

# Agenda Report

February 27, 2023

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and City Council

**FROM:** City Clerk  
City Attorney

**SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR DIRECTION REGARDING THE FORMATION OF A  
CHARTER STUDY TASK FORCE**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

It is recommended that the City Council:

- (1) Find that the proposed action is exempt from California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to State CEQA Guidelines Section 15061(b)(3), ("Common Sense Rule");
- (2) Provide direction to staff on whether to initiate a Charter Study review process, utilizing a Charter Study Task Force to study potential amendments to the City Charter; and
- (3) If so directed, authorize staff to prepare and distribute a Request for Proposals seeking consultant services to lead the Charter Study Task Force process.

**BACKGROUND:**

In August 2022, the City Council expressed interest in reviewing the City's Charter for possible amendments, taking particular interest in topics related to the City Council's appointment process and other election-related matters. At the time, City staff suggested that a Charter Study Task Force might be convened to allow for a thorough public vetting of these and other topics ahead of any work to prepare ballot measure questions for voter consideration. As this would be the first multi-topic review of the City Charter since the late 1990's and early 2000's, staff has provided a suggested framework that City Council might consider in moving such a process forward.

**CHARTER STUDY TASK FORCE FORMAT**

The most recent efforts to consider multi-issue changes to the City Charter involved an advisory body in the form of a Task Force empaneled by the City Council to study the matter in depth. In 1997-1998, the City Council formed a Charter Reform Task Force to study City governance issues (Attachment A – sample of historical documents). In 1999-2000, a second Charter Reform Task Force was formed to focus on Pasadena Unified School District governance issues (Attachment B – sample of historical

documents). Each body was comprised of community members nominated by members of the City Council (School District Governance Task Force also included representatives of other oversight entities). City staff provided lead support, while an outside consultant was engaged to assist the Task Force in guiding their work and consideration. The City Council adopted a subject matter charge that provided guidelines and parameters to help direct and govern the review of City Charter. The Task Force returned with a final report that provided a summary of their work and recommendations on possible Charter changes. The City Council held public meetings to consider and deliberate on the report's findings. Each process culminated with the City Council submitting multiple ballot measure questions to the voters.

**1997-1998 Charter Study Task Force – City Governance (20 members)**

Ross Selvidge, Chair	Harold James
Brian Williams, Vice Chair	Richard Janisch
Fred Brandt	Mark Leon
Ken Chawkins	Esteban Lizardo
Michael Coppess	Ralph McKnight
John Crowley	Katie Nack
James DeBose	Thelma Reyna
Peter Dreier	Paul Sawyer
Vince Farhat	Margaret Thomas
Porfirio Frausto	William Thomson

**1999-2000 Charter Study Task Force – School District Governance (11 members)**

Chris Holden, Chair	Council Representative
Bart Doyle, Vice Chair	Sierra Madre Representative
Steve Haderlein	Council Representative
Lisa Fowler	School Board appointment
Marge Wyatt	School Board appointment
Ken Lovell	Supervisor Antonovich appointment
Barbara Madden	Supervisor Antonovich appointment
Nancy Parachini	Public Member Appointed by Council
Alfred Wilfong	Public Member Appointed by Council
Esteban Lizardo	Public Member Appointed by Council
Catherine Wood	Public Member Appointed by Council

**TOPICS, SCOPE, AND CHARGE TO BE CONSIDERED AT A FUTURE MEETING**

Over the past several years, members of the City Council and community have raised various questions and concerns related to City governance issues contained in the City Charter that could be the subject of Charter study (most recently, the appointment process for vacancies on the City Council). The preliminary discussion that is the subject of this agenda report is designed to initiate a Charter review process, with the Council asked to generally approve the proposed structure and authorize staff to

prepare and distribute a Request for Proposals for consultant services. Identifying possible Charter Amendment topics, as well as setting a scope and charge for the Task Force, is recommended to occur at a later date in the coming weeks. At that time, the Council and community can have a substantive discussion on which sections of the City Charter should be studied and reviewed for possible recommended amendments.

