

PORTLAND CHARTER COMMISSION

PUBLIC COMMENT REPORT

Date range: November 22, 2021 to December 9, 2021

From November 22, 2021 to December 9, 2021, at 8:00 a.m., **63 public comments** were submitted through the online public comment form and via email. One out of the 63 comments was made on behalf of a community-based organization. To date, we've received 699 public comments. Below is a breakdown and comparison of the public comments received for this comment period and to date.

Raw public comments received from November 22, 2021 to December 9, 2021. Attachments below.

Public comments:

I offered to Ms. Meier and the Charter Commission about a year ago a proposal to create a Police Commission for the City of Portland. I also spoke to her about some other specific governance proposals. I have been keeping track of the Charter Commission's progress, and I was wondering at what point a specific proposal like mine would be considered by the commission.

My proposal has generated some recent press, as you'll see in the link below, and it notes that my plan has been received by the Charter Review Commission to be put in the pipeline.

<https://pamplinmedia.com/pt/9-news/528715-422712-defund-the-police-rhetoric-haunts-progressive-candidates>

Please let me know if you have questions, or how I can be of service to you all.

Safe Rest Villages a great idea unless Portland's city council is managing it.

Years to get 6 sites that holds a small fraction of 300 homeless at a cost of \$16 million! Why the hell should tiny sheds on that small scale cost \$16 million! How in fucks sake will you ever be able to have a plan that gets a significant amount of homeless off the streets? It's called a state of emergency so treat it as one!

You guys keep thinking we are all stupid and haven't caught on to this put a bandaid on it governing style, blast it on the news to make you look like you are achieving something....bull shit.

Here's an idea..... do the right thing for Portland and dissolve our current form of government to one that is actually effective. That is the only viable answers anymore.

Let's all pray 🙏 this Charter is capable of being bold and has the courage to do what needs to be done and save PDX!

How can we represent the cities of the future if we are stuck in a lame government of the past?

If you can't figure out how to get 5000 homeless into shelter that helps them for a what a decade now.....you sure as hell won't figure out Police Reform.

We are so fucked!

Are you feeling under appreciated? Well boo hoo just go ask the Police about that after you totally screwed up attempts at Police Reform.

Our government is built to be in chaos in a real crisis which should tell you that it really doesn't work when not in crisis either. Too many cooks in the kitchen in jobs they are not qualified to do with biased self centered objectives.

What could go wrong? Look around!

No longer a Democrat....waiting for a third party.

A resident and worker for 34+ years in Portland, I wholeheartedly encourage a complete reorganization of our govt. model more in line with what other cities have. The current Mayor and City Council model should go.

I encourage the reform commission to consider city councilors who represent certain parts of town. The at-large positions now routinely discriminate against the east side of town.

I encourage a form of government that requires audits and follow up actions. Currently we have auditors reporting problems but we don't have course corrections. The problems continue. (PBOT, PDC for example)

I believe we need to have an emergency vote to change the commissioner based form of government in Portland. I don't think we should wait a year. This city is in crisis and people are getting hurt. I don't know if this vote can be moved to happen sooner but change needs to happen now! Thx for listening!! I Hope

Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different outcome has been defined as "insanity" and "stupid." Continuing a form of government

That we have proven many times that it does not work and is unaccountable to the community. Failure to support a change is outrageous as incompetent or irresponsible. Any council members not supporting a change in form of government need to be replaced.

Do Something different it is the only path to improvement. We need accountability.

Thank you Mingus Mapps for having courage to put Portland's future over self.

Most have no idea how truly ineffective our Government is and that it is to blame for all of this chaos. Please continue to educate the people. Portlanders are not stupid just uninformed.

All of you should be saying loudly what Mapps has the courage to put out there in an effective way. It's time for a new Government.

We will no longer be kept in the dark so politicians can get a paycheck and feel empowered pushing a fucking pen around to nowhere for a decade of ineffectiveness! How much more proof do you guys need that your very positions are the problem?

Thank you Mingus Mapps. You give me hope.

CHARTER please be bold! Kick this clown show to the curb. Don't let fear stand in the way of real change. The time is NOW. 🙏 Give us one leader with power we can hold accountable through a vote that counts.

The current system of government is broken. We must reform the charter commission to serve the needs of the public, create accountability and break deadlock.

Dear Charter Commissioners,
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As you work towards reforming City Council elections and our current form of government, you have the opportunity to address many of the structural barriers preventing us from taking meaningful action of the issues that plague this city.

Portland is now the "city that doesn't work anymore". Problems of trash, inadequate access to open spaces, unemployment, lack of drug rehab and health care, and housing unavailability used to be confined to Blacks Indigenous, People of Color, women, students, working people, people with disabilities, older adults and others who "didn't matter" to the City Council. Now they affect the whole city.

Fixing the city therefore requires an equitable approach to these problems, through charter reforms centered in social

and environmental justice. Climate action is vital for Portland, because most of downtown will be under water if climate change is not addressed. Can we build a more equitable, collaborative, strategic, and community-driven city in place of what we have now? Will charter reform be part of the solution, or part of the problem?

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With all the problems facing Portland today, I feel that our current form of government is not working. We would be better served if our commissioners were a legislative body, representing various sections of the city. To insure accountability and responsibility, we would be better served if we had a city manager, selected by the commissioners.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I'm writing to encourage that you center environmental justice and climate action in the Charter Review process. As you work towards reforming City Council elections and our current form of government in Phase I, you have the opportunity to address many of the structural barriers preventing us from taking meaningful climate action.

Through charter reforms centered in environmental justice, we can not only open the door to climate action, but build a more equitable, collaborative, strategic, and community-driven city.

Our city is facing intersecting challenges - from high rates of poverty and homelessness to deep racial injustice to the worsening effects of the climate crisis. The Charter Review is a once-in-a-decade chance to comprehensively address the most pressing issues facing our city.

Environmental justice also calls on us to uplift the people closest to these problems as essential and equal partners in building solutions - communities of color, low-income communities, and so many others living on the front lines of these crises. I urge you to embed this practice into your work on the Charter Review as a whole and in the selection of your subcommittees for Phase II of the Charter Review process. Through this collaboration, we can uproot our most deep-seated challenges together and transform our city for the better.

Go to Eugene and see how they handle the homeless parks. The land is not destroyed, it's clean.

You guys created this mess. YOU should be responsible for keeping it cleaned and safe for everyone!

This is unacceptable! At the very least CLEAN YOUR DAMN MESS UP! You should be managing all these areas where you allow anyone to live. If you can't even do that how the hell will you manage them at facilities?

Our city is a total SHIT HOLE now ON YOUR WATCH!

NO MORE COMMISSIONERS! We don't care anymore what you say. We know it's meaningless. The only thing you can say of any value is educating the public about getting rid of your positions and the worst city government in the US.

Dear Charter Commissioners,

Please take dramatic and serious action around environmental protection, especially in this climate crisis.

