

Change Election Ordinance to Provide for Plurality Referral

Prepared by: Budget Committee Team C

Background

City Ordinance - Election Dates

- Chapter 9 sec. 9-2 Date of Regular elections for City Commissioners and Mayor
- Regular elections shall be held in March or April of each year, on a date set by the City Commission by ordinance, for the election of city commissioners, including the mayor, whose terms of office expire or to fill vacancies that may occur. In the event no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast in an election to fill a district, mayoral or at-large vacancy, a run-off election shall be held on the fourth Tuesday following the first election between the two candidates for such district(s), mayoral or at-large seat receiving the highest number of votes cast.

Background

Election Costs

	<u>Election Cost</u>	<u>Run Off Cost</u>
2001	\$ 35,698	\$ 26,325
2002	\$ 31,584	\$ 21,056**
2003	\$ 46,829	\$ 38,315**
2004*	\$ 39,459	\$ 32,284
2005	\$ 69,953	\$ 18,622
2006	\$ 88,814	-0-
2007	\$101,612	-0-
2008*	\$ 59,735	\$ 33,671
2009	\$ 94,257	-0-
2010	\$116,961	\$100,000***

*In presidential-election years, the City shares the cost of servicing a precinct with the County. This reduces the cost by approximately 40%.

**Estimates were used since both elections were booked as one entry.

***Estimated cost. Final costs not yet determined; however, each open seat in 2010 required a run-off. The other run-off elections were for one seat.

Background

Election costs vary because:

- At-large seat races require all City precincts to be open rather than district seat precincts.
- Run-offs have not been required three of the last five years.

Recommendation

- Change the City's Ordinance from a majority of votes cast to a plurality of votes required to fill a district, mayoral or at-large vacancy.

Estimated Savings

- Election costs continue to increase. Changing ordinance language to plurality versus majority would save cost of run-off election.
- Costs continue to increase annually. Eliminating run-off election potentially saves up to \$100,000 with at-large and mayoral elections.