



City of Arts & Innovation

City Council Memorandum

TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL **DATE: OCTOBER 17, 2023**
FROM: CITY CLERK'S OFFICE **WARDS: ALL**
SUBJECT: ORDER AND CALL FOR THE GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION ON MARCH 5, 2024

ISSUE:

Adopt a resolution pursuant to Charter Section 500 calling a general municipal election for March 5, 2024, to elect office of the Mayor and Members of the City Council for Wards 1, 3, 5, and 7 for four-year terms and determine that candidates pay the cost of Candidate Statement of Qualifications publication.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The City Council:

1. Adopt the attached resolution calling the General Municipal Election to be held March 5, 2024, to elect office of the Mayor and Members of the City Council for Wards 1, 3, 5, and 7, for four-year terms and consent to the County Registrar of Voters rendering election services to the City as requested by the City Clerk with the County of Riverside to be reimbursed in full for the services;
2. Maintain the current policy of having candidates cover the expenses associated with publishing a no more than 200-word Candidate Statement of Qualifications; and
3. Direct the City Clerk to fulfill any administrative requirements in accordance with the City Charter and California Elections Code.

BACKGROUND

In accordance with Charter Section 500, which is designed to align with California Elections Code (EC) requirements, it is now the appropriate time for the City Council to call the General Municipal Election for March 5, 2024, for the purpose of conducting an election for the office of Mayor and City Council Wards 1, 3, 5, and 7, each for four-year terms. Additionally, the City Council will request to enlist the Registrar of Voters to provide election services to the city, as requested by the Elections Official. The city will fully reimburse the County of Riverside for these services.

EC Section 10403, states that when a city calls for an election, it must, at least 88 days prior to the election date, submit a resolution from its City Council to both the Board of Supervisors and the Registrar of Voters, which states:

1. Requests that the city election be consolidated with the statewide election.
2. Sets forth the exact office to be voted upon at the election as it is to appear on the ballot.
3. Acknowledges that the consolidated election will be held and conducted with procedures same as statewide election (EC §10418).

On June 13, 2023, in compliance with the Fair and Inclusive Redistricting for Municipalities and Political Subdivisions (FAIR MAPS) Act, the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 7636, which revised boundaries for all Wards. However, the existing terms for each Ward representative remained the same.

DISCUSSION

Pursuant to Elections Code Section 13307, upon the submission of nomination documents to the Elections Official, candidates have the option to include a Candidate Statement of Qualification of no more than 200 words in the ballot materials sent to voters. The City Council determines who should bear the expenses related to the printing and distribution of Statements. These charges are calculated based on the actual costs incurred by the County for typesetting, translation, and delivering them to registered voters. Historically, the city has placed the expense for publishing the statements on the candidates. Staff recommends that candidates continue to cover the printing costs.

In addition, the elections official has the authority to permit candidates for nonpartisan elective office to prepare a written candidate statement for electronic distribution. This statement would be published on the city's election webpage and may also be included in an electronically distributed voter's pamphlet. This alternative not only offers a cost-effective option for candidates but also serves as an additional source of information for voters.

The deposit required at the time of nomination are as follows:

- Mayor - \$2500
- City Council - \$700
- Electronic Statements - \$260

The number of registered voters in the City and the respective Wards as of October 4, 2023, is provided below for informational purposes.

- Citywide – 161,324
- Ward 1 – 22,364
- Ward 3 – 25,027
- Ward 5 - 22,607
- Ward 7 – 22,333

Nomination Period

The Riverside Municipal Code (RMC) Section 1.15.010 dictates that the filing period for municipal elections must coincide with the period for submitting nomination documents by candidates in elections that are consolidated with the general election, as specified in EC Section 10407.

Therefore, for the upcoming March 5, 2024, election, the nomination period commences on Monday, November 13, 2023, and concludes on Friday, December 8, 2023. All potential candidates are required to obtain and file their nomination papers with the City's Elections Official/City Clerk.

If an incumbent does not file, pursuant to EC Section 10407(b), the filing period for the office or ward the incumbent did not file for is extended to Wednesday, December 13, 2023. Incumbents may not file during this extended period.

The process of issuing and filing nomination papers can be complex. To ensure clarity and provide guidance, the Elections Official/City Clerk will host a Candidate Workshop on Monday, November 13 at 9:00 a.m. This workshop will offer potential candidates a 45 to 60-minute overview covering various aspects of the process including issuing nomination papers, candidate eligibility requirements, FPPC filings, redistricting, regulations concerning candidate statements and ballot designations, and more. The Elections Official/City Clerk will also provide a candidate handbook for reference.

For potential candidates who cannot attend the workshop, scheduling an appointment with the Elections Official/City Clerk during the nomination period is strongly recommended for personalized assistance in pulling nomination papers and navigating the process.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The estimated consolidated election costs of \$280,000 to \$300,000 are included in the Fiscal Year 2023/2024 budget.

Prepared by: Donesia Gause, City Clerk/Election Official
Certified as to
Availability of funds: Kristi Thomas, Chief Financial Officer/City Treasurer
Approved as to form: Phaedra Norton, City Attorney

Attachment: Resolution - Calling Election