Some ideas that are low-hanging fruit and make our city genuinely more green (not green washing) and equitable for all living here:

1. Plant more trees and green space past 82nd to reduce the temperature in these neighborhoods that are least likely to have AC.
2. Create more rose lanes and run buses more frequently to encourage their use.
3. Don't expand any more roads or freeways.
4. Improve our recycling capabilities dramatically. We are currently only able to recycle about 11% of our mixed recycling. (San Francisco recycles 80%.)
5. Plant native plants instead of grass in parkways, lane barriers, and all places that are not specifically in need of grass.

Environmental issues are the bedrock of our community. All other issues such as homelessness, cannot be resolved and will only worsen on a dying planet.

Thank you.

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The current city-wide commissioners are not responsive to citizen complaints. Our city has been broken for 6 years, with absolutely nothing done by city-wide elected officials. A clear example of taxation without representation. Look around Portland and see how the do nothing mayor and council have completely ruined Portland.

We MUST have single member districts, where the elected official will be responsible to the voters in his/her district. We need neighborhoods represented. Neighborhoods are the backbone of this city, and the current system has silenced them.

SINGLE MEMBER DISTRICTS. IT IS DO OR DIE FOR PORTLAND.

Our form of government needs to change. Our city is becoming a dump and the slogan "the city that works" is so ironic. People with no experience should not be in charge of bureaus or departments they know nothing about. Portland is turning into a tent city and garbage dump and the city government doesn't seem to do anything but watch it get worse

I have lived in NW, SE, N and NE Portland over the 20 years I've been a resident. It is abundantly clear we need local district representation on the city council and qualified professionals running the various bureaus of city government. Many of my friends who were trying to raise their families in the city have already moved and the state of the city is constant topic of conversation for those of who are still here. I just had a couple more people reach out to me requesting a consultation on selling their home and help finding a new home out of the city and out of Multnomah

County due to their escalating taxes and complete failure of the government to provide basic services and safety. Neighborhood associations are not an adequate substitute for elected representatives of various districts. It's time to change our charter to increase council accountability and have actual leadership from the mayoral position.

Attached please find a Powerpoint presentation containing ideas related to creating city districts for Portland...I've shared earlier drafts with some of you and added new content over the past few weeks. The presentation focuses on using 2020 census data to evaluate options that combine statutory requirements with equity considerations.

It's a bit too long to present in the Public Comment session on December 13th, but I hope you will take a look at it. I'd be more than glad to discuss if any of you are interested.

Best regards,

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Hello Sofia. I wrote an email to KOIN 6 this morning that I would like to share with members of the Form of Government Committee prior to their Nov 30th meeting. Hopefully you can facilitate that. It is copied below:

Dear KOIN 6, you did a great piece and a great service with the presentation you did about Portland's system of government on Tuesday. Thank you for that!

My wife and I moved from Idaho to Portland in 2009 because we were both really attracted to the city. It was beautiful, lively, prosperous seeming, and comfortable. I was fond of telling everyone who wanted to listen that I thought it was the most "user friendly" city I had ever experienced, and I have been to virtually all of America's large cities. Gradually, things began to change in Portland. I understand that the driving forces for these changes weren't necessarily local. A big factor is the Nation's growing wealth inequality and the dramatic increases in housing costs. Regardless of the sources of the problems though, it is the city's responsibility to manage the fall-out. The growing evidence of homeless street people, tents popping up everywhere, and trash in the streets became unavoidable. Simultaneously, the vandalism, shootings, and crime rates rose to significant levels of concern. Still, we continued to love Portland.

However, in 2016 we moved to Vancouver - due to my wife's employment, not a dislike for Portland. Portland is still our big lovable city. But, lately it has gotten more and more difficult to love. The boarded up buildings and growing vacancy rates downtown take away a lot of the lustre that was once there. The shootings, car thefts, vandalism, and such seem to have spiraled even further out of control since we left Portland. This past Saturday, a friend and I rode the Springwater Corridor from Sellwood to Boring - a beautiful ride on a trail that is one of Portland's gems. But it was also so sad because of all the homeless encampments we witnessed along the trail. Most of them were extremely littered with trash. But mostly I felt sad for the people caught in these circumstances - where this seemed their best

remaining choice for living.

I can no longer vote in Portland, but if I could I would be extremely happy to vote for a non-commission form of representative government, with a strong mayor. As Mayor Wheeler stated, he is just one of five "mayors" who spend a lot of time running bureaus and fighting with one another about responsibilities and budgets. Portland needs much more direct accountability and strong leadership. It has been difficult to watch the decline of Portland from my perch north of the Columbia. It is like watching the demise of my big brother. Just very sad in all respects.

Hoping Portlanders will do the right thing, Erwin Teuber, Vancouver

I feel the current "weak mayor" system is serving us poorly. We need to change our system. City Council members should NOT be in charge of bureaus. We need a "strong mayor" system.

Dear Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I have lived in Portland for 30 years. I'm asking that you center environmental justice and climate action in the Charter Review process. As you work towards reforming City Council elections and our current form of government in Phase I, you have the opportunity to address many of the structural barriers preventing us from taking meaningful climate action.

Through charter reforms centered in environmental justice, we can not only open the door to climate action, but build a more equitable, collaborative, strategic, and community-driven city.

Environmental Justice affirms the need for urban ecological policies to clean up and rebuild our city in balance with nature, honoring the cultural integrity of all our communities, and provided fair access to clean air and water

Environmental justice also calls on us to uplift the people closest to these problems as essential and equal partners in building solutions - communities of color, low-income communities, and so many others living on the front lines of these crises. I urge you to embed this practice into your work on the Charter Review as a whole and in the selection of your subcommittees for Phase II of the Charter Review process. Through this collaboration, we can uproot our most deep-seated challenges together and transform our city for the better.

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Greetings! I have been appreciating your work and spreading the good work of P4P. I had a suggestion / request I think your organization would be extremely useful with if you concur. A lot of folks don't seem to understand that they need to leave comments for the City Charter Committee in order to have the right options to vote on change next year. I was hoping you would consider an automated email campaign similar to the one you have had going on to email our city leaders, to help folks send comments to the committee. I think most of us agree with Mingus Mapps and other ideas in this Portland Tribune article about a having a city manager, council people representing districts they actually live in, etc. Thank you for considering this helpful action with your tools and resources.

Dear Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I live in East Portland with my husband and 18 month old son. I work in nonprofit administration as the Operations Manager for Ethos Music Center in North Portland.

I'm writing to encourage that you center environmental justice and climate action in the Charter Review process. As you work towards reforming City Council elections and our current form of government in Phase I, you have the opportunity to address many of the structural barriers preventing us from taking meaningful climate action.

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We are in a climate emergency, and Portland must become an example to other cities of the transformational change that is possible. If we don't lead, we will be too late to give our children a fair chance at a healthy, safe life.

60 Portlanders and 500 people across the Northwest died during a single heat wave this June as we reached record-breaking temperatures of 116 degrees, with the majority of deaths clustered in lower income, more racially diverse neighborhoods. These deadly consequences are not distributed equally, but fall most heavily on the communities that are burdened by disinvestment, unsafe or unstable housing, pollution, and many other forms of environmental racism and injustice.

