



[Verbal public comment](#)

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I've been following this process in a shallow way for the past few months and gave some feedback earlier, mainly saying I was unsure or didn't know, but I've been thinking about and we should increase the number of people on the city council and hire a city manager to stop the bureau shuffle. I think COVID has really shown that a number of departments don't work and haven't worked for a long time and no one has ever felt the need or had the time to fix that.

STAR voting is a far simpler form of voting than ranked choice. PLEASE choose STAR voting.

In RCV, duplicate rankings are not permitted and may result in your ballot being thrown out; In STAR, duplicate scores are permitted.

RCV uses a series of eliminations; STAR uses simple addition.

RCV has a variable number of rounds (could be as many as the number of candidates minus one); STAR always has exactly two rounds.

RCV is not precinct summable (which may in fact make it not legal per state law in Portland, which spans three counties); STAR voting is precinct summable.

It is difficult to report full election results in RCV. Usually only first place choices are reported, or complicated charts that are hard to read; In STAR it is easy to report full results using a simple bar graph.

RCV ballot width must be as wide as the number of candidates, or limit the number of candidates that voters can rank; STAR voting is always exactly 6 bubbles wide and you can score as many candidates as you want.

In RCV, not all rankings are counted. Some voters have more rankings counted than others; In STAR, all ballot data is counted.

Dear Committee Members:

I have attempted to get more detailed information about the current recommendations from the Charter Review Committee. I have not received a reply from my inquiry. I am therefore making my comments with incomplete information.

I strongly support institution of a strong Mayor and City Manager. We need to separate the roles of the management of the city from the executive/legislative function of the Mayor and City Council. I believe this will provide continuity for the city bureaus, more efficient operation and less conflict between bureaus. I believe we need a Mayor with increase authority to be able to more quickly implement recommendations from both the City Manager and the City Council.

I strongly support increasing the number of City Councilors and have them elected by districts. I believe this will lead to better representation of all communities.

I do NOT support rank choice voting to be included in the Charter Review. Rank Choice voting is a complicated issue and needs to be addressed separately.

Commissioners,

My understanding is that the commission is continuing to consider districts containing more than one representative. This looks to me to be in consideration of specific special interest groups that have persistently campaigned to obtain increased representation for their interest. That they have done so is a welcome aspect of our democratic process. Structuring that process into our electoral process seems to me to be misguided. Addressing the needs of groups having a specific interest is of course the good and right thing to do, however the only truly ongoing interest that an election ought to address is that of the electorate. If in general the electorate persists in remaining ignorant of one group's needs or interests, imposing solutions from the base of the special interest will lend itself to repression and reactivity. Social change comes through dialogue and persuasion.

Representative government works best when the representatives have the closest, most intimate relationship with the represented possible. I believe that the charter commission has a responsibility to address that by recommending the greatest number of electoral districts possible, with one representative for each district to enable the greatest number of citizens to have direct access to their representative.

Additionally the charter commission has a long history of presenting recommendations to the electorate that fail. This could be an indication of any number of things including: only "wonks" want to be on a commission and tend to be out of touch with the prevailing mood of the citizenry, or more plausibly the commission is populated by those deft enough to produce a document adequately veiled to appear earnest while enabling those who benefit most from the status quo to marshal the resources necessary to defeat it. Lets hope there are at least fifteen members of this commission wise enough to avoid either of those two possible pitfalls.

PS: The work of this commission is important enough that its members ought to be free of competing interests such as benefiting as an office holder, or potential office holder affected by the outcome of this commissions work. That this commission has tolerated members not being so unencumbered in my opinion decreases the legitimacy of your work in the public eye. I would hope at the very least you address this for future commissions going forward. WG

I would like to make a short public comment on why I believe the council should use Star Voting.

I and the Parkrose Community Alliance agree with this sentiment expressed here. Let's not have this fall apart, please.  
Terry

On Tue, Mar 8, 2022 at 10:11 AM Will Ganschow <will.ganschow@gmail.com> wrote:

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2nd choice if that candidate wasn't eliminated in a prior round of tabulation. In practice, such situations are not rare, they are common. It's a normal part of RCV tabulation. This problem is not in the ballots, it's not in the voting procedure, it's only in the tabulation. So, the public perception that RCV is simple is based on a mistaken intuition that the tabulation will count all the votes and deliver fair results.

