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Memorandum

To: Common Council
From: Brian Running
Re: Amending Wards, Aldermanic Districts, and Polling Places

Back on March 25, I sent an email to the Council warning you that we might have to act very quickly on ordinances to adjust our wards and aldermanic districts when the Supreme Court finally approved an alternate legislative district map. Our deadline for doing so, by statute, was April 10.

Of course, the Supreme Court approved a new map after April 10, so we are beyond the statutory deadline, and we now have to pass ordinances amending our wards, aldermanic districts, and polling places to conform to the new map as soon as possible. There is an August election this year, and the deadlines for filing and ballot preparation will be coming very soon.

Two ordinances are being presented – one to amend the ward descriptions in Code §1.02, and one to amend the composition of the aldermanic districts and assignment of polling places in Code §1.01 and §1.03. The ordinances are attached to the Council agenda.

The boundaries of the aldermanic districts do not change.

The new legislative district lines split some of our wards, and wards can't cross legislative district lines, so that is where the adjustments have to be made. The solution is simply to split the wards along the legislative district lines and re-name the resulting pieces. As a result, Code §1.02 creates new wards 9 and 9A, 10 and 10A, 18 and 18A, 35 and 35A, and 40 and 40A. There will now be a total of 52 wards in the city.

Section 1.01 is amended to add the "A" wards to their respective districts, and §1.03 is amended to assign the "A" wards to the correct polling places. The only real substantive change is the splitting of those five wards.

There is a possibility that there will be further legal challenges to the legislative districts, and that we might have to adjust our wards again. Don't be surprised if we have to do this again. The urgency to make rapid changes will only increase as we get closer to August and November election dates and their respective filing deadlines.

We ask that you suspend Council Rule 7 to waive the three readings and pass the ordinances as presented.