This is the decade in which we must take action. The next Charter review will not take place until 2031. The best available scientific evidence and our desire to keep our neighbors here in Portland alive and well lead us to the same conclusion: we need to act now.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify, and for your ongoing work towards building a more equitable and functional city. You are changemakers and now is your moment in history to do everything you can to tackle the climate crisis, center environmental justice, and shape a city in which everyone can thrive.

Apologies... This is the correct link for the KOIN 6 news story with Colleen Swenson on the Portland Community Equality Act.

<https://www.koin.com/news/does-portlands-government-represent-you/>

EP EDWARDS, M.A.
Pat@PatEdwards.net
808.347.7999

On Fri, Dec 3, 2021, 8:42 AM Pat Edwards, M.A. <epedwards@gmail.com> wrote:
We tried this only a few years ago with the Portland Community Equality Act.... It was a miserable fail. The people of Portland would not even sign the petition for change.

I spoke directly (face-to-face) with Ted Wheeler about this before he was elected to his first term in office. I met with Joanne Hardesty about it (face-to-face) before she was elected to the City Council. Both were eager to express support for the Portland Community Equality Act... initially, I suspect now to collect votes. After getting elected to office both remained absent for further discussion on the issue.

This is the KOIN news broadcast on the Portland Community Equality Act with Colleen Swenson:

<http://patedwards.net/portfolio-items/business-2/?portfolioCats=6%2C7%2C8%2C9%2C31%2C34%2C10%2C11%2C35%2C12>

and the channel 2 version of the same news:

<http://patedwards.net/portfolio-items/business-2/?portfolioCats=6%2C7%2C8%2C9%2C31%2C34%2C10%2C11%2C35%2C12>

After seeing that the people of Portland did not want change, both Colleen Swenson and I packed up, sold our homes, and moved to Vancouver, Washington.

Respectfully,

Hello Charter Review Commissioners,

This was certainly a busy week for you all, with meetings of the two issues subcommittees and probably a lot of prep time in advance of them. Wishing you all a happy holiday season and some well-deserved downtime!

I wanted to offer some comments related to the upcoming surveys that were discussed at this week's meetings. Given the complexity of the underlying issues, there was a suggestion to provide one or two pages of background material so that survey respondents had context to understand the questions and responses. That could be helpful but I wonder if it could also dissuade people from responding, if the questions require "study-time" just to get started. Another option is to phrase the questions in terms of outcomes rather than the mechanisms for achieving them...some of the questions already had this flavor or could be modified in this direction.

Another observation is that in some cases, the questions or response choices seemed to touch on areas where there's already some agreement, within the commission. For example, one of the response options for City Elections was for people to say that they wanted a voting method that basically preserves Winner Take All (that wasn't the phrasing, my apologies). What if that gets a lot of affirmation from survey respondents...does that mean that the commission might opt to keep WTA instead of a method that produces a Proportional Representation outcome? Probably not...so why offer it as a choice? There were other questions and responses that fell into this pattern as well.

Final comment is about the survey itself. Surveys are a very cost-effective way to reflect the opinions of a population, but their accuracy drops dramatically when people must opt-in to take it...you end up getting what is known as sampling and response bias. Who has access to the technology, who is on mailing lists to even see that it is available, etc. I'm sure the team working on the survey know this stuff, and I am hoping that they will choose a method (such as targeted outreach or stratified sampling) that will produce a representative outcome.

Again, thank you all, and happy holidays!

Why have you all not implemented a garbage program at all the park homeless camps that the city has "sanctioned"? Instead of playing wackamole like idiots wasting tax payer dollars?

Let me spell this out for the mentally challenged on this team....

Step 1: Arrange placement of large dumpsters at every homeless camp in every park you allow

Step 2: Arrange regular weekly pick up (cost less then playing wackamole I bet)

Step 3: Initiate rules for the homeless such as area remain garbage free around any tent. You know like the same rules WE ALL have to follow for our home codes.

What kind of "progressives" allow a plan that seriously hurts those it's supposed to protect and also takes down the city with it? Imagine what we must think of this utter incompetence.

It's clear that the city's current form of government is not working, and needs to be changed. I'm not an expert on these matters, but from my research I've learned that a strong Mayor coupled with a City Manager, and City Council members ELECTED FROM THEIR RESPECTIVE DISTRICTS could be a good model for reform.

I sincerely hope the Charter Commission will find in favor of reforming the city's government structure.

I'm very much in favor of a new form of city government with professionals running the vital city agencies.

Expanding the council size is good. Ranked choice OR district election. I favor district so everyone has an advocate.

Change is desperately needed here. Soon, please!

I would add that the police union has too much power and influence. We need public safety and it needn't look or act

like an independent militia.

Sincerely,

Dear Charter Commissioners,

I strongly recommend that the Charter Commission should reject STAR voting because of the fact that STAR voting violates majority rule.

The majority criterion says that when more than half of the voters prefer candidate A to every other candidate then candidate A should win.

The following 3-voter 4-candidate example demonstrates that STAR voting violates majority rule:

Voter #1:

Candidate A gets 5 stars.

Candidate B gets 3 stars.

Candidate C gets 4 stars.

Candidate D gets 0 stars.

Voter #2:

Candidate A gets 5 stars.

Candidate B gets 4 stars.

Candidate C gets 3 stars.

Candidate D gets 0 stars.

Voter #3:

Candidate A gets 0 stars.

Candidate B gets 5 stars.

Candidate C gets 4 stars.

Candidate D gets 3 stars.

In the example above, candidate A has a total score of 10 stars, candidate B has a total score of 12 stars, candidate C has a total score of 11 stars, and candidate D has a total score of 3 stars. When STAR voting is used, the candidates B and C get into the second round. In the second round, candidate B wins against candidate C with 2 votes to one vote. Thus, candidate B wins under STAR voting even though more than half of the voters give the best possible rating to candidate A and even though more than half of the voters strictly prefer candidate A to every other candidate.

In theory, the sole purpose of a single-winner election is to fill a single seat. In real life, however, an election also serves other purposes. For example, one purpose of an election is to settle a dispute, at least temporarily. Another purpose of an election is to give the winner the legitimacy he needs to run his office.

But when some candidate A gets more than half of the votes and some other candidate B wins the election, then candidate B will never have the required legitimacy. The supporters of candidate A will request a revote. They will argue that they gave honest ratings for candidate B while the supporters of candidate B "gamed" the election by giving excessively poor ratings for candidate A.

Of course, there are other election methods that violate majority rule. But these methods (e.g. approval voting) do so because they don't collect enough information to verify whether there is a majority winner. But when an election method (like STAR voting) collects sufficient ballot data to determine that candidate A is the favorite candidate of more than half of the voters, voters would expect this method to declare candidate A the winner.

There are other methods (e.g. the Schulze method) that meet all the desirable criteria that are met by STAR voting and that also meet the majority criterion.

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Sincerely,

Good morning, Commissioners!

Our Charter Review Working Group would like to submit the attached cover letter and proposal for a charter-mandated Civic Participation Commission for your review. We will be testifying on this proposal at the Charter Commission Meeting with Public Comment on December 13.

