

9/30/15 DRAFT: For Task Force Review

INTERIM REPORT OF
CHARTER REVIEW TASK FORCE



October 13, 2015

Task Force Members

Dionne Bagsby, Chair

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Scope of City Charter Review

Issue	Current Charter provisions
Number of Council members	8+1
Terms of office	Two-year terms
Staggered terms	Concurrent terms
Compensation	\$29,000 for Mayor \$25,000 for Council members
Conflicts of interest	Prohibits any direct or indirect financial interest in City contracts
Technical amendments	Inconsistencies with state law, archaic language, unused provisions

Schedule

July 28, 2015	City Council adopts resolution appointing Charter Review Task Force.
August 19, September 3, 17, 30	Task Force holds four meetings to study issues and reach preliminary findings.
October 13	Task Force briefs City Council on preliminary findings .
October 26 - November 16	Task Force conducts six public hearings at locations throughout the city.
November 18 or 24	Task Force meets to formulate recommendations .
December 8	Task Force presents recommendations to City Council.
January 5 and 12	City Council holds public hearings on Task Force recommendations during two regular Council meetings.
January 26 (NLT 2/19/16)	City Council adopts ordinance calling election on proposed Charter amendments.
February through April	City conducts outreach to educate voters about proposed Charter amendments.
May 7	City conducts Charter election .

Council-Manager Benchmark Cities As Selected by Task Force

Texas

Austin

Dallas

El Paso

San Antonio

Other States

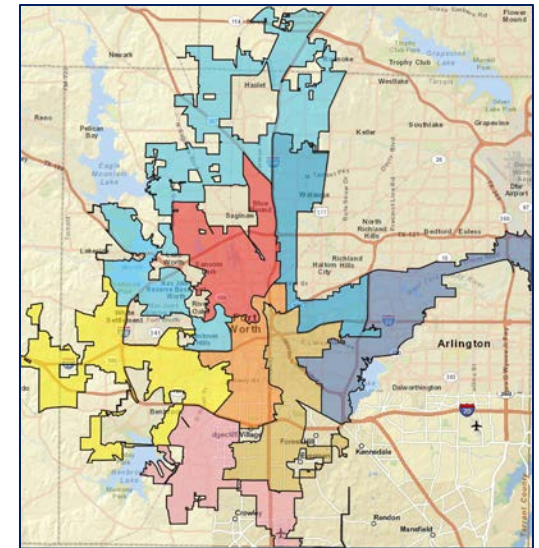
Charlotte

Kansas City

Oklahoma City

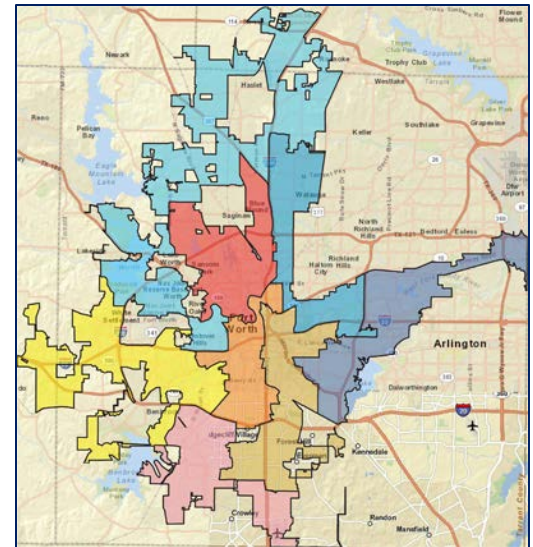
Number of Council Members: Background

- The city council is currently composed of the mayor who is elected city-wide and **eight council members** elected from single-member districts.
- Each council member in Fort Worth represents approximately **101,000** citizens.
- In Austin, Dallas, El Paso, and Oklahoma City, each council member represents **fewer than 100,000** residents.
- In San Antonio, however, each of their ten council members represents more than **140,000**.



Number of Council Members: Questions

- Would increasing the number of single-member districts, perhaps from eight to ten, provide **all Fort Worth residents** with better representation?
- Would increasing the number of districts provide **minority groups**, such as Hispanics and African-Americans, with better representation?
- Would increasing the number of districts provide better representation for residents from different **geographic areas**, including older urban neighborhoods within Loop 820 and newer suburban neighborhoods beyond the Loop?



Terms of Office: Background

- Fort Worth's mayor and city council members currently serve **two-year terms** and are elected in odd-numbered years.
- Council members in Dallas and San Antonio also serve for **two years**.
- Council members serve for **three years** in Charlotte and for **four years** in Austin, El Paso, Kansas City, and Oklahoma City.



