
**INFORMAL STAFF REPORT
TO MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL**

SUBJECT:

Resolution encouraging the Denton County Commissioners Court to adopt countywide vote centers.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

On October 17, 2023, Council Member McGee presented a two-minute pitch to consider a resolution encouraging the Denton County Commissioners Court to establish countywide vote centers. The Council did not reach the necessary consensus of six Council Members to place the proposal on a future agenda as a resolution. However, the Council directed staff to gather additional information to present back to the Council.

BACKGROUND:

“Vote center” is a term used to define a model of voting where a voter can cast their vote at any Election Day polling location instead of just the one that is assigned to their voting precinct. In Texas, it is also called the Countywide Polling Place Program.

In 2009, the Texas Legislature authorized the Countywide Polling Place Program, which enables participating counties to allow voting at any polling location on Election Day. Until 2021, Denton County was precluded from participating because any participating county must exclusively use direct recording electronic (DRE) voting systems at all polling places. While Denton County has utilized a paper voting system since 2017, it is eligible to participate in the Countywide Polling Place Program.

Currently, Denton County voters can cast their vote at any Early Voting location in the County but must vote at their assigned precinct on Election Day.

DISCUSSION:

To implement a countywide voting program, Denton County must submit an application to the State following the guidelines outlined in Texas Election Code Section 43.007. As of September 2024, the County expressed no intentions to pursue this program.

CONCLUSION:

The City does not have the authority to compel the County to participate in the Countywide Polling Place Program; thus, further consideration of this proposal is not recommended.

STAFF CONTACT:

Kristi Fogle
Chief of Staff
Kristi.Fogle@cityofdenton.com
(940) 349-8565

REQUESTOR: Council Member Brandon McGee

STAFF TIME TO COMPLETE REPORT: 2.5 hours

PARTICIPATING DEPARTMENTS: City Manager’s Office, City Secretary’s Office