

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 4, 2023
TO: City Council, City of Greenbelt
FROM: Board of Elections
RE: Proposed Charter and Code Amendments:
Voting by Noncitizens

The Board of Elections earlier submitted proposed legislation to permit noncitizen residents to vote in City elections.

As shown in the proposal, Charter would be amended in several places, to authorize Council to set out requirements and a process for noncitizen voting. Then the Election Code, Chapter 8 of the City Code, would provide for noncitizen registration and voting procedures.

Because these changes to City law represent a significant altering of voting rights, with a new registration process in the Clerk's office, the Board would respectfully suggest that the question be put to the voters in referendum. Then, if Greenbelt voters approve the proposal, Council could amend Charter and Code as proposed, with or without modifications, and the program could be given effect in the next election.

The referendum question could be presented in language such as this:

Should residents who are not U.S. citizens be allowed to vote in City elections if they meet certain residency requirements? Please vote "Yes" or "No."

In the absence of referendum, and if Council approves the changes, Charter and Code may be amended in the usual way.