



Agenda Report

TO: CITY COUNCIL **DATE:** NOVEMBER 19, 2001

FROM: BILL CROWFOOT, CHAIR
REDISTRICTING TASK FORCE

SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT ON REDISTRICTING TASK FORCE
ACTIVITIES

RECOMMENDATION OF REDISTRICTING TASK FORCE:

This item is for information and Council feedback on the redistricting process.

BACKGROUND:

This written report is intended to substitute for an in-person report to the City Council. Although that in-person report was to take place at this meeting, the Council has had two in-person reports from the Task Force thus far and there is nothing further to add tonight that couldn't just as easily and economically be done in writing. The Task Force Chair is particularly cognizant of the Mayor's desire, graphically expressed at the last Council meeting the Chair attended, to move the Council meeting along.

On July 30, 2001, the City Council took action to create a nine-member Redistricting Task Force to recommend a redistricting plan for adoption by ordinance of the City Council. On August 20, 2001, Council made appointments to the Redistricting Task Force, and the Task Force met for the first time on August 27th.

The Task Force meets the first and third Wednesdays of the month, at 7:00 p.m. and has met five times to date. The first few meetings were organizational in nature (review of Brown Act, redistricting legal criteria, member liability concerns, timeline, review of Requests for Proposals for a redistricting consultant and a public outreach consultant, and interviewing and hiring of said consultants).

Upon the Task Force's recommendation with the City Council's approval, the City hired Mr. David Ely, of PacTech Data and Research, as its redistricting consultant to provide demographic analyses and maps based on the 2000 census data, to follow-up on research requested by the Task Force, to write

summaries or reports as needed, and to assist with framing issues for Task Force deliberations.

Upon the Task Force's recommendation, the City also hired Mr. Manuel Valencia, of Valencia, Perez & Echeveste, as its public outreach consultant. This is a relatively small contract amount not requiring Council approval and the Council is quite familiar with Mr. Valencia's company, so the matter was not brought forward to the Council for formal approval. Mr. Valencia will coordinate outreach to a diverse community to stimulate as much public participation as possible in this process; prepare media kits and public information materials; coordinate media events and interviews with editorial boards; prepare community outreach letters, flyers, and press releases; coordinate speaking engagements with community groups; and do three direct mailings to community groups and interested parties. Based on Pasadena demographics, the Task Force has stressed to the outreach consultant the importance of specific outreach to the Latino and Armenian communities.

Both of the above consultants were hired a decade ago by the prior Redistricting Task Force. They are well-qualified and from Pasadena firms, and their past experience and historical memory in issues raised in the last redistricting process will be an asset.

Mr. Ely has prepared a draft Workplan for the Task Force (Attachment A). The Workplan anticipates completion of Task Force work at its February 20th meeting, with a final report presented to the City Council on March 4, 2002.

Mr. Valencia prepared an outreach plan which is attached for Council's information (Attachment B). The Task Force suggested that the consultant explore with the School District the distribution of redistricting information through school newsletters where possible. It also suggested that the School District encourage teachers to follow this process with their students where appropriate to the subject matter of their classes.

The consultants noted that in the redistricting exercise ten years ago there was not much public participation or interest in the process until various plans and alternatives were proposed. The Task Force recognizes it will need to affirmatively solicit community participation and not just rely on the public to attend regular Task Force meetings at City Hall. Individual Task Force members will help raise public awareness of this process by attending neighborhood association meetings; City staff and the outreach consultants will assist Task Force members in identifying and scheduling those appearances. With the assistance of the outreach consultant, the Task Force will pursue other ways of soliciting community participation, such as scheduling special meetings at several targeted locations at different days/times and a "hands-on" workshop for the public.

Task Force Deliberations

As mentioned earlier, the first three meetings pertained mostly to organizational matters. The last two Task Force meetings have been substantive. At the October 17th meeting, the Task Force discussed factors that may impact the redistricting process, and identified information/data for the redistricting consultant to compile. The consultants provided a brief history of the complex policy and political issues addressed by the last redistricting process. The Task Force also discussed (i) the impacts of new and future housing; (ii) whether the Task Force should at all times try to keep neighborhood associations within one Council district, and (iii) whether all the district lines should touch Colorado Boulevard. The Assistant City Attorney informed the Task Force that there is no legal requirement that district lines touch Colorado Boulevard.

At the last Task Force meeting, on November 7th, the redistricting consultant presented the corrected census calculations as to district populations. These were the same corrected numbers the Task Force Chair presented to the City Council on November 5th. As you know, the corrected percentage variations from the ideal district size of 19,134 were less dramatic than the earlier calculations. With less variation from the ideal district size, less moving of district lines is required to equalize the population among the seven districts.

There was some strong sentiment expressed that there should be a minimum of disruption to current representational patterns. Also discussed was the nature of precinct geography and complications that can arise in consolidating precincts across natural geographic boundaries. Attached for Council's information is a colored map depicting the population deviations from the ideal size of 19,134 (Attachment 3) as well as the corrected census calculations per district populations confirmed by PacTech and City staff and presented to Council on November 5th (Attachment 4).

At the last Task Force meeting, Mr. Ely suggested three conceptual approaches to equalizing the population among the districts, bearing in mind that District 3 is the most over, and District 6 the most under, the desired population number. These possible approaches were: (i) starting with District 6, moving in a counter-clockwise direction to equalize the populations among the districts, which is to say District 6 would take some of District 7, which would take some of District 4 (which extends below Colorado in East Pasadena) and so forth, (ii) having District 6 go above Colorado Boulevard into what is now District 3; or (iii) having District 6 come across the Arroyo to what is now District 1 to balance its population.

The Task Force directed Mr. Ely to come up with variations of plans that would equalize the populations for discussion at the next meeting. The Task Force had a sharp debate on approach (iii) described above, as a result of which Mr. Ely indicated he would not bring forward any proposals that would have District 6

cross the Arroyo to District 1 unless specifically instructed to do so by the Task Force. The Task Force recognizes that the issue may arise later in this process as a result of public comment. The discussion of approach (ii), crossing Colorado at District 3, was less intense, but various Task Force members expressed skepticism about whether such an approach would be well received if presented.

The Task Force's next meeting has been rescheduled to November 20 instead of November 21, to avoid meeting on the eve of Thanksgiving Day. The consultant will present several "discussion draft" proposals so that the Task Force and the public, both, can begin to focus on the concrete reality of the redistricting process. The Task Force anticipates that the presentation of these proposals, coupled with a stepped up outreach effort, will generate greater public interest in the redistricting process.

FISCAL IMPACT:

There is no fiscal impact with this informational report.

Respectfully submitted,



Bill Crowfoot, Chair
Redistricting Task Force