STAR Voting has no such problems. Everything in STAR is clear and transparent. Every STAR election is readily understandable to any lay person looking at the results of the simple two rounds. STAR was developed specifically to resolve the fundamental problems in RCV. Portland should choose the best method for elections, not the one with popularity tied to public misunderstanding.

A car might have nice styling and features, but if it is unreliable, it's a poor choice. Naive buyers have a hard time evaluating reliability, but that doesn't mean they don't care. Don't promote an unreliable reform that voters will support but later come to regret or even to have mixed feelings about. Support STAR because it is the reliable, higher-quality reform that will allow voters to trust the system over the long term. STAR accomplishes all that RCV supporters are asking for and then delivers on the results they actually expect.

No masks 😊 in private and public places. Open up restaurants, fitnesses centers, businesses with zero lock downs. Care for the people and take positive actions shown by Florida's Governor.

Having lived a 15 years in Portland and previously in Oakland, which has a city manager, I'm strongly in support of a strong mayor government. A strong mayor plus a city manager is better than this clown show we have in Portland.

Please include these comments in the public record :

I strongly support City Manager/City Council form of government. We need professionals educated and experienced in the individual bureau (please rename them to Departments) to run the City. The Mayor should be the figure head, voice, and representative regionally and nationally. The City Council shall be responsible for spending (budget) and law making (resolutions and ordinances). The City Manager shall ensure Departments are run efficiently and correctly and shall report to the City Council. The City is very siloed, rarely works together, and has fiefdoms. A City Manager can correct this. The public needs a voice. We currently get few to no responses from much of the staff or the electeds. We need responses from staff and need electeds to respond when we get no response from staff. Having City Council members represent areas of the City is very important (each must live in that area). That allows them to know the area and have the whole City represented. I believe the City is currently split as NW, SW, NE, SE, S, N, and E...this means we need 7 City Council members (or call them Aldermen...or Alderpeople?)

Ive lived in several cities small, medium, and big but have never lived in one like Portland which is so disfunctional. My taxes feel unused or improperly used. Boarded up buildings, trash from homeless, completely inefficient code enforcement, tiny graffiti control, no speed enforcement, very few road resurfacing projects (a PCI of 55 is absurd...most cities strive for an 80 and accept a 70), no use of minors or court enforced community service hours for graffiti, trash cleanup, hydrant painting, curb paiting...partner with the schools and courts! So many easy solutions already occurring in other cities across the country. The wheel has been invented, no need to reinvent it.

Thank you

Thank you for reaching out. I don't think I have much to add by participating on March 10, 2022 but would like to give the Commission some input with regard to my experience as a former longtime resident of Des Moines, Iowa.

In Des Moines, a city of about 220,000 in population and with similar ethnic and racial makeup as Portland, there is an elected mayor and city council with an appointed city manager. Six council members (two more than in Portland - a city with three times the population) are elected to four year terms. Four are elected by ward and two are elected to seats at-large. If Portland were to apportion council seats in a similar way we would have twelve wards and council members and six at-large council members. I'm not an expert on government and I'm not saying these are the numbers Portland should use but I think it illustrates the imbalance in Portland.

When my wife and I moved to Portland seven years ago I wanted to contact the person representing my

neighborhood and found that I had none. I could hardly believe what I learned and have been an advocate for change since that time.

Des Moines has problems and no form of government will be perfect, but I can tell you from experience that more equal representation and a professional in charge of managing the city is a more efficient way to serve the population.

Thank you again for reaching out and thanks to all of the members of the commission.

I wholeheartedly support moving to a city manager/city council form of government. Politicians are skilled at running for office, but not necessarily skilled at managing bureaus. They do not necessarily have the skills, experience and knowledge to needed to provide leadership for the bureaus they are assigned to. We need professionals, with expertise and knowledge of the field they are administering in leadership positions. Portland suffers from the lack of this expertise and the politicization of the role of bureau directors.

Giving more money to the police does not equal more crimes solved, there are plenty of peer reviewed studies to back that up. when we give more money to the police it takes away funding for programs that would eliminate the need for police. the more support and funding a community has the less crimes of poverty they will commit. start asking public health professionals how to solve these problems. stop referring to the portland business alliance who only want to fund their programs. if portland business alliance is so smart than why do they want to continue to fund clean and safe. ask any business in chinatown/old town if clean and safe ever does a good job. we need to stop funding fronts for the pba and start funding programs that will actually make a difference. start asking public health professionals. Marisa Zapata would be a great start. thank you for reading this.

