

To: **Mayor and City Council**
From: **Nate Burkett, City Manager**
Date: **October 14, 2021**

Planning Commission Size and Ward Representation

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The City Council directed that ordinance amendments be prepared for consideration to expand the Planning Commission from seven to nine members and to require through ordinance that the Planning Commission have equal representation between all three wards of the city.

To effectuate the expansion of the Planning Commission, the Council may advance the following ordinance language to a regular meeting for first reading:

Amend City Code 31.01(C) to read:

*Members. The Planning Commission shall consist of ~~seven~~ **nine** members who are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by the City Council. The City Attorney, Zoning Administrator, Community/Economic Development Director and one member of the City Council may be ex-officio members without the right to vote.*

To effectuate the requirement that all wards of the city have equal representation:

Add one of the following to City Code 31.01(C)

- (1) All wards of the city must be equally represented. OR
- (1) To the greatest extent possible, all wards of the city must be equally represented.

History and other information

The earliest record of codified language pertaining to number of voting members on the Planning Commission is from 1969 at which time nine voting members were required. Based on records, there were nine voting members from 1969 until the spring of 2011. In 2011, multiple Planning Commissioners opted not to seek re-appointment and there were not enough applicants to fill all nine seats. This prompted the Council to reduce the number of voting members from nine down to seven. During the first reading it was stated that an additional reason for the reduction in the number of members was due to the City now having a City Planner on staff (as opposed to a previously used third party consultant) that would be better equipped to facilitate the planning process, therefore lessening the need for the higher number of voting members. The motion to reduce the number of voting members from nine to seven so was passed unanimously on June 27th, 2011.

In order to provide an idea of what other communities have for Planning Commission composition, Staff surveyed other comparable first ring suburbs to see how many voting

members they have on the Planning Commission and whether or not they require ward representation (see attached).

Additional Questions for consideration

1. If a requirement for equal ward representation is passed; what happens if there are no candidates from a ward with open seats?
2. If either the expansion or requirement for ward representation passes; what would be the desired effective date of the ordinance to allow time for recruitment, selection, etc...?

FISCAL IMPACT:

NA

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff has no recommendation on this matter.