



# Weekly Management Report

## December 27, 2024

- 1. Memo** Council Member Anthony's Request to Determine the Feasibility of Allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to Vote in Local Elections  
**City Clerk's Department**



# MEMORANDUM



## CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

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**DATE:** December 23, 2024

**TO:** Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

**FROM:** Kimberley Clark, City Clerk *Kimberley Clark*  
**BY:** Kimberley Clark, City Clerk; Linda Thai, Assistant City Clerk; and  
Melissa Dekermenji, CMC, Records Manager

**SUBJECT:** Memorandum on Council Member Anthony's Request to Determine the  
Feasibility of Allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to Vote in Local Elections

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### **BACKGROUND**

At the September 10, 2024, City Council Meeting, Council Member Anthony requested a memo on the feasibility of allowing 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in local elections.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **Youth Voting in the United States**

Currently in the United States, 12 cities allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in local elections. The cities of Takoma Park, Maryland; Hyattsville, Maryland; Greenbelt, Maryland; Riverdale Park, Maryland; Somerset, Maryland; Mount Rainier, Maryland; Chevy Chase, Maryland; Cheverly, Maryland; and Brattleboro, Vermont allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in local municipal standalone elections. The cities of Berkeley, California; Oakland, California, and Newark, New Jersey allow 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in school board contests.

#### **Youth Voting in California**

The Alameda County Registrar of Voters uses California's pre-registration system—the system that allows 16- and 17-year-olds to pre-register to vote in California as a whole—to register 16- and 17-year-olds to vote in local races.

- **Berkeley**

In 2016, Berkeley voters approved Measure Y1, which allowed 16- and 17-year-olds to vote for members of the Berkeley Unified School District Board of Directors.

Since 2020, the City of Burbank has consolidated its elections with the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk (County) in accordance with Senate Bill 415. The Burbank Unified School District contests, conducted separately from Burbank municipal elections, are also consolidated with and administered by the County.

Currently, the City Clerk's Office conducts several outreach efforts encouraging 16- and 17-year-olds to pre-register to vote so that they can participate in elections the moment they turn 18.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

While the fiscal impact is unknown, it is anticipated that there would be significant costs associated with implementing this change. If Council directs staff to proceed with a ballot measure to lower the voting age, there would be costs associated with requesting the County to place the measure on the ballot, and staff time dedicated to coordinating the ballot measure. If the ballot measure passes, additional election administration costs include updating existing voter registration system and sending and processing voting materials to eligible registered 16- and 17-year-olds. As no City in Los Angeles County currently allows 16- and 17-year olds to vote, the City must determine if the County could accommodate this request, and, if not, the cost of potentially holding our own elections.

### **CONCLUSION**

A small number of cities in the United States allow 16- and 17-year-old residents to vote, either in school board contests or in local municipal elections. No cities in Los Angeles County currently allow 16- or 17-year-olds to vote in any elections. While there may be an impact on voter turnout and civic participation, the City must consider additional factors such as privacy concerns and undue influence on minors' votes. Instituting such a change would require voters approving an amendment to the City Charter, navigating State election laws, and coordination with the County Clerk and potentially the Burbank Unified School District. Additional research is required to determine the feasibility of administering the election, as the County does not currently have a system in place for youth voting. This change is anticipated to involve significant cost to the residents of Burbank.