Instead of trying to reinvent the wheel as they do with any computer systems, why not take a look plagerize the most succesful ones in the country. One of those is our neighbor, Boise,Idaho. Take one that has had an outstanding success rate and then "tweak it".

Please simplify the changes. Strong Mayor or City Manager. Five to Seven councilmembers elected by geographic districts. No Bureau assignments for councilmembers. That's it. If this is too complicated it will lose.

Please make the proposals relatively straight forward

- \*geographical representatives for council. Number up to ten.
- \* Mayor (citywide election) hires professional city manager with council confirming.
- \*Please keep working of ballot measure SIMPLE!

The most important elements of this opportunity are: 1) We need either a strong mayor or a city manager; 2) No bureau assignments for Council members; 3) Nine (9) Council members elected by district. NOTE: Rank voting is an idea for another day. Let's keep the plan as simple as possible and get Portland on a better track NOW !

Dear Ms. Alvarez-Castro and Mr. Mozyrsky,

I write to thank you for your informative presentation to the Laurelhurst Neighborhood Association last night and to register my support for Ranked Choice voting. It was quite heartening to hear about the thoughtful, functional process that the Commission has designed and, also, that commissioners are coalescing around some significant—and hopeful—changes.

I am supportive of much of what you reported last night, including increasing the number of commissioners, though I do hope the number remains small enough that meetings can be effective. A council of close to 11 members will be better able to make timely decisions than one of 14 or 16 members, I believe.

I also want to register my support for Ranked Choice voting. As my neighbor suggested, Ranked Choice voting requires significant education for people to understand why it is fair, but I hope the Commission will not avoid adopting this approach because it won't initially be easily understood. My understanding is that this approach is fair, is supported by academic research, and has been successfully used in places as diverse as the state of Maine and NY City. We Portlanders will be able to wrap our heads around this with good information about the process!

Unfortunately I cannot participate in the virtual forum. But I have been following the review process. I have 40+ years working as an employee for the City of San Diego. I've experienced working for a strong mayor form of municipal government as well as a City Manager organization. In my experience, the City Manager works very well especially

when considering that department (or bureau) heads are professionals in their fields. From what I can see in Portland, the only department heads who are experienced in the work of their departments are the Police and Fire Chiefs. Just as successful private sector businesses have a Board of Directors (the city councilmembers) and a CEO - the City Manager. Department heads have either come up through the ranks, garnering experience in the work of the department and the work of being an administrator. Sometimes they are hired from "the outside". Either way, they have a sense of corporate history, familiar with City policies and what as or has not worked in the past. These department heads answer to the City Manager - who serves at the discretion of the City Council.

Having an Engineering Department with a professional engineer at the helm, or a City Planning manager who is schooled and experienced in the field of city planning makes for a far more efficient functioning of public services. The (in my opinion) all too frequent reassignment of bureaus to City Commissions interrupts the continuity of projects and priorities. Portland is a large city, with a vibrant population and would benefit from stable professional leadership at the bureau level.

Ladies and gentlemen: I was privileged to serve on the City Club committee devoted to studying the question of Portland's city government which first began to meet around 5 years ago. When I was a younger man I was also privileged to serve 3 years on my hometown's city council (Davenport, Iowa) and then 9 years as a member of the Iowa House of Representatives. Those experiences taught me much about accountability and the importance of citizens' having designated representatives to whom they can bring their concerns and grievances. The current form of Portland's government -- besides being unable to respond quickly or satisfactorily to major issues -- violates several important democratic principles: 1) in a system where "all" council members represent "all" citizens, the fact is that NO ONE is really accountable; 2) without district or ward representation, citizens' concerns essentially vanish into a black hole and there is no one whom they can hold accountable to whom they can ask to ride herd on their expressed concerns; 3) in essence, the current system is "taxation without representation"; 4) the intermixing of legislative, executive, and judicial functions is extremely unwise and was frowned upon by our Founders.

For all these reasons I strong support moving from the current backward, unrepresentative, and unaccountable form of city government to one of an elected mayor and a sufficient number of district representatives so as to bring voice and accountability to each portion of our community (in a city this size, that number should probably be no less than 8 council members elected by ward or district); in addition, I recommend the establishment of a city manager position whose responsibility would be to assist the mayor in overseeing and administering the executive functions and responsibilities, including implementing council directives.

