

**Memorandum
City Manager's Office
City of Tempe**



To: Mayor and Council
Through: Andrew Ching, City Manager
From: Kristin Gwinn, Council Aide
Date: July 29, 2015
Subject: Proposed Charter Amendment – Publicly Financed Elections

BACKGROUND:

In February 2015, the City Council gave direction to create a working group to explore the feasibility of a publicly funded campaign system for city elections, similar to the Arizona Clean Elections system.

The Working Group engaged with a number of stakeholders (including the Arizona Advocacy Network, Maricopa County Elections, Arizona Clean Elections Commission, and community members) to evaluate each element of the statewide system. The group determined that a similar program at the municipal level would increase transparency and greatly limit the influence of political action committees and special-interest money in Tempe's elections.

Enactment of the proposed Tempe Clean and Transparent Campaigns (TCTC) program would require a charter amendment passed by the voters along with an accompanying ordinance detailing the program.

The proposed charter amendment and ordinance would establish the TCTC and provide for the following:

- An increase in the Prosecution Assessment Fees and Public Safety Enhancement Charges imposed on penalties assessed by the Tempe Municipal Court. The City estimates that a new fee of \$5 would generate about \$100,000 per year or \$200,000 per election cycle for the TCTC program.
- Candidate funding in the amount of \$25,000 per election for council candidates and \$50,000 per election for mayoral candidates, subject to funding availability.
- Establishment of an Independent Oversight Committee, a public body charged with making decisions (including conclusions of law and findings of fact) and enforcing violations
- Regulation of expenditures and contributions similar to Arizona's Clean Elections System.

The program and provisions of the ordinance would be outlined in a summary available to voters prior to the March election.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The COW working group recommends that the Council forward the proposed charter amendment to the next available RCM for consideration, and direct the drafting of an accompanying ordinance based on the included overview, to be forwarded to the next available RCM once completed.

Councilmembers on the Working Group

Councilmember David Schapira
Councilmember Lauren Kuby
Councilmember Kolby Granville

Staff Members assigned to the Working Group

Elizabeth Higgins, Chief of Staff to the Mayor and Council
Kristin Gwinn, Council Aide
Brigitta Kuiper, City Clerk
Judi Baumann, City Attorney
Nikki Ripley, Communications and Media Relations Manager