

MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 16, 2023
TO: City Council, City of Greenbelt
FROM: Board of Elections *SMG/BA*
RE: Proposed Code Amendments:
Early Voting

The Board of Elections submits for Council review proposed Code amendments concerning early voting.

As the Board has advised and Council members have noted, Greenbelt in election years offers early voting during almost all of October, though voters use the procedure far less often than other methods. Most voters in 2021 voted on election day, and almost as many used the mail-in procedure, despite practical problems. Early voting came in a distant third. The Board and Clerk's Office saw only a few voters, and sometimes none, on early voting days in the last election.

Because the Board is encouraging voting on election day or by mail-in, with improved mail-in procedures and paper (not machine) ballots, and because we believe voters will find mail-in voting a good substitute for early voting, we recommend that early voting take place in Greenbelt East, Central, and West on the weekend, Saturday and Sunday, before election day. (Another option would be to authorize early voting on Friday and Saturday). This we think will allow sufficient early voting times while providing full and efficient coverage at all three locations.

Enclosure: First Enclosed Draft 16 March 2023

BOE3075CouncilMemoEarlyVotingDraft

FIRST ENCLOSED DRAFT 16 MARCH 2023

CODE AMENDMENTS:
EARLY VOTING

Sec. 8-13. Early voting.

(a) Residents of the city who are qualified voters [registered with the Prince George's County Board of Elections] have the right to vote by early voting in municipal elections, as provided in this section.

(b) [For purposes of this Code, an "early voting ballot" is a ballot not used in a polling place on election day nor for "absentee voting," and "election day" means the day of a municipal election.

(c)] Voting by early voting in municipal elections shall be as follows:

(1) Early voting will [begin on the third Saturday prior to the election and end on the first Friday prior to the election on the following schedule: Third Saturday (9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) and third Sunday (11 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.) prior to the election in Greenbelt East; second Saturday (9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) and second Sunday (11 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.) prior to the election in Greenbelt West; and Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) and Tuesdays (9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.) in the municipal building throughout this period] *take place on the last Saturday and Sunday prior to election day, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Early voting ballots may be cast in Greenbelt West (Spring Hill Lake Rec Center), Greenbelt Central (Community Center), or Greenbelt East (Schrom Hills Park Rec Center), or such other locations in Greenbelt East, Central, and West the board of elections may designate. A voter may use any polling place, without regard to residence.*

(Ord. No. 1302, 8-10-09)

KEY:

[Brackets] indicate deletions from existing law.

Italics indicate additions to existing law.

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