We look forward to your thoughts and questions, and thank you for your consideration and service.

Best regards,

350PDX

BerniePDX

Hygiene4All

Portland Chapter of DSA

Participatory Budgeting Oregon

Portland-Metro People's Coalition

Sunrise Movement PDX

Dear Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am a grandmother of two teenagers. I worry about their futures as do they. I'm writing to encourage that you center environmental justice and climate action in the Charter Review process. As you work towards reforming City Council elections and our current form of government in Phase I, you have the opportunity to address many of the structural barriers preventing us from taking meaningful climate action.

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Dear Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. There are a few things that are on my mind

Our city is facing intersecting challenges from the effects of urban renewal, greenwashing, from privatization, and yes a man made climate change crisis stemming from a very acceptance of neoliberal policies that exploit everyone when its looked at under the microscope. Justice reforms must happen for those affected by the problems the most. The private sector in our world and the city must make a profit to exist. This is why regulation, policy, and oversight must be able to be achieved by the public sector but not just elected officials but by all citizens effected by the private sector so that the profits do not exacerbate the problems that Portland faces by further exploitation and high profits.

I would also like to comment on the bureaus and city council. As Commisioner Hardesty has pointed out recently other cities that relinquish oversight over the bureaus have not created a resolution to inequity or racism and all have a climate crisis,work related crisis, transparency issues, systemic racism, isolation, poverty, cancer, poor drinking water, poor air, bankruptcy due to medical issues and transportation needs, and their own housing crisis. These other homogenous cities are equally failing on these many issues. Only elected officials should be head of these bureaus because when its proven they are ineffective, it's much more transparent and a vote can fire them for the job. But it's true, currently there are three commissioners that offer very little insight or can manage their bureaus in an effective manner. This is the product of coming into office for the wrong reasons or being assigned a bureau that the council member is not very strong on and is not equipped enough to handle. Also in the case of Comissioner Eudaly,

she ran on renters rights but was not assigned the bureau to work on that betterment. She worked from the outside-in. It was as if Commissioner Eudaly was kept from doing the job she wanted to do, yet again, she was elected to do her vision. Yet, faced roadblocks starting with the job she was given. That should be ended. I stand with the idea that the heads of these bureaus needs to be ELECTED. That's the imperative aspect that must be included and without money getting them elected but the masses electing these leaders in the city and the leaders constantly getting public feedback.

Futhermore, there needs to a MORE PUBLIC SOLUTION to the never rectified and exacerbated problems that effect the PUBLIC at large in a very horrible way. The pandemic, George Floyd, and climate change has proven there now needs to plans in action to help elevate the public sector which has been both neglected and ignored as well as compromised compared to that of the private sector. It's time to change these uneven scales that prop up the private sector and ruin the masses in ways that only resillience is the only outcome going forward..

In solidarity.

Portland would benefit greatly from hiring a qualified city manager and giving them the time and resources to build a professional management team.

We are confronted with fundamentally changing the way we produce energy to offset the damage already done to our planet. I'm hoping that you consider what type of governance will ensure that fundamental changes will occur to confront the greatest threat to our existence.

I think Portland would benefit tremendously from a city council system more comprable to what most other cities have - i.e. representation for various districts, rather than 'at large' elections for all members of the council. A larger council with representatives for various districts throughout the city would help ensure that marginalized people throughout Portland are better represented. As somebody who has worked closely with city government in various roles, I think the shuffling of the comissioners to lead new departments every election cycle is incredibly damaging, it ensures departments are often at cross-purposes with each other, and that there is no real institutional memory or consistency. This has a huge impact on government services, and it's incredibly stressful for city employees.

I saw some of the "Is Portland Over" news series. I'm a retired police officer and I would suggest, "Tactical Traffic" as a practice to be adopted by the police that shouldn't be difficult to put on line with existing resources. The effort involves "officers in civilian vehicles, working in tandem with marked vehicles, to do surveillance, as well as, initiating investigative activities by the uninformed officers that are assigned to them, based on the observations of the civilian dressed. This can be an extremely useful tool in triggering high value traffic stops. My other comment has to do with homelessness. Is it possible to designate specific locations as authorized, but " not insured" by the city. A random and reasonable police presence from the start will go a long way towards maintaining order in the camps. Also announce to the city that this is a plan to correct unacceptable conditions and everyone's cooperation is needed.

We need a city government that works for the people. Obviously, the sytem we has is failing and will continue to do so until we get qualified leaders in managment and visionary positions. Plus, we NEED representative government. The MAJORITY of the population lives on the east side of the river, yet, typically NONE of our city councils (Until Mapps, of late) have a clue about East Portland. Without a city manager and district representation, Portland will fail.

I've been in Portland proper since 2001 and it is long past time to change how we govern. The past 24months has cemented the need for change and it's time to make it happen. Portland citizens have long been held hostage with the current governing body with commissioners who have proven their incompetence and little or no leadership skills! PLEASE recommend change! People blame the mayor like he has the authority of traditional US city mayors without realizing Portland mayor has little authority over commissioners therefore lacking leadership structure and accountability to the citizens/tax payers of Portland.

PDX current form of government is outdated and ineffective. It's time for a change.

We need more police and a police Commissioner with law enforcement background

1. Need City run by City manager 2. Need bureaus run by pros 3. Need council members to represent specific areas of the City

I add my voice to those supporting ranked choice voting for the mayor and auditor positions, and proportional ranked choice voting for the commissioner positions. I would propose no at-large commissioners, but potentially larger districts with more winners in each (I also support a larger council, and am not opposed to moving to a city

commissioner type of government). Additionally, I support same day registration and requiring all candidates to participate in OAE.

I strongly support a change in Portland's form of government. Portland outgrew its commission form of government long ago, and I am very concerned about the future of the city (and, honestly, its present) with the current structure. Portland has changed dramatically over the years, and our public governance structure must evolve as well. Some of what made Portland great in the past was its boldness in public and urban planning. Let's move ahead in that spirit.

Portland needs a representative form of government, we have the basic infrastructure already in place with the neighborhood associations. We also need a real police commissioner with law enforcement background and a city manager.

While for decades I supported Portland's 5-member commission form of City Council because I wanted to vote for ALL positions on the Council, I now support a council of folks who are elected by different districts of the city. We need a larger Council (12 or so) with each member representing the interests of citizens in each district. I am tired of being ignored by City Council. Too often our Commissioners are too busy or too narrowly focused on their own bureaus that they fail to respond to what the people see or need.

The current model does not work. We need to change this.

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Dear Charter Commissioners,

It is absolutely imperative that environmental justice is at the forefront of the Charter Review process. As we watch fires ravage our lands, suffer deathly heatwaves, and hear of floods in nearby Canada....how can we afford to wait any longer to center environmental justice?

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Dear Charter Commissioners,

It is absolutely imperative that environmental justice is at the forefront of the Charter Review process. As we watch fires ravage our lands, suffer deathly heatwaves, and hear of floods in nearby Canada....how can we afford to wait any longer to center environmental justice?

