

2021 ICRC Project Management Timeline for 2031 Commission

Produce an Austin City Council district map, select 14 Independent Citizens Redistricting (ICRC) commissioners and hire three staff members after the U.S. Census is taken every 10 years beginning March 1 of each year ending in the number one and ending on November 1 of the same year.

In June of 2030 the City Auditor will start the process of selecting commissioners (see Final Report). The first eight commissioners will be in place by January 23, 2031. Those eight will select then final six commissioners and must have the commission fully established no later than March 1, 2031. The 2021 ICRC recommends the 2031 commission begin the process much earlier. Below are their recommendations:

2031

February
(first week)

- Have entire commission in place by end of February
- Recommend the 2031 ICRC consider applicants' availability throughout the process and the distribution of needed skills on the commission. Select candidates that will complement the ICRC commissioners selected through the random process.
- Name chair and vice chair, after commission is in place
- Request city email addresses

February
(last week)

- Deadline for reviewing final applications for commission seats set by City Charter is February 28 (2021 ICRC recommends starting earlier)
- Start trainings, after entire commission in place
(Complete by end of April)
 - Texas Open Meetings Act (complete within 90 days of being sworn in)
 - Public Information Act (complete within 90 days of being sworn in)
 - City Email
 - City Email Security
 - Social Media form and any other forms required by city
- Name chair and vice chair, after commission is in place

March
(first week)

- Deadline for ICRC to be fully established is March 1 (2021 ICRC recommends starting earlier; the 2021 ICRC had a total of 20 regular meetings)
- Make committee and working group assignments
 - o Hiring and finance committees should be staffed first, since expenses begin and help running meeting is needed
 - o Public forums, public relations/advertising and final report committee members should be named
 - o If haven't already, name chair and vice chair
- Review City Charter, Roadmap to Redistricting, Voting

Rights Act

- and Robert's Rules of Order (League of Women Voters offer trainings)
- Adopt rules of operation, which includes times and locations for general meetings

March
(second week)

- Finance committee should:
 - o Establish a budget soon after formation on March 1 and get appropriation request on the Austin City Council's agenda. Expenses start immediately. Budget should be based on expected costs pertaining to staff, communications (advertising in media), want ads, public hearings and estimated incidental expenses. The total amount allotted the 2021 ICRC was \$150,000
 - o Prioritize an advertising budget to promote public forums and meeting ASAP. (Example: For recruitment of commissioners, the city spent at least \$20K with one radio media outlet, not including all other efforts such as mailers. Recommend budgeting the equivalent of one staff member's compensation for promotions to drive critical public awareness and engagement. This will be needed to cover about five - seven media outlets and agency cost (approximately 15%) of the ad budget, not including creative fees (if needed).
 - o Meet with city liaison and financial manager in the Management Services Dept., to understand the payroll system of the City of Austin

*(Liaison sends contracts created by the ICRC for administrative manager, mapping specialist and legal counsel to city legal department, after it is signed by city, ICRC and contractor it gets sent to Buyer; the Buyer is a person in purchasing office that makes sure funds are set aside to pay those vendors; once money is set aside invoices can be sent to liaison for fulfillment, who will send the invoices to the purchasing office so checks can be cut and mailed.);

- o Create contracts for administrative manager, legal counsel and mapping specialist.
- o Ask for ICRC credit card for incidentals that will be needed by the administrative manager for public forums and office supplies, snacks, drinks, etc. (A recommended work-around is to purchase gift cards for incidentals such as snacks and drinks for commission meetings)

-Hiring committee:

- o Request job descriptions from previous ICRC and revise as needed
- o Create hiring criteria (rubric) for administrative manager, legal counsel and mapping specialist that commissioners can use to score candidates (Rubric can be used to narrow down candidates as well as by the rest of commission to rate candidates during/after interviews)
- o 2021 ICRC found it helpful to hire an administrative manager with public relations/media experience and to hire the same firm for the legal and mapping roles with redistricting experience. As other cities and states will also be redistricting at the same time, it's critical to begin the job posting and hiring process immediately
- o Create salary requirements
- o Post job ad notices immediately after criteria and salary is set on Indeed, Zip Recruiter, newspapers, radio, city site
- o Schedule applicants interviews during public meetings by end of the month

-Public Relations Committee:

- o This working group is charged with three tasks:

