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# City of Detroit

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TO: Council Member Latisha Johnson, Chairperson  
Internal Operations Standing Committee

FROM: David Whitaker, Director   
Legislative Policy Division

DATE: May 6, 2022

RE: Community Advisory Council Formation

Council Member Gabriela Santiago-Romero requested the Legislative Policy Division provide a report on how City Council proceeds with the establishment of Community Advisory Councils. The following addresses this request.

Community Advisory Councils (CACs) were created as part of the 2012 Charter revision, effective as of 2014.

Pursuant to Section 9-102 of the Detroit City Charter:

City Council shall by ordinance establish seven (7) Community Advisory Councils upon receipt of a petition from the residents of districts created under [Section 9-101](#). The petitions shall be signed by a number of qualified registered voters who are residents of a district equal to not less than ten (10) percent of the number of persons voting at the last municipal general election in the district.

CACs are established by ordinance upon petition of city residents. Therefore, the CAC is not formally created until the required number of petitions are received and approved. Once established, City Council's involvement in the actual formation is very limited.

Pursuant to city of Detroit Charter sec. 9-102 Creation and Composition of Advisory councils.

Duties specific to City Council members are as follows:

- City council shall by ordinance establish seven (7) Community Advisory Councils upon receipt of a petition from the residents of districts created under Section 9-101.
- City Council shall establish by ordinance a procedure for the selection and appointment of the high school member and senior issues representative on Community Advisory Councils.

In addition, Section. 9-103 Powers, Duties and Limitations.

Provides for the following:

- The City Council member elected from the non at large district in which a Community Advisory Council resides, or their designee, shall attend all official meetings of that Community Advisory Council
- City Council shall, by ordinance, prescribe uniform procedures, for the exercise of the powers and duties for all Community Advisory Councils. Included in those powers and duties shall be the provision that a community council may require that the City Council representative receive prior consultation from the Community Advisory Council on all issues which relate exclusively to that district.
- CACs meet annually with City Council to discuss the challenges confronting the district and the resources required to advance the interest and support the viability of the district.

Currently, only two districts have formed CACs. District seven, in 2014 and District 4, in 2020. CACs are advisory in nature and the establishment in each district is **optional**. There have been initiatives to establish CACs in various districts throughout the city. These efforts have been led by grass roots groups as well as elected officials, thus far only two districts have been successful in establishing CACs.

### **When can candidates run?**

Candidates may run for elected office at the next election occurring in the city after the creation of the Community Advisory Council.

### **Is it possible to make an appointment to the community advisory council outside of an election year?**

Yes, it is possible, however there are only two instances where this can occur.

Pursuant to the Detroit City Code

## **Article II Community Advisory Councils**

### **Sec. 12-2-22. – Elected members; and terms.**

(d) If a vacancy occurs in an elected member position, it shall be filled by appointment by the city council member elected to represent that district. The person appointed shall serve until an elected member takes office. The election to fill the vacant position shall occur at the next general election in the City to be held not sooner than 180 days after occurrence of the vacancy.

**Sec. 12-2-23. - Appointed members; terms; and excessive absences.**

- (a) There shall be two members appointed to the Community Advisory Council by City Council from a list of names for each appointed position provided by the current elected Community Advisory Council members, and *bona fide* residents of that district, submitted to the Office of the City Clerk by January 31st of each new term:

If a vacancy occurs an appointment can be made by the City Council member in the district allowing someone to serve until an elected member takes office. Both the senior and youth members are to be appointed by Council from a list of names provided by the elected CAC members and bona fide residents of that district, by January 31<sup>st</sup> of the new term. If this does not occur the council member representing the district can make the appointment.

In both instances, appointments can be made outside of an election year. A vacancy by an elected member of the CAC can be filled by an appointment by the district Council Member outside of an election year. In addition, the requirement that the senior and youth representatives be appointed by January 31<sup>st</sup> of the new term places this appointment outside of an election year.

If there are additional questions or need for further analysis, LPD remains at your service.