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I'm writing to encourage that you center environmental justice and climate action in the Charter Review process. As you work towards reforming City Council elections and our current form of government in Phase I, you have the opportunity to address many of the structural barriers preventing us from taking meaningful climate action.

Through charter reforms centered in environmental justice, we can not only open the door to climate action, but build a more equitable, collaborative, strategic, and community-driven city.

Our city is facing intersecting challenges - from high rates of poverty and houselessness to deep racial injustice to the worsening effects of the climate crisis. The Charter Review is a once-in-a-decade chance to comprehensively address the most pressing issues facing our city.

Environmental justice also calls on us to uplift the people closest to these problems as essential and equal partners in building solutions - communities of color, low-income communities, and so many others living on the front lines of these crises. I urge you to embed this practice into your work on the Charter Review as a whole and in the selection of your subcommittees for Phase II of the Charter Review process. Through this collaboration, we can uproot our most deep-seated challenges together and transform our city for the better.



December 6, 2021

Portland Charter Commission,

On July 22, 2021 the Portland Metro People’s Coalition (PMPC) Charter Reform Working Group sent [a letter to the Portland Charter Commission](#) that included three topic areas of priority for the Commission’s work. These areas included *Participatory Rights & Equity*, *Policy Juries/Sortition*, and *Participatory Budgeting*. These ideas fall broadly under the category of *participatory democracy*: mechanisms and strategies wherein a government shares power, deliberation, and governance directly with residents. The undersigned organizations strongly support charter reforms that expand and innovate *participatory democracy* in Portland, with and in addition to needed reforms to the structure of *representative democracy*.

To that end, we have developed [the attached proposal](#) for a charter-mandated **Civic Participation Commission** (CPC). We- the undersigned organizations- request that the Commission consider and incorporate these ideas into the current Phase I charter reform process. Unlike other representative bodies, the proposed CPC would be selected by a democratic lottery (i.e. sortition) and would have specific authorities and powers- independent of the City Council. For that reason, the proposal falls within the focus of “Structure of Government” and thus we request it be considered in the Phase 1 work.

Several of us plan to attend the December 13 Charter Commission meeting to share this proposal but want to share the full draft proposal in advance. We are also actively engaging other community organizations about these ideas. We thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Participatory Budgeting Oregon

Bernie PDX

Hygiene4All

Sunrise Movement PDX

Portland Chapter of Democratic Socialists of America

Portland Metro People's Coalition

Attached: [Civic Participation Commission Charter Reform Proposal.pdf](#)

Participatory Democracy in Portland *Charter Reform*

Version 3.0

PMPC Charter Reform Working Group

On July 22, 2021 the Portland Metro People’s Coalition (PMPC) Charter Reform Working Group sent [a letter to the Portland Charter Commission](#) that included three topic areas of priority for the Commission’s work. These areas included *Participatory Rights, Policy Juries/Sortition, and Participatory Budgeting*. These ideas fall broadly under the category of participatory democracy: mechanisms and strategies wherein municipal government shares power and governance directly with residents. We propose establishing these strategies and mechanisms in Portland by creating a charter-mandated Civic Participation Commission. This document provides an abbreviated proposal for the CPC, then offers a more detailed description with contingent elements, definitions, and example practices and case-studies. We based this proposal on a set of [principles and values](#) for advancing participatory democracy in Portland charter reform.

Civic Participation Commission - Abbreviated Proposal

We propose the City Charter establish a Civic Participation Commission (PCP) with independent but circumscribed policy making authority relating to participatory democracy in the City of Portland. Commissioners would be selected by democratic lottery such that all Portlanders have an equitable opportunity to serve. By charter mandate, the CPC would be charged and adequately funded to fulfill the following authorities and responsibilities:

- 1.) Establish City standards and programs to ensure fair and equitable opportunities for all Portlanders to engage and participate in government decision making. This includes fair and equitable opportunities to serve on City-administered commissions, boards, advisory committees, task forces, or other such groups – standing and temporary – charged with making or recommending City policy. In partnership with the City Auditor, oversee and monitor civic participation processes and their impacts, and make participatory policy improvements over time.
- 2.) By 2024, establish a City-wide [participatory budgeting](#) process wherein all community members are afforded the opportunity to help decide how to spend a portion of the City budget through a binding decision or vote that leads to government action. By 2030, the City would allocate *a minimum of 10%* of the annual General Fund budget and *a minimum of 5%* of annual parks and transportation-related capital improvement expenditures through City-wide participatory budgeting.
- 3.) By 2026, establish new policies and programmatic capacity for selecting some or all participants on City-administered commissions, boards, advisory committees, task forces, or other policy making or oversight bodies through democratic lottery.

Detailed Civic Participation Commission Proposal

A. Selecting the Civic Participation Commission

In representative democracy, representative bodies are usually either elected or appointed. This inevitably limits the degree to which those serving represent the diverse communities of a given municipality. We propose that the Civic Participation Commission function as a standing policy jury with Commissioners selected via democratic lottery. Democratic lotteries (also known as [civic lotteries](#) or [sortition](#)) are a method for bringing everyday people into government decision-making by selecting participants through a randomized lottery that creates a representative microcosm of the public on several demographic factors. Selection via democratic lotteries typically involves four stages. For example, the selection of the CPC could proceed as follows:

1. First the City Council identifies the desired demographic factors for representation on the Commission. Typically, democratic lotteries ensure proportional representation on at least seven factors, which may include: age, gender, race/ethnicity, economic means, location of residence, political ideology, frequency of previous political participation, immigration status, language(s) spoken, educational attainment, housing status, or experience of a disability, among others. Beyond this baseline guarantee of representation equivalent to the population, an equity lens can be applied to the selection process by setting targets to overselect for participants from communities experiencing marginalization, disenfranchisement, disengagement, or underrepresentation elsewhere in the political system.
2. Second, invitation letters are sent to randomly selected residential addresses and to those experiencing houselessness through social service organizations. These letters outline the opportunity to serve, the stipend and expenses paid for service, and the commitment required. The invitation also requests demographic self-reporting from the respondent.
3. After replies are received, a public lottery is held to select the Commission. This lottery is an anonymous and randomized process, yet also one that creates a Commission reflective of the general public on all demographic factors simultaneously – to form a group that is a microcosm of the city.
4. Finally, the selected Commissioners (and alternates) are informed of selection and prepared for their service. All individuals are equitably compensated for their service in order to reduce economic or time barriers to their ability to serve.

Bodies selected through democratic lottery are typically paired with a set of group processes and methods for policy work generally described as “deliberative democracy.” These collaboration-oriented processes seek to create more inclusive, fair, and productive public decision-making through: 1) group autonomy to the maximum extent possible, including process self-governance and group control over informational inputs and outputs, 2) participant- and research-driven process design, allowing for the thoughtful consideration of internal and external experience/expertise and the discovery of common ground without forced consensus, 3) radical accessibility, where no prior experience, particular set of abilities, special knowledge, comfort with traditional processes, or access to resources is necessary for full

participation, and 4) third-party evaluation by independent observers, with public transparency of results.