I also strongly favor ranked voting in which citizens indicate by numerical preference their wishes for candidates as this is likely to increase diverse representation and advance candidates with moderate points of view.

Lastly, I have some reservations about multiple-member districts, primarily because of the problems and potential confusion around the matter of accountability. There is also the very real problem of this kind of system infusing political rivalries into district issues, leaving both the citizens and their voice(s) on the Council weakened and divided.

Thank you for your considering my remarks, and thank you for your significant public service!

City Charter Commissioners,

Dear Commissioner on the Portland Charter Review Committee,

I urge you to continue your service as a Commissioner by voting to strengthen democracy and expand decision-making power in the City of Portland. Specifically, I write urging you to vote to refer the following City Charter changes to Portland voters:

Expand City Council to at least 23 seats, and adjust the size of council in the future to maintain a ratio of residents:councilors of no greater than 30,000:1

Implement multi-member districts, elected with proportional representation, with a minimum of 4 councilors per district

Change the city's voting method from First-Past-The-Post to a method that allows voters to express preference levels for multiple candidates

Eliminate Primary elections

Establish a City-wide participatory budgeting process with an allocation to such a process of a minimum of 10% of the annual General Fund budget and a minimum of 5% of annual parks and transportation-related capital improvement expenditures

Establish City standards and programs to ensure fair and equitable opportunities for all Portlanders to engage and participate in government decision making, including 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

Establish new policies and programmatic capacity for using democratic lottery for selecting some or all participants on City-administered commissions, boards, advisory committees, task forces, or other policy making or oversight bodies

Open the civic participation process outlined in the previous three reforms to non-citizens and people age 16 and older, with the goal of reforming Oregon state law to expand voting rights to non-citizens and people age 16 and older

In 2022, it is time we commit to Portland's Charter a full program of guaranteed representation and decision-making power distributed throughout our neighborhoods and communities. Rather than staying in our current structure or settling for modest changes, I urge you to vote to refer these deep changes to the Charter.

For a City where power is held by all of us,

I'm writing to you because I just submitted my comments for this Thursday's meeting through the online public comment form, but didn't realize until I opened the form that the comments had to be received 2 business days before the meeting. I can't attend the meeting, so was hoping that my written comments could be accepted.

Is there any way you can add my comments, so they are received and read by the commissioners? They are in the Word attachment.

Please let me know if you can or can't, and if not, how I can I submit them so they are considered.

Comments attached

I believe we are way over do for change in our style of government away from a commission and to a charter. For too long city bureaus have been run by politicians with no substantive experience in running large city departments, nor do the have the necessary skills or knowledge to be effective. This is not how you go about hiring someone, so why would you do this for any reason?

I strongly support highly experienced, independent managers who are not puppets for any particular commissioner(s), to run the bureaus. The need to be audited by an independent body to ensure the bureaus are run properly with minimum waste. However, I'm against electing commissioners by district. The reason being, decisions made by a commissioner not in my district may have an enormous impact on something in my neighborhood and have no impact in her/his district and myself and my neighbors have now means to vote against her/him. I liken it to a gerrymandered state where 70% of the voters belong to one party, but may have less t 1/3 of the representatives. The 2/3 of the representatives won't give a rats arse about the 70% when they go to Washington.

From my 40 years of local and state government experience in Oregon, I strongly support a professional city manager, rather than a "Strong Mayor." The region already has two, Metro Executive and Multnomah County Chair. Let's not have a battle of "The Titans"!

As a former state and county elections official, I have no problem with single member districts, but STRONGLY urge you to lay off the complicated and difficult to explain "Preferential, or Layered" voting!!! There will time for that another year.

Our current City Council contains an extraordinary variety of diversity, including:

- Gender
- Race
- Ethnicity/language
- Sexual orientation
- Income

The Council still lacks diversity in:

- Age
- Geography/residential area
- Religion
- Disability
- Profession/area of business
- Political party

Attempting to add only "Geography/residential area" to the Council diversity is a relatively small return considering the varieties of diversity still missing and the varieties of diversity already achieved.

Unless single-representative district elections add multiple varieties of diversity without losing the diversity already achieved, the City Club should not recommend them.

