

Article VII Nomination and Elections

Section 701. Special Municipal Elections.

No proposed changes

Section 702. Accordance with Elections Code of the State of California

No proposed changes

Section 703. Nominating Papers

No proposed Changes

Section 704. Primary and General Election Candidates Should the voters adopt district voting in 2016 and increase the number of city districts to 8; here is the suggested implementation: In the Election of 2018, following the drawing of the new district boundaries; all council seats shall be subject to election. Council district seats 2, 4, 6 and 8 shall be elected to a term of two (2) years and in subsequent elections, the terms would be 4 years. Council district seats 1,3,5,7 shall be elected to a term of four (4) years. This shall establish the proper rotation of the newly formed districts and to ensure all councilmembers reside within the newly established districts.

In the primary municipal election, electors in each district shall be entitled to vote for one (1) candidate for Councilmember from their district.

- a. The voters of each Council District shall elect the Councilmember at the primary municipal election. However, should no candidate for the office of Councilmember receive a majority of votes cast at the primary municipal election, the two candidates receiving the most votes for that office shall thereby qualify as candidates for the office of Councilmember at the runoff election to be held at the general municipal election.
- b. In the run-off election in the general municipal election, the electors in each district shall be entitled to vote for one (1) candidate for Councilmember from their district, and the candidate for Councilmember in each district receiving the highest number of votes cast by the electors of the district shall be declared elected to such office.
- c. If any provisions of this article of the application thereof to any persons or circumstances are held invalid, the invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this article which can be given effect without the invalid provisions or applications, and to this end the provisions of this article are severable.

Arguments in favor:

This charter section would change the current process of first voting within the district and then require a city-wide election regardless of the outcome of the primary to a district only voting-runoff process. Since the current process was adopted in 1986, only three times have the results of the primary election been overturned by the citywide election. In every other election, there

was a clear winner in the district election and needless sums of campaign contributions were required to fund the city wide races. Most importantly, the City must reimburse the County for all elections it holds. To hold these second elections, when there was a clear winner and sometimes only one candidate in the primary, has cost the taxpayers of Stockton on average \$200,000 per second election or nearly \$3.5 million. It is an expense the City of Stockton cannot afford.

It creates the opportunity for more candidates to run for the council seat because it removes the requirement for the second city wide election. This change creates an opportunity for the Stockton City Council to be more reflective of its rich diversity by allowing candidates in run in smaller districts without needing the campaign contributions for the city-wide elections. It makes it more affordable for all candidates to run and get elected within their district. It further creates more opportunity for the voters of each of the specific districts to elect a representative for their district.