Democratic lotteries and deliberation have several advantages. They create democratic bodies that are composed almost entirely of new voices – thanks to their direct invitation to participants, payment for service, and, typically, unique influence in the policy-making process. They create “cities in one room,” which don’t simply strive for representation – they guarantee it. Once participants are selected, deliberative processes prioritize access and comfort for those marginalized by existing systems and create the structural conditions for collaboration over competition. What’s more, they exhibit a revolutionary new democratic paradigm, one where everyday people are empowered to tackle our thorniest political issues and supported in engaging with the most complex details of governance. In so doing, democracy by lottery expands the knowledge and experience of a diverse public in decision making and engenders a new level of legitimacy in public processes. See Section C III below for specific case studies of democratic lotteries used to select temporary and permanent policy-making bodies.

B. Resourcing & Supporting the Civic Participation Commission

We propose that the CPC be adequately funded to support staffing and technical knowledge necessary to select Commissioners and implement other charter-mandated programs and policies. A possible funding formula could index the CPC budget to a percentage of the City General Fund.

C. Civic Participation Commission Responsibilities and Authorities

The Civic Participation Commission would have three authorities and powers independent of the City Council. How and to what extent this power and authority would be circumscribed and delimited from the power and authority of the City Council would have to be determined and defined.

I. Participatory Equity

We propose that CPC have the ongoing and independent authority to monitor, oversee, and set policy related to civic participation in the City of Portland to ensure fair and equitable participation in government. This would include establishing policies and programs to reduce and eliminate social, economic, cultural, racial, physical, and other barriers to any Portland resident desiring to serve on any City-administered commission, board, advisory committee, task force, or other such group – standing or temporary. This CPC authority would also include establishment of programs and standards to support or compensate Portlanders for their time and expertise in service of the City, a practice inherent to democratic lotteries and policy juries.

Numerous examples of compensating participants for their time and expertise already exist. The [Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development \(OECD\)](#) has identified remuneration as a best practice to ensure equal and fair opportunities for civic engagement in policy making. The City of Seattle compensates community members as independent contractors for serving on some City advisory or policy-making committees. Metro currently compensates individuals for their service on many regional advisory committees. In February

2020, the City of Portland issued an inter-bureau [Stipends Task Force Report](#) that reviewed existing and potential policies for compensating individuals serving on City advisory bodies.

The CPC would also set policies and practices governing transparency, accountability, deliberative design, privacy, and security as they relate to civic participation and the use of civic technology. This would include policies and practices to ensure everyone can access information about how decisions are made, who benefits, and which voices are heard. Policies would also establish safeguards to ensure civic technology and data is used only for civic engagement, protecting the privacy and security of individuals with regard to sensitive information, such as immigration status, that might jeopardize their willingness to participate.

Furthermore, we propose the charter direct the CPC to work in partnership with the City Auditor on an ongoing basis in order to:

- Oversee and monitor civic participation processes and mechanisms in the City of Portland, and review and improve standards and core process elements.
- Monitor the policy impact of recommendations developed by participatory bodies and processes across the City.
- Ensure accountability and transparency necessary to increase the trustworthiness of City government.

II. Citywide Participatory Budgeting

We propose that the CPC establish a City-wide [participatory budgeting](#) (PB) process by 2024, wherein all community members are afforded the opportunity to help decide how to spend a portion of the City budget through a binding decision or vote that leads to government action. We propose that by 2030, the City would allocate a minimum of 10% of the annual General Fund budget and a minimum of 5% of annual parks- and transportation-related capital improvement expenditures through Citywide participatory budgeting.

Participatory budgeting is a rapidly growing mechanism of participatory democracy now implemented by over 10,000 municipalities worldwide, including dozens of cities and towns within the United States. The process varies in design and purpose and requires elected officials to first dedicate funds to the process. Once launched, PB usually involves at least five steps:

1. A representative steering committee co-designs the process with City staff.
2. People come together in assemblies and brainstorm ideas.
3. Community budget delegates & government staff refine ideas into projects vetted for legality, feasibility, and sometimes equity and impact.
4. Projects go back to the community for a binding vote or decision.
5. Projects with the most votes are implemented with available funds.

After each cycle, the process is evaluated and improved before it starts again. Through multiple cycles, public officials and residents learn together, creating a new mode and culture of governance. Over time, data on residents' decisions – exercising real power over real public money – help inform the broader budgeting process by elected officials.

At least two US cities have added, or are in the process of adding, a PB mandate to their municipal charters.

New York City: In 2019, voters in New York City passed a [charter reform](#) that included a PB mandate. The new charter established a Civic Engagement Commission to implement a Citywide participatory budgeting program no later than the City Fiscal year beginning July 1, 2020.

Boston: This November, Boston voters will decide on [Question 1](#), a charter reform ballot measure that will incorporate a mandate for participatory budgeting into the City Charter. The new Charter would establish an independent Office of Participatory Budgeting with an external oversight board, to create and oversee an equitable and binding decision-making process open to all Boston residents by Fiscal Year 2024. The proposed charter language reads as follows:

“To further public engagement and democratic involvement in city spending, the City of Boston shall create by City ordinance an independent Office of Participatory Budgeting with an external oversight board, to create and oversee an equitable and binding decision-making process open to all Boston residents by Fiscal Year 2024, consistent with G.L. c. 44, § 53.”

III. Democratic Lottery Selection for City Policy Advisory Bodies

We propose that the CPC would establish new policies and programmatic capacity by 2026 for selecting some or all participants on City-administered commissions, boards, advisory committees, task forces, and other policy-making and oversight bodies through democratic lottery (see details on democratic lotteries above and case studies below).

The CPC would establish demographic factors for selecting participants from the City’s population, to ensure each participatory body reflects Portland’s population on age, gender, race/ethnicity, economic means, geography, immigration status, access to housing, and any other factors the CPC defines. In addition, the CPC may create selection criteria to overrepresent participants from marginalized or previously underrepresented communities. In instances where participatory bodies may need to be selected within a specific profession, within an area of expertise or lived experience, or within a particular demographic or geography, lottery selection could still be used to choose participants within those limitations (i.e., representative of the general population on all other demographics).

There are [hundreds of examples](#) of deliberative bodies selected by democratic lottery. In fact, Oregon is internationally known as a leader in implementing this democratic model. The following are a few examples most relevant to this proposal.

Ostbelgien, Belgium: Standing Lottery-Selected Citizens’ Council & Assemblies: In 2019, the region of Ostbelgien, Belgium established a permanent Citizens’ Council, selected by democratic lottery, which has the independent authority to convene and set the agendas for up to three lottery-selected Citizens’ Assemblies on any policy topic each year. These Assemblies recommend policies to the regional Parliament, which must either advance legislation to adopt them or specifically explain why they will not be doing so.

