



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

COUNTY OF SONOMA

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Unincorporated Governance Charter

Background

The Board of Supervisors established the Unincorporated Governance Ad Hoc on January 1, 2023 to provide direction to staff on exploring governance solutions for unincorporated areas of Sonoma County. The Ad Hoc will focus on the acquisition or improved delivery of specific types of governance services that are either lacking or insufficient in the unincorporated areas.

The County's Community Investment Program allocates \$175,000 each year from Transient Occupancy Tax to support District Formation activities. This policy recognizes that rural areas of Sonoma County are experiencing an increased need for municipal services. These District Formation funds may be used for professional services to establish Special Districts that will enable communities to provide self-generated funding to address municipal challenges.

On December 14, 2021, the Board of Supervisors (BOS) approved use of District Formation Funds in the amount of \$152,500 for District 1 and \$152,500 for District 5. On May 3, 2022, the BOS allocated \$152,500 each for the remaining districts (2, 3, and 4) to be used for district formation related activities. The County Administrator's Office is supporting each Supervisorial District to utilize these funds to explore services in unincorporated communities to identify potential alternate governance and service options.

Committee Members

Susan Gorin, First District Supervisor
Lynda Hopkins, Fifth District Supervisor

Committee Duration

The Unincorporated Governance Ad Hoc Committee will be convened for a limited term through December 2023, unless extended by the Board of Supervisors.

County Department, Resources

Christina Rivera, County Administrator
Christel Querijero, County Administrator's Office
Maggie Fleming, County Administrator's Office
Robert Pittman, County Counsel

Outcomes

The desired outcome is to identify strategies for local areas to gain more access and/or funding for services. Furthermore, the Ad Hoc committee seeks to identify which communities in unincorporated areas of Sonoma

County are suited or positioned to be annexed, incorporated, or receive services through the formation of new districts. The Ad Hoc committee will direct staff in preparing information to support the Board of Supervisors in deciding whether to pursue additional work to support unincorporated communities in exploring incorporation and/or district formation.

Deliverables and Timeline:

In May 2023, staff will bring the draft Charter to the Board of Supervisors for review and approval. In July 2023, staff will provide an update to the Board of Supervisors on District Formation Fund activities and options for governance solutions for unincorporated areas. Staff will look to the full Board for direction on whether to move forward with further unincorporated governance deliverables.