

Explanatory Statement

The volunteer Charter Commission recommended amending the City Charter to streamline Council approval of utility franchise agreements by removing outdated, burdensome and redundant requirements. A utility franchise agreement authorizes a utility to use City streets to provide residents with utility services.

Currently, Chapter 10, Article 2 of the Charter requires City Council to use a lengthy and outdated process that can take over six months to complete. For example, the entire franchise – which can run 25 pages or longer – must be published in the newspaper.

Under the Commission's recommendation, outdated and redundant requirements specific to franchise agreements would be deleted. Instead, Council would grant franchises using its standard ordinance process. The standard process includes ordinance publication, public testimony, and adoption and effective date provisions located in Charter and code.