Any commission who sets as a "Desired Outcome" institutionalized racism should be disbanded immediately. Specifically referencing:

#3 - Reflective government with Councilors who look like the community they represent

So 77% of City Councilors should be white? Asians 8% Blacks 6% Absurd and disgustingly racist. Welcome to regressive Progressivism, I guess.

Keep. It. Simple. Dump current form. Districts with similar populations. Each district elects one councilor. No crossover.

I support a form of government with geographic representation but I want to make sure that it reflects the interests of renters as well as homeowners. Districts should be drawn to have as even a balance as possible.

Thank you for all your hard work. I ask that you keep the proposed reforms as simple and limited as possible so there is the highest chance of voter approval. To me, the key changes are: (1) empowering the mayor or a city manager to run the bureaus instead of individual commisioners and (2) representative elections (ie, district lines to elect a representative, such as N Portland, NE portland, etc) instead of city wide.

Some of the other ideas you're discussing are interesting and could be helpful, but I am very concerned they are too complicated to understand and would risk a "no" vote when we so desperately need very basic and fundamental changes. So, please stick with the most basic changes as they are more easily understood and will truly have a profound impact. This is really a make it or break it moment for Portland. I'd rather have a "partial" fix instead of a failed "perfect" fix. Don't let perfect be the enemy of the good

I support district elections and the expansion of the number of council members, and that there be a City Manager guaranteeing or at the least hoping for, management of our resources by a professional person who reports to the council and is hired by the council. The mayor should be "first among peers" in his or her relationship with the council. Ranked choice voting is working in cities like San Francisco and lastly, I support participatory budgeting for some portion of Portland's budget. The latter provides citizen's with a "real time" sense of participation. I have experienced this in Vallejo, California.

I worked for the Rochester NY City Council. They had what seemed an efficient and representative system of elected Mayor, appointed City Manager, and a 9 member Council with 5 at-large members and 4 who represented specific geographic districts.

Make changes simple. We must have a strong Mayor or City Manager. No more than 5 to 8 Council Members elected by geographic districts. No Bureau assignments for Council Members. Hire a City Manager to set up an organization to run the Bureaus. Don't make it complicated.

As a tax paying resident of NE Portland, I fully support changing the city charter to a strong mayor system with a professional city manager to manage the bureaus. I also fully support electing councilors by district and rank voting to level the playing field for diverse candidates. We are far too large a city to still have a circa 1913 form of government

where council members have no experience running a huge (or two) bureau(s). It leads to not only dysfunction, but wasted tax payer money, taking too long to get simple city functions done. This must change or Portland will not recover from this COVID-intensified homeless crisis that is leaving tax paying residents no protection or safety from the rising crime and shootings our city is experiencing. It is not sustainable. Please ensure your commission is solidly in majority on this - it cannot come to a city council voting on whether to dismiss itself. Now is the time for this change and for bold moves, strong leadership and experienced city management.

In favor of STAR voting (prefer to RankedChoiceVoting).

I am copying another's comment, as it reflects my views better than I have remaining battery on my low-end device.

I'm writing as a proponent of STAR Voting and urging the commission to prioritize STAR over RCV. I know this can seem like he-said/she-said arguments, but there are basic facts that are important here. Proponents of Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) commonly misrepresent how RCV works. They make claims like "if your 1st choice gets eliminated, your vote moves to your 2nd choice". This is simply not true without qualification. In RCV, your vote can only move to your 2nd choice if that candidate wasn't eliminated in a prior round of tabulation. In practice, such situations are not rare, they are common. It's a normal part of RCV tabulation. This problem is not in the ballots, it's not in the voting procedure, it's only in the tabulation. So, the public perception that RCV is simple is based on a mistaken intuition that the tabulation will count all the votes and deliver fair results. STAR Voting has no such problems. Everything in STAR is clear and transparent. Every STAR election is readily understandable to any lay person looking at the results of the simple two rounds. STAR was developed specifically to resolve the fundamental problems in RCV.

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Please do not screw this up. Portland desperately needs new form of government. If you make it too complicated to understand or if it seems too risky given all the racial and inequity plans PEOPLE WILL NOT VOTE FOR IT...i beg you to keep it simple and get a win but NOT TRY to shape the city into something it is NOT but you WISH it was...KEEP IT SIMPLE AND EASY TO UNDERSTAND AND PROCESS

Please hire a competent city manager as soon as possible. Also ranked voting makes the most sense for true representation.