Terms of Office: Questions

- Could longer terms increase the **effectiveness** of the mayor and council members?
- Would longer terms in any way reduce their **accountability**?
- Should the **cost** savings of holding less frequent elections, i.e. up to approximately \$550,000 per municipal election, be a significant factor in this decision?



Staggered Terms: Background

- Fort Worth's mayor and city council now serve **concurrent** two-year terms.
- Dallas, San Antonio, Charlotte, and Kansas City also have **concurrent** terms.
- Austin, El Paso, and Oklahoma City **stagger** their terms.



Staggered Terms: Questions

- Would staggered terms provide the city council with greater **continuity and stability**?
- Is it important to limit the amount of **turnover** that could occur in any city council election?
- Is it important to elect the mayor and all council members at the **same time**?
- Do the **terms of office**, i.e. two years versus three or four years, affect the importance of staggering those terms?
- Should the **cost** of holding elections be a significant factor in this decision?



Compensation: Background

- The mayor is currently paid \$29,000 per year and the council members are paid **\$25,000**, but the time demands on the mayor and council members have increased over the years as the city has grown in size and complexity.
- In comparable cities, salaries range from \$24,000 for the mayor and **\$12,000** for council members in Oklahoma City to more than \$123,000 for the mayor and **\$61,000** for council members in Kansas City.



Compensation: Questions

- Is it important to consider the **time demands** of the position when setting compensation?
- Is it important to consider the city's **budget**?
- Would increasing the compensation allow **more citizens** an opportunity to serve in public office?



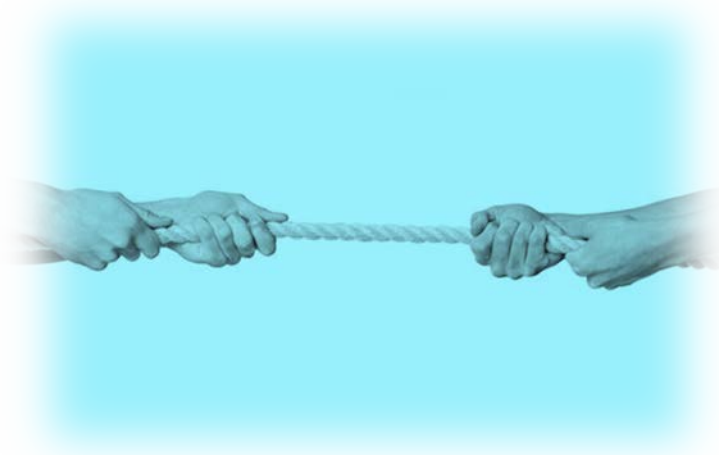
Conflicts of Interest: Background

- The city charter currently provides that no elected official or employee shall have a direct or indirect **financial interest** in a contract with the city.
- For example, if you work for the city, your **spouse** may not enter into a contract to provide goods or services to the City.
- Similar language appears in the charters of **most** comparable cities.
- Furthermore, the City's **Ethics Code** elaborates upon this prohibition by discussing what constitutes a direct or indirect financial interest.



Conflicts of Interest: Questions

- Is it important to **retain** this provision in the city charter?
- Is this provision sufficiently **clear and understandable**?
- Could this provision from time to time **prevent** the city from entering into beneficial contracts?



Public Engagement Process

- **Community outreach**

- Six public hearings
- Speakers bureau
- Meeting in a box



- **Traditional media**

- City News weekly electronic newsletter
- City Times monthly utility bill insert
- Weekly Bulletin from Community Engagement Office
- Display advertisements in newspapers
 - ✓ *Star-Telegram*
 - ✓ *La Estrella*
 - ✓ *Panorama news*
 - ✓ *La Vida Black News*



Public Engagement Process

(Continued)

- **Web/ social media**

- *YourFortWorth.org*
- *FortWorthTexas.gov*
- Facebook and Twitter posts
- Councilmember web pages
- Mayor's Message



- **Video**

- FWTV
- Other broadcast outlets



- **Media relations**

- Pitch story to print and broadcast reporters.
- Answer media inquiries.
- Meet with *Star-Telegram* editorial board.

Public Hearings

Council Districts	Day	Date	Time	Location
9	Monday	October 26	7:00 p.m.	University Christian Church
3 and 6	Thursday	October 29	7:00 p.m.	Southwest Regional Library
4 and 7	Monday	November 2	7:00 p.m.	Heritage Church of Christ
2	Monday	November 9	7:00 p.m.	Northside Community Center
8	Thursday	November 12	7:00 p.m.	Hazel Harvey Peace Center for Neighborhoods
4 and 5	Monday	November 16	7:00 p.m.	Martin Luther King Community Center