Bogota, Columbia: Itinerant Citizens’ Assemblies: In Bogota, Colombia, the municipal government operates a series of Itinerant Citizens’ Assemblies, selected by democratic lottery,

which have the authority to set their own agendas and make recommendations to the City Council. The City Council must implement the recommendations in legislation or explicitly reject them with justification. (For more detail, see page 19 of [An Introduction to Deliberative Democracy for Members of Parliament \[Westminster Foundation for Democracy, 2021\].](#))

[*Oregon: Citizens' Initiative Review*](#): In 2011, the Oregon Legislature adopted HB 2634, which established the Citizens' Initiative Review (CIR), a pioneering lottery-selected process for writing voter information. Through the CIR, a representative panel of voters questions pro and con advocates of ballot measures, as well as independent experts, then deliberates on the issues at hand and writes credible and thorough voter information for the voters' pamphlet. Oregon's award-winning model has since been used in Arizona, California, Colorado, and Massachusetts, as well as in municipalities in Finland and Switzerland.

[*Eugene, Oregon: Review Panel on Housing*](#): From November 2020 to April 2021, the City of Eugene convened a Panel of 29 residents – selected through a democratic lottery – to advise the City on housing code changes in compliance with HB 2001. Meeting online, the Review Panel heard from numerous stakeholders and experts, and drafted four reports: three on housing principles and policy through multiple feedback loops with City staff, and a fourth advising the City on public engagement practices.

[*Toronto, Canada: Planning Review Panel*](#): Between 2015 and 2017, the City of Toronto convened a 32-member, lottery-selected standing advisory board to make policy recommendations on a variety of issues related to growth management and urban planning.

[*Calgary, Canada: Citizens' Commission on Municipal Infrastructure*](#): The City of Calgary commissioned a 36-member Citizens' Commission, selected by democratic lottery, to review the city's infrastructure investment model and to propose revisions to the strategy.

Ideas for City Elections

Hank Schottland

Creating Voting Districts for Portland

Three considerations:

1. Districts, from a population and census perspective
2. Creating districts, based on geography
 - Can the “Portland quadrants” form the basis of districts?
3. Creating districts, considering additional factors
 - Can these advance key Charter Review Commission goals?

1. Districts: Oregon Requirements

- “Bodies that fix electoral district boundaries based on population, shall ***consider*** the following when drawing district or precinct boundaries”:
 - districts should be contiguous
 - utilize existing geographic or political boundaries
 - not divide “communities of common interest” [*more on this later*]
 - be connected by transportation links
 - for districts, be of equal population [*by convention, 10% spread from smallest to largest*]

(Source: Secretary of State directive 2021-1, dated 9/9/21)

How big should Portland districts be?

- U.S. Census Department: census tracts
 - Defined as a “small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county or equivalent entity” – like groups of blocks
 - A census tract has “a population size between 1,200 and 8,000 people, with an optimum size of 4,000 people”
- What does this mean in terms of geography?
- Portland has ~160 census tracts, as per the following map

Observations

- Because population density varies across the city, tracts have different sizes (geographically)
- Tracts take up large areas where population is sparse, and small areas where it's dense
- This ensures that the total number of residents per tract is roughly equal ($652,000 / 160 = 4075$ average)
 - So we are close to the “optimum” of 4000 as defined by the Census Bureau



Population and City Districts

- Number of Districts vs. District Size
 - 3 equal-population districts would each need to contain ~217,000 residents ($652,000 / 3 = \sim 217,000$)
 - 4 districts would each need ~163,000
 - 5 districts would each need ~130,000
 - 6 districts would each need ~109,000
- How does this relate to our 5 quadrants?

2. Districts based on Portland Quadrants

- If you overlay a map of our 5 Portland “quadrants” on top of the map of tracts, you can count the number of tracts & residents in them:
 - N Portland: contains 22 tracts and 86,000 residents (~3900 per tract)
 - NE: 39 tracts and 163,000 residents (~4200 per tract)
 - NW: 12 tracts and 44,000 residents (~3700 per tract)
 - SE: 55 tracts and 244,000 residents (~4400 per tract)
 - SW: 30 tracts and 103,000 residents (~3400 per tract)
- These numbers reflect the fact that population varies quite a bit across quadrants, so they be voting districts as-is
 - for example, SE has 5.5x as many people as NW

The Problem

- A 3-district city needs very large districts; only SE could be its own district and we would need to combine/slice-and-dice the remaining quadrants to create the other 2
 - e.g., N + SW would produce the right numbers but it would seem odd to put them into the same district...no “neighborhood affinity”
 - N + NE would be too large for a district so part of NE would need to split off
- The 4-district configuration might be better
 - NE would fit into its own district, but SE would need to split in 2 and contribute 13,000 to some other district
- 5 and 6 district configurations have their own +’s and –’s

Another consideration

- Council size – for a “reasonable” council size (9 to 16):
 - A 3-district solution needs 3 to 5 councilors per district
 - A 4-district solution needs 3 to 4 councilors per district
 - A 5-district solution needs 2 to 3 councilors per district
- So, some strategic issues need to be worked through in order to create districts that are based only on geography and equal population size...but keeping the existing 5 quadrants as voting districts seems problematic
- Splitting neighborhoods across districts could produce its own downsides (diminished voter support and political power)
- Other options?

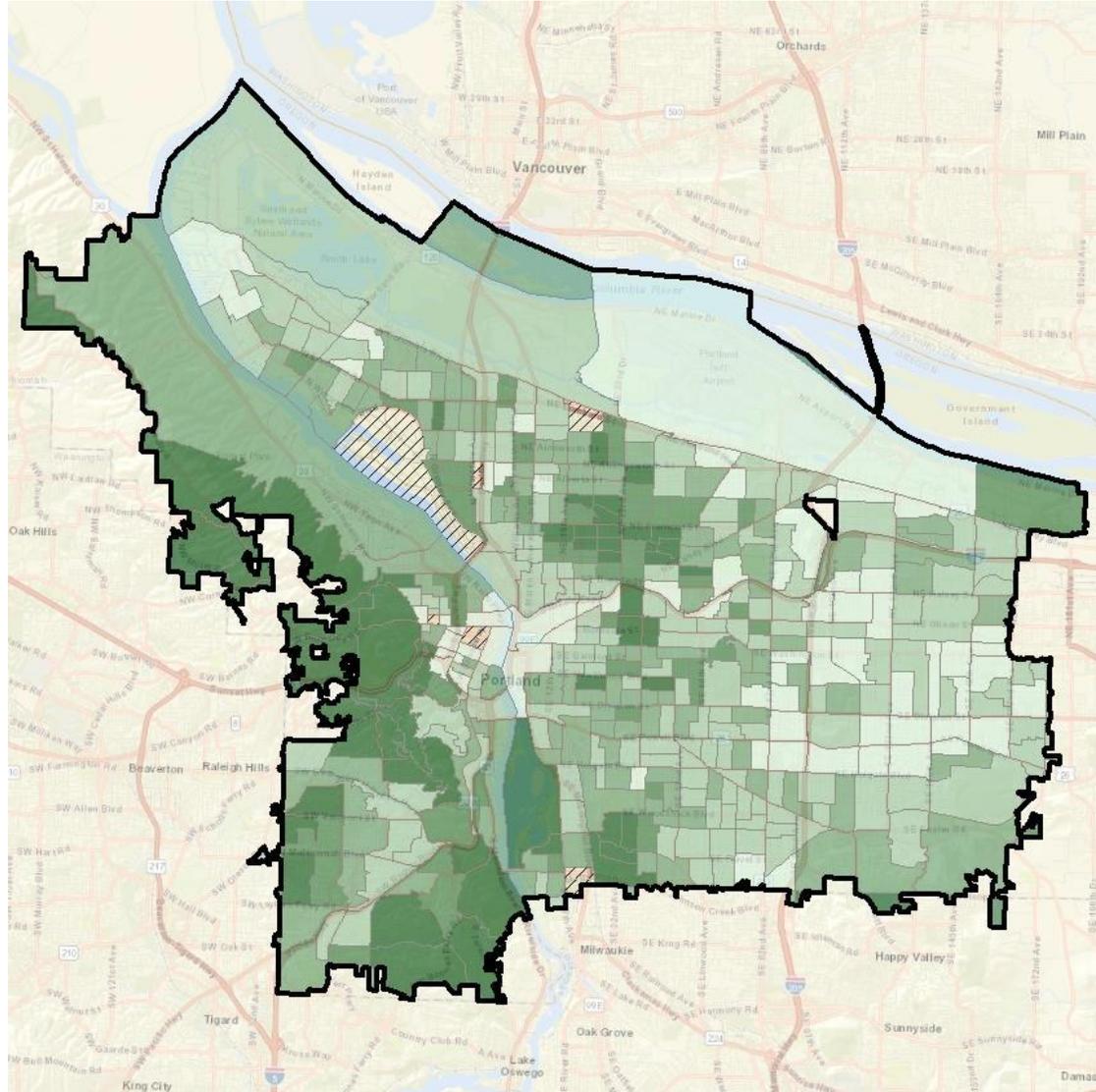
3. An Additional Consideration for Districts