1. writing or proofing press releases (if written by administrative manager)
 2. Promoting events, including public forums, key milestones and deadlines, methods for submitting public testimony (Begin advertising at least two weeks prior to any series of events and establish regular advertising frequency to build awareness)
 - creating and posting social media updates
 - updating the ICRC's city-owned and independently owned websites
 - creating media plan for advertisements or creating a request for proposal (RFP) for media planning agency with ad creative and ad buying expertise to do so
 - hiring agency or building in-house by mid-April
 - Handling citizen communication and outreach
 3. Handling citizen communication and outreach
 - Recommend setting a deadline for public response to preliminary map
- ◇ In 2021, administrative manager handled emails, mail, phone calls, press communications and press releases. Website administration and marketing platform were executed by administrative manager working in conjunction with the public relations working group and in 2013 commissioners were appointed to each task
 - ◇ 2021 ICRC split responsibilities for social media, website, and advertising due to volume of work noted above, which helped to streamline for efficiency.
 - o Create or get a Dropbox link from city (to share files)
 - o Request social media credentials (usernames/passwords) from previous ICRC/City as appropriate (ie. Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Speakup! Austin, Redistricttx.org etc.)
 - o Request city website credentials (Speakup! Austin and RedistrictATX.org)
 - o Request logo files from previous ICRC/city

- o Coordinate with the city PIO ASAP about communications (ie. City will want to have complete jurisdiction over posts. Establish that the shortened time frame and independent status does not allow for this)
 - o Meet with city atx department, who record and mic all meetings for the city to understand their deadlines
- *Note: Establish with the City that communications will be made and distributed on a shortened time frame and that the ICRC's independent status does not allow for city management of ICRC communications. It will be crucial to establish that an expedited time frame for posting press releases will need to be accommodated by the city

March
(third/fourth week)

-2030 U.S. Census release date

April
(first week)

-City of Austin demographer should speak to commission at regular meeting about findings in new U.S. Census numbers

-Public Forums Committee should decide on potential

dates for

the first 10 public forums and should be voted on by ICRC

- o Recommended dates May-June
- o Determine locations (recommend getting list of city buildings/venues available free of charge and securing a booking immediately)
- o Use first 10 district forums to gain further feedback and reception on the preliminary map, as well as input on the redistricting process in general

-Create document and script for upcoming public forums (2021 ICRC chair and vice chair created a PowerPoint for forums)

-Determine a way to address questions asked by public at

events

-Hiring Committee should have legal counsel and mapping specialist in place

- o Set regular meeting time with Chair and Vice Chair
- o Sign up as a city vendors through liaison

manager in

- o Sign and turn in ICRC contract
- Hiring Committee should have an administrative

place

- o Set regular meeting time with Chair and Vice Chair
- o Sign up as a city vendors through liaison
- o Sign and turn in ICRC contract
- o Meet with all committee chairs, city liaison, city PIO, city financial manager in the Management Services Dept. to understand the payroll system of the city of Austin and how to charge incidentals, City Clerks 'Office administrative assistant to understand how agendas are posted for the city
- o Get Robert's Rules of Order training from the League of Women Voters.
- o Schedule trainings
 - Texas Open Meetings Act
 - Public Information
 - City Email and City Email Security
 - Social Media Form from City
- o Solicit commissioners biographies and photos (mug shots)
- o Maintaining calendar and public hearing schedule
- o Post maps, photos, events
- o Gather public comments

April
(third week)

- Have commission finalize script and public forum procedures in a regular meeting
- Public Relations Committee should begin PR and

advertising for

- first 10 public forums for May and June
- materials/campaign for the first 10 public forums for May and June
 - o Recommend setting a deadline for public response to preliminary map

current

- Have mapping specialist give a presentation on the

district map place May

- o Explain his/her mapping methodology
- o Explain U.S. Census data
- o Explain the mapping process
- o Explain the mapping software

- Mapping specialist give a presentation on the current district map place May

April (fourth week)

- First of 10 public forums should take place
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)

May
(second week)

- Second of 10 public forums should take place
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)
- Commissioners complete the Attorney General's online training in Texas Open Meetings Act and Public Information Act (within 90 days of being sworn in)
- Public Relations Committee should continue media buys and publicizing public forums with deadline for public input
- Commission should hear from city mapper in a public meeting
 - o Explain mapping software
 - o Explain mapping methodology
 - o Explain how city will work with ICRC mapping specialist to create maps for general public to view

May
(third week)

- Third and fourth of 10 public forum should take place
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)

May
(fourth week)

- Fifth of 10 public forums should take place
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)

June
(first week)

- Sixth of 10 public forums should take place

- o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)
 - Public Forums Committee should decide on potential dates for the second round public forums (4 total) as well as the last series of 2 and should be voted on by ICRC in a regular meeting
 - o Recommended dates for 4 public forums in different precincts July-August
 - o Recommended dates for last 2 public forums in North and South Austin early September
 - o Determine locations
 - Public Relations Committee should continue media buys and publicizing public forums with deadline for public input
- June (second week)
- Seventh and eighth of 10 public forums should take place
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)
- June (third week)
- Ninth of 10 public forums should take place
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)
- June (fourth week)
- Tenth of 10 public forums should take place
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)
- July (first week)
- Recommend mapping specialist meet with each commissioner one-on-one publicly to answer questions about the process
 - Summaries of all 10 public forum comments and emails received should be completed by administrative manager and disseminated to ICRC, mapping specialist and legal counsel

