

CITY OF EL CAJON

(This Measure will appear on the ballot in the following form.)

MEASURE S

Do you approve amending Section 201 of the City of El Cajon Charter to require election of City Council members by geographic districts in which they reside beginning with the general municipal election to be held in 2018?

This measure requires approval by a simple majority (over 50%) of the voters voting on the measure. Full text of this measure follows the arguments and rebuttals.

CITY ATTORNEY IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS

The City of El Cajon is a charter city and Section 201 of the El Cajon City Charter provides the manner by which the Mayor and Council Members are selected by the voters. Currently, the Mayor is elected directly by all voters in the city every four years, and the Council Members are elected "at large," meaning that all voters throughout the city choose from among the qualified candidates living anywhere in the City, each serving a four year term.

This proposed measure would amend Section 201 of the El Cajon City Charter, eliminating the requirement for at large elections and replacing it with a requirement that the four Council Members shall be elected from districts in which they reside, solely by the residents of that district, beginning with the general municipal election in November of 2018.

This proposed charter amendment does not create specific districts or establish procedures for implementation of Section 201 at this time. If this proposed amendment is approved by the voters the City Council will, with input from the public at various open and public meetings, develop and adopt an ordinance to implement district elections and approve the initial boundaries for the four districts, all of which will be in compliance with state and federal voting rights laws. The initial district boundaries are subject to change as necessary at any time but at a minimum they will be re-evaluated and, if necessary, re-drawn following each 10-year United States census beginning with the 2020 decennial census. This measure will not shorten any term of office or change the number of Council Members.

If the proposition is approved, district elections would commence in 2018 for one of the council seats and 2020 for the remaining three council seats.

In compliance with state laws this measure was placed on the ballot by the City Council of the City of El Cajon and requires approval by the voters.

The above statement is an impartial analysis of Measure S. If you desire a copy of the ordinance or measure, please call the elections official's office at 858-668-4530 and a copy will be mailed at no cost to you.

ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE S

My name is Bill Wells. I have had the pleasure to serve the City of El Cajon as a City Councilman and as your current Mayor. I believe we have made great strides in improving El Cajon. Our streets are safer, our downtown is vibrant again, and we have made El Cajon a destination for new businesses. New car dealerships, 4-star hotels, and a new hospital are all coming to El Cajon in the coming years. These new amenities will bring news jobs along with improved goods and services for the residents of our city.

Today I am asking for your support on a very important issue facing our city, district elections. Your City Council has enthusiastically and unanimously pledged its support for Measure S and we are asking for your support for the good of the city and all its citizens.

Measure S will create 4 voting districts for the City of El Cajon. Each district will elect its own City Councilmember. Individual districts will allow each Councilmember to focus their attention on their own neighborhood within the city. It will give individual citizens improved access to their elected representative. It will empower residents by making sure their collective voice is heard through an elected representative who lives in their neighborhood.

We have unanimously voted to place Measure S on the ballot to give the citizens of El Cajon more local control over their government. We, along with citizens, community leaders, business owners, and the East County Chamber of Commerce, urge you to vote Yes on Measure S.

WILLIAM "BILL" WELLS
Mayor, City of El Cajon

JIM KELLY
Trustee, Grossmont Union High
School District

ERIC J. LUND
CEO, San Diego East County Chamber of Commerce

REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT IN FAVOR OF MEASURE S

Mayor Bill Wells states that the requirement that the four councilmembers must live in the district they represent will allow each member "to focus their attention on their own neighborhood," and would "empower residents" by ensuring their voices are heard by a "neighborhood" representative.

Those positive features are not applicable to El Cajon, because of its small size. Chula Vista, which is now in the process of converting to district elections, consists of 52 square miles, and a population of nearly 257,000. El Cajon is just 14.4 square miles, with a population of about 100,000.

If a Chula Vista councilmember has difficulty "covering" 52 square miles (with widely-separated neighborhoods), it would certainly be an advantage to manage just one-fourth of the city; i.e., roughly 13 square miles). Why then can't each of the four El Cajon councilmembers "cover" 14.4 miles? One-fourth of that size would be just 3.6 square miles. It should be noted that councilmembers receive a monthly car allowance of \$450, which they should give up if Measure S passes.

As stated in my argument against the measure, voters would not be empowered, but would lose 75% of their voting power over the city council.

ROBERT B. CLARK

ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE S

Conversion by cities in California to district elections is supposedly justified in order to comply with the California Voting Rights Act, which enables voters to "elect candidates of their choice in local elections."