- Instead of defining district boundaries based solely on geography, consider additional factor
 - Historically, some map-drawing options have produced maps that are gerrymandered and create voting outcomes that favor one political party or ideology (partisan gerrymandering)
 - What if some other factor, ***tied to social equity***, was used as a factor in drawing district maps in addition to geography ?
 - Could this help us meet the “communities of interest” criterion highlighted by the Oregon Secretary of State?

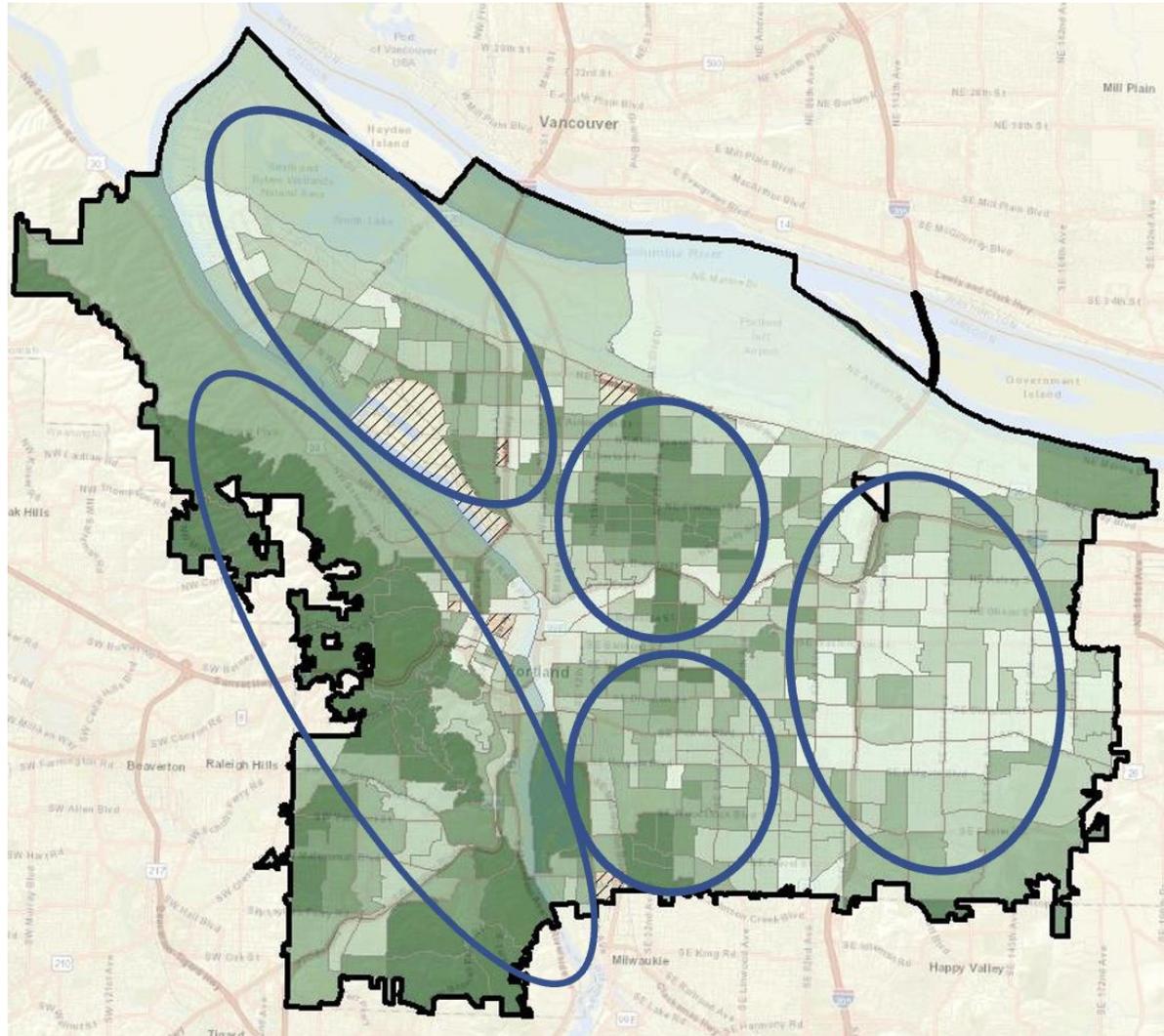
Looking at Community Input to Charter Review

- Public comment during the charter review process reflects that people are unhappy with both the budget process and the resulting budgets...stating that their neighborhoods are not getting fair treatment
 - Consider adding this as a key issue when drawing district boundaries
 - It might be a way to **provide greater equity** if people in similar economic situations are grouped together in a way that elevates their power (in particular, the power of those in lower-economic groups)
 - Unlike demographics such as race & ethnicity, which are distributed across the entire Portland geographic area, there are areas in Portland where residents are (somewhat) **stratified by income**.
 - In practice, this should also address demographic equity in regions where income is highly correlated with race+ethnicity

Income levels across Portland



Potential Districts using Income Clustering



Conclusion

- If we had districts that reflected both geography and income levels, it would ***equalize the power*** between those at the top of the financial pyramid and those lower down, while preserving the benefits of neighborhood representation
 - Over multiple generations, income produces wealth
- Groups who have not had historical access to financial resources and power would benefit the most
- Is it possible to create districts that reflect this hybrid approach of geography (including neighborhoods) and income ?