



City of Costa Mesa

Agenda Report

77 Fair Drive
Costa Mesa, CA 92626

File #: 22-625

Meeting Date: 4/5/2022

TITLE:

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTRAR OF VOTERS BALLOT DROP BOX LICENSE AGREEMENT

DEPARTMENT: CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE/CITY CLERK DIVISION

PRESENTED BY: BRENDA GREEN, CITY CLERK

CONTACT INFORMATION: BRENDA GREEN, CITY CLERK, (714) 754-5221

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends the City Council:

Approve the License Agreement with the Orange County Registrar of Voters (ROV) for placement of Official Ballot Drop Box on City property at the Boys and Girls Club of Costa Mesa.

BACKGROUND:

The California Voter's Choice Act (VCA) requires counties to provide at least one ballot drop box location for every 15,000 registered voters. Ballot drop boxes are designed for outdoor placement in public locations and have preventative security measures such as anti-vandalism coating.

Voters can deposit their ballot at any time at a ballot drop box starting 30 days before the election and until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day. Ballot drop boxes are open 24 hours a day during the voting period. Ballot drop boxes are closed and secured during non-voting periods.

The ROV and the City has located a site on City property that meets the criteria for placement of a ballot drop box. The site is at the Boys and Girls Club of Costa Mesa. The Boys and Girls Club of Costa Mesa has agreed to place the ballot box on the premises. Additionally, the ballot box does not interfere with the day-to-day operations of the Boys and Girls Club. Attachment 1 to this report contains a map of the current ballot box locations, plus the proposed site.

The ROV requests that the City enter into License Agreement for the placement of the ballot drop box at the site. The agreement would allow the County to place and maintain the ballot drop box for a period of up to five years. The County would install, maintain and remove the ballot drop box. The County has taken measures to make the box as impervious to vandalism and damage as possible. However, should that occur, the County would remove or repair any vandalism or damage to the box. City Staff would not install, maintain or remove the ballot drop boxes.

ANALYSIS:

A Ballot Drop Box is a secure and locked receptacle where a voter can drop off their vote-by-mail ballot in the same manner they would at a mailbox. Ballots will only be picked up by election officials from the ROV. In 2019, City Council approved ballot boxes on City property at the Mesa Verde Library and Tewinkle Park.

Ballot Drop Box locations has been determined through a joint effort between City staff and the ROV and must consider the criteria outlined in the Voter's Choice Act (VCA). Examples of those criteria include proximity to public transportation hubs, communities with historically low vote-by-mail usage, proximity to population centers, proximity to voters with disabilities, proximity to communities with low vehicle ownership, proximity to low-income communities, and traffic patterns. Additionally, proximity to Voting Center sites was also a consideration.

The VCA allows counties in California to provide voters more options on how, when, and where they cast their ballots during an election. With the adoption of the VCA in February 2019 by the County of Orange Board of Supervisors, beginning in 2020, all voters in Orange County will receive a vote-by-mail ballot and will be able to mail, with no postage necessary, or drop off their ballot at any Vote Center located within the County or place inside a secure Ballot Drop Box. These options offer more flexibility, access, and convenience when casting their vote. The County of Orange will manage delivery, installation, and all expenses.

ALTERNATIVES:

City Council may choose not to approve the License Agreement and/or direct staff to find an alternative location.

FISCAL REVIEW:

There are no costs to the City for the addition of the ballot box.

LEGAL REVIEW:

City Attorney has reviewed this report and agreement and has approved them as to form.

CITY COUNCIL GOALS AND PRIORITIES:

This item is administrative in nature.

CONCLUSION:

Staff recommends the City Council:

Approve the License Agreement with the Orange County Registrar of Voters (ROV) for placement of Official Ballot Drop Box on City property at the Boys and Girls Club of Costa Mesa.