- Public Relations Committee should begin creating and placing advertising and PR campaigns for the second and third series of public forums August and September
 - o Decide on what outlets to advertise in
 - o Decide on budget for the two months
 - o Make media buys to start publicizing public forums
 - o Recommend setting a deadline for public to response map
- Public Forums Committee should finalize final round of public forums (2 one North of Lady Bird Lake and one South of Lady Bird Lake)
 - o Recommended dates for last 2 public forums in North and South Austin in October
 - o Determine location

July
(second week)

- Recommend mapping specialist meet with each commissioner one-on-one publicly to answer questions about the process
- Public Relations Committee should begin PR and advertising campaigns for publicizing the preliminary map to get feedback for the next 14 days as well as for the second series of public forums in July and September
 - o Make media buys to start publicizing preliminary map and second series of public forums (4 total) in July and September

July
(third week)

- Recommend mapping specialist present first draft of a preliminary map to the ICRC during the general meeting.
- Recommend commission discuss and provide suggested edits, vote and adopt the preliminary map
 - *Note: Charter states: written public comment shall be taken for at least 14 days from the date of public display of the approved preliminary plan
 - o Recommend reserving two consecutive dates for general meetings in case map is not approved
- Public Relations Committee should decide after preliminary plan is voted on: immediately place PR and advertising campaigns for publicizing the preliminary map to get feedback for the next 14 days as well as for the second series of public forums in July and September

- o Make media buys to start publicizing preliminary map and second series of public forums (4 total) in July and September
- o Recommend setting a deadline for public to response map

July
(fourth week)

–Public Relations Committee should place PR and advertising campaigns for publicizing the preliminary map to get feedback for the next 14 days as well as for the second series of public forums in September

- o Make media buys to start publicizing preliminary map and second series of public forums (4 total) in July and September
- o Recommend setting a deadline for public to response map

August
(first week)

–Summaries of final preliminary map feedback should be compiled by administrative manager 14 days after approval of preliminary map.

*Note: Charter states: written public comment shall be taken for at least 14 days from the date of public display of the approved preliminary plan

–Public relations committee should schedule/buy placements for PR and advertising campaigns to publicize the second series of public forums in September and October

- o Recommend setting a deadline for public response to map

August
(second week)

–Recommend administrative manager disseminate to ICRC, mapping specialist and legal counsel final feedback on preliminary map

August
(third week)

–Public Relations Committee should continue media buys and publicizing public forums with deadline for public input

August

(fourth week)

- Recommends holding first of 4 public forums in each county precinct
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)
- Public Relations Committee should decide on promotional materials/campaign for publicizing the second series of public forums in September
 - o Make media buys to start publicizing 4 public forums in September
 - o Recommend setting a deadline for public to response map

September
(first week)

- Recommend holding second of 4 public forums in each county precinct
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)

September
(second week)

- Recommend holding third of 4 public forums in each county precinct
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)

September
(third week)

- Recommend holding fourth of 4 public forums in each county precinct
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)

September
(fourth week)

- Summaries of second series of 4 public forum comments and emails received should be completed by administrative manager and disseminated to ICRC, mapping specialist and legal counsel

October
(first week)

- Recommend mapping specialist present the first draft of a final map to the ICRC during the general meeting. Commission discusses and provides suggested edits, votes and adopts the first draft of a final map
 - o Recommend reserving two consecutive dates for general meetings in case map is not approved
 - o Public relations committee should immediately post map drafts on websites and promote in press release, social media and ad campaigns to solicit public input
- Recommend holding first of 2 public forums in North and South Austin
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)
 - Purchase frames for maps to give to commissioners
 - Notify city auditor through city liaison of timeline for certification
 - Hire notary for the certification of final map (city clerks' office has notary)
 - Hire photographer to document certification of final map

October
(second week)

- Recommend holding second of two public forums in North and South Austin
 - o Administrative manager should summarize public forum public comments and emails received into one document after each forum ([See](#) appendix E)
- Summaries of third and final series of 2 public forum comments and emails received should be completed by administrative manager and disseminated to ICRC, mapping specialist and legal counsel

October
(third week)

specialist
input

- Recommend certifying of final map, after mapping and ICRC work to redraw final map with public

- o Recommend reserving two consecutive dates for general meetings in case map is not approved
- o Public relations committee should immediately post final map drafts on websites and promote in press release, social media and ad campaigns to solicit public input

October
(fourth week)

for

– Recommends using this time to gather documentation certifying and submission of final map

November
(first week)

–Recommend submitting final map to Austin City Council
–City Charter states final plan should be adopted no later than Nov. 1

December
(first week)
Travis

–Recommend submitting final report and hearing from County voter registrar on its redistricting

January
(first week)

–Recommend hearing from city clerk's office about records retention