A significant effect of this conversion has been largely ignored: it deprives 100% of voters of their choice of candidates. Before the conversion, there are four councilmembers who have equal power over all areas of the city. All voters can vote for or against all four. But under District Elections, while the four council members continue to have power over all areas of the city, voters can vote for or against just their own district member. That district member would constitute just one vote out of five on the full council (including the mayor), and fall short of the three votes needed to pass any legislation

Voters would therefore be stripped of 75% of their voting power over councilmembers. That would seem to be a blatant violation of the CVRA. The Ballot Measure should be amended to include a statement that under District Elections, voters can vote only for their local council member. If the City deliberately omits that provision, it would seem to involve the City in "advocacy," instead of just providing information. State law prohibits cities from spending money advocating a ballot measure.

ROBERT B. CLARK

REBUTTAL TO ARGUMENT AGAINST MEASURE S

Measure S, which has strong bi-partisan support within the El Cajon community, is about improved Localized Neighborhood Representation. It will allow our City Councilmembers the opportunity to focus on getting to know their neighbors and vote on issues based on how it will affect the neighborhoods they live in. Measure S will guarantee El Cajon citizens that someone who actually lives in their neighborhood will represent them in government.

A position on the El Cajon City Council is a part time job, but one that comes with full time responsibilities. Councilmembers have to analyze and as a group arrive at a consensus vote on complex issues based on what is right for El Cajon. Passing of Measure S will allow Councilmembers to focus on how each issue affects their neighborhood and will ensure that every citizen will have an improved opportunity to have their voice heard on El Cajon City Council decisions.

Please join your fellow citizens, community leaders, business leaders, and the East County Chamber of Commerce in support of Measure S. Let's make El Cajon a better community.

GARY KENDRICK
El Cajon City Councilmember

RICK SITTA
Heartland Fire Chief (Retired)

DAVID MIYASHIRO, Ed.D.
Superintendent, Cajon Valley USD

JEFF D. ARVAN
Police Captain (Retired)

FULL TEXT OF MEASURE S

Article 2 Form of Government

Section 201. Legislative Body; Composition, Elections and Terms

The legislative body of the City shall consist of a Mayor, who shall be elected directly, and four persons elected at-large by districts. This legislative body shall be known as the City Council, and each of its members shall be known as "Council Members."

No person shall be eligible to hold the office of Mayor, or to be elected or appointed to the office of Mayor, unless such person is a resident and registered voter of the City or territory annexed to the City at the time of filing the nomination papers or at the time of appointment to such office. To be eligible to seek election or appointment to the office of Council Member, a person must be a registered voter of the City and resident of the Council district, which that person seeks to represent at the time of filing the nomination papers for such office, or at the time of appointment to such office. The Mayor and Council Members must continue to reside as set out herein during his or her incumbency, and shall be removed from office upon ceasing to be such a resident.

The Mayor shall be elected by the qualified voters of the City directly and the each of the four Council Members shall be elected by district by the qualified voters of one of four (4) districts designated by number within the City at a general municipal election to be held on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of November of every even-numbered year. The term "by districts" shall mean the election of eligible persons, as defined herein, to the office of Council Member by voters of each district alone.

For the purpose of electing Council Members, excepting the Mayor, the City shall be divided into four (4) numbered districts before December 31, 2017. The boundaries of the four districts shall be set by ordinance of the City Council and established initially by reference to the federal decennial census of 2010. Thereafter the boundaries of such districts shall be subject to alteration and change following each federal decennial census commencing with the 2020 census, and following any annexation of territory to the City, which the Council finds results in a significant deviation from an equal number of people in each district. No later than December 31st of the year following the year in which each decennial federal census is taken, the City Council shall adopt an ordinance to divide the City into four Council districts. Any such redistricting shall become effective at the expiration of the term of the Member from the district at the time of redistricting. Prior to establishing or modifying boundaries the City shall conduct a series of public meetings throughout the community, in such locations and at such times determined by the City Council that allows residents the opportunity for reasonable participation in the mapping of districts.

The establishment of initial districts, and any subsequent boundary adjustments during a Council Member's term, shall not result in a disqualification for membership on the Council during such term.

Their terms of the Mayor and Council Members shall be staggered in the manner as existing at the time of the adoption of this Charter. They shall hold office for the period of four years from and after the date of certification of election results by the City Council and until their successors are elected, and qualified.

The members of the City Council shall not be eligible to any other office or employment with the City during the period of their incumbency, and for a period of one year following the termination of their position on the City Council.