

Whittier Voting Districts Formation Community Meetings Next Week

Today, Whittier is a diverse community with a rich cultural heritage that is central to our City's identity. On June 3, 2014, voters approved a Charter Amendment, Measure W, setting into motion an historic process to create four geographically defined City Council voting districts with a mayor elected by the entire city. This dynamic districting process will change the way our community elects its future leadership.

As we undertake this important process, it is critical that the Whittier community engage in the voting districts formation (VDF). The process began with "Meet the Expert" meetings, where interested parties had an opportunity to see sample maps and provide input. As a continuation, the City is hosting community meetings this month to gain your input regarding potential voting district boundaries. The formation process will continue in early 2015 when we plan to host another round of meetings to display map revisions based on the public input received since October of this year.

November: First Round of VDF Community Meetings

Meeting attendees will have the opportunity to learn about the process, provide input on the make-up of the new City Council districts, and review sample maps for discussion and comment. Participants will meet demographics expert Dave Ely of Compass Demographics, who was hired by the City of Whittier to gather community input and provide expert recommendations to the City Council on the formation of the districts in a manner that best reflects, among other things, the Whittier community's population, geography, communities of interest, and significant and sensitive land issues.

Each of the three November meetings will provide the same information. Your presence and participation are welcomed at the following meetings:

Saturday, November 15, 2014

9-11 a.m.

Whittier Senior Center, 13225 Walnut Street

Wednesday, November 19, 2014

6:30–8:30 p.m.

Palm Park, 5703 Palm Avenue

Thursday, November 20, 2014

6:30–8:30 p.m.

Parnell Park, 15390 Lambert Road

December: Public Hearing on District Formation

The City Council will hold a public hearing at 6:30 p.m. on December 9, 2014 to receive a report on the outcomes from the first round of community meetings and to review proposed maps developed as a result of public input. Prior to this meeting, information and recommendations received from the first round of meetings, one-on-ones and other relevant information will be incorporated into proposed maps of the districts. The City Council will also receive additional public comments about district dividing lines so everyone is invited to speak to the Council.

Early 2015: Second Round of VDF Community Meetings – Proposed Maps

A second round of community meetings will be held in early 2015. Participants will be able to review proposed maps of the districts and provide comments.

Community input from the second round of meetings will be incorporated into the map(s) that will be used for the written report that City staff will provide to the City Council for consideration and final approval at a future public hearing in early 2015. The new voting districts will be reflected in elections beginning in 2016.

The process for creating voting districts aims to be transparent and is designed to inform and, most importantly, engage the public. All community members—residents, business owners, and other interest persons—are encouraged to provide input on the formation of voting districts. We invite you to be a part of the mailing list so you always know the latest information as the process moves forward. To register, please visit www.cityofwhittier.org/vdf. Kathryn Marshall, City Clerk-Treasurer is also available to answer any VDF inquiries at (562) 567-9854 or at kmarshall@cityofwhittier.org.

The City of Whittier remains committed to providing a healthy and safe community, through a balance of economic, social, political, cultural and recreational opportunities where participation in the affairs and the progress of the community will continue to flourish.

Cathy Warner, Whittier Mayor
Fernando Dutra, Whittier Mayor Pro Tem