### **NEXT STEPS AND PROPOSED TIMELINE**

Assuming the City Council directs staff to proceed as described above, staff will prepare an application for community members to apply for appointment to the Task Force. Staff will also prepare a Request for Proposals for consultant services to lead the process and help to accomplish the charge and work plan. Following are details that will require City Council direction as the process moves forward:

- Review and approve a proposed budget for Charter Study
- Determine the size and composition of the Task Force
- Outline a list of topics/sections of the City Charter to be studied by the Task Force
- Develop a charge and work plan to guide the Task Force's work
- Assign duties to City staff for in-house support of the Task Force's work

In addition, following is a suggested timeline that takes into account the timing of the November 5, 2024 General Election calendar, allowing for the review and public discussion of Charter Amendment topics to be studied, providing the Task Force with adequate time to study the issues, conduct community meetings and outreach to solicit public input, and submit its recommendations to the City Council ahead of the legal deadlines to place any ballot measure(s) on the General Election ballot for voter consideration:


- Preparation of Request for Proposals (RFP) for Consultant Services (February to March, 2023)
- Preparation of an application for community appointments (February to March, 2023)
- Application period opens to serve on Task Force (March/April, 2023)
- Discussion by the City Council on Topics, Scope, and Charge (March/April/May, 2023)
- RFP responses due and selection of a consultant (end of April, 2023)
- City Council appointments to serve on the Task Force (middle of May, 2023)
- Task Force begins meeting (June, 2023)
- Task Force meetings (June, 2023 thru May, 2024)
- Task Force final report and recommendations to Council (June, 2024)
- City Council consideration of proposed changes and preparation of ballot measure question(s) to amend City Charter (July, 2024)
- November 5, 2024 General Municipal Election

## **FISCAL IMPACT**

Prior efforts of Charter Study Task Forces included meetings both at City Hall as well as at various meeting locations throughout the community. The remote community meetings promote public awareness and participation, and provide interested members of the public an opportunity to weigh in on important changes to the City's Charter. To deliver reliable, accessible, and well-organized meetings in a remote format will require significant staff support. Departments that would need to be involved in the work of the Task Force likely include the offices of the City Manager, City Attorney, and City Clerk, as well as Department of Information and Technology and Pasadena Media for technical meeting support.

It is initially suggested that the City Council consider allocating \$175,000 in the City Clerk's FY 2023-24 Operating Budget to cover the expenses related to the formation of a resident-based Charter Study Task Force, the hiring of a professional consultant to guide the Task Force's work. A more detailed breakdown of this estimated cost will be provided as part of the City Clerk's 2023-24 Operating Budget proposal, following the RFP process and the amounts submitted by proposers seeking to work for the City as a consultant to the Task Force.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Mark Jomsky  
City Clerk

  
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Michele Beal Bagneris  
City Attorney/City Prosecutor

## **Attachments:**

- A. Sample of Historical and Background Documents from Charter Reform Task Force to study City governance issues (1997-1998)
  - i. Mayor's July 24, 1997 Agenda Report – Charter Reform
  - ii. Mayor's August 18, 1997 Agenda Report – Revised Charter Reform Proposal
  - iii. Charter Reform Task Force – Final Report
  - iv. July 6, 1998 City Council Minutes – Actions on City Governance Charter Reform Recommendations
- B. Sample of Historical and Background Documents from Charter Reform Task Force to study Pasadena Unified School District governance issues (1999-2000)
  - i. Resolution No. 7786 – Composition and Charge of Charter Reform Task Force on School District Governance
  - ii. June 26, 2000 Agenda Report – Transmitting Final Report and Recommendations of Charter Reform Task Force
  - iii. June 26, 2000 City Council Minutes - School District Governance Charter Reform - Final Report Discussion