I just moved back to Portland after a decade away, and on coming back was so confused as to why I could not find out who my councilmember was in my neighborhood, representing me and the small businesses in my neighborhood. I then learned about our obsolete commission form of government in the City of Portland. This makes no sense. How can the city council represent its constituents if geographic areas are not represented? This form of government is inequitable. Ranked choice voting, and an adoption of council districts, is the only way the government will actually represent the choice of City residents. Further, the Mayor's office seems to be neutered of any power, any real ability to change things. There is so much ire directed towards current mayor Wheeler, and I feel like it is misplaced. The dissatisfaction with his track record and performance does not take into account how hamstrung he is by the commission form of government. I hope that this makes the November ballot and we can vote to change our form of government so that it truly represents Portland residents.

How the hell are we still operating under the current system? It's downright embarrassing to see our city government "function" in its current existence. Geography-based councilors! Choice rank voting! Maybe one day Portland can have a city government that isn't stuck in 1920!

I reviewed the March 2, 2022 proposals.

I am in favor of ending management of bureaus by City Commissioners. I do not oppose electing Commissioners by districts. The other proposals may lead to voter disapproval of the entire package.

The more changes that are put before the voters, the smaller the chance of voter approval.

It is time to change from our dysfunctional system of government to a City Manager with Commissioners representing geographic districts.

First my name is Rich Ferguson. I have owned a home in Westmoreland (Sellwood-Moreland) area since 1984. I am sending this because I believe a change to our current form of city government is imperative!

I have been following articles and information about the changes. To keep my comments simple, I believe there should be eight counselors each voted on by the district that they represent. I read that there are other ideas that I understand could result in multiple counselors from the same district. This makes no sense to me. Please keep the proposed change simple and understandable!

Thanks

I did send an email yesterday, but I am not sure it got through, so I am sending this second message.

If City Council draws its own districts, conflicts of interest will lead to gerrymandering. Fortunately there is a great way to let the public draw the districts: sortition, a.k.a. Citizen Assemblies. Portlanders have experience with Citizen Assemblies, e.g., from the recommendations on Measure 26-199. More info at [healthydemocracy.org](http://healthydemocracy.org).

I strongly support:

- \*multi-member districts

- \*single-election ranked choice

- \*city manager appointed by the City Council

Thanks for your consideration!

We need a Mayor or a City Manager that has more authority. Only 5 to 7 council members elected from districts who do not have Bureau assignments are necessary.

We need a simple form of city government. a strong mayor, no more than 6 council members with no responsibilities of running agencies, who oversee a qualified city manager.

Comments Attached

Re: VOTING METHOD

Portland Charter Review Commission

First, a big thank you to this Review Commission. Your credible embrace of transparency, serious objective study process, and willingness to address powerful fundamental change make this Commission one of the best exemplars of government undertakings in my 60-year dedicated attention to government observation.

Thanks, also, for your thoughtful and equal consideration of my written input here in contrast to those who testified via live video.

To begin, voting methods must be chosen on the basis of voting science. While I respect the good intentions by those who prioritize their selection based mostly on advocacy and common sense opinion argument, any thorough study will reveal just how complex and challenging it is—to assure that this most consequential decision technology will accurately measure and faithfully represent the full breadth of the voter constituency. What most everyone has long been led to assume is a system based on simple counting—has deep systemic flaws that undermine the very intent and profound trustworthiness of representative democracy.

Voting science is a social science; it's not the pure inviolate cut-and-dried truth of hard sciences like chemistry and physics. Yet today's advances in ability to carefully apply systematic observation, experiments, and mathematics do enable the development of much more objective, analytic, and sophisticated understanding of how voting policy and practice actually perform. Problematically, because democracy is founded on the equality of all voters, there is an assumption that all voters have the chops to decide on voting methods. As this Commission quickly discovered, that assumption has led to awful consequences, including officials who exacerbate the systemic sequential thread of systemic bad decisions and inequitable representation. While this Commission has appreciated that truth, many who testify on this topic with the best intended gravity and hopeful serious study, do so only philosophically and without

the genuine ability to apply voting science. It is crucial for the Commission, and all of us who engage in this debate, to realize our personal limitations and lack of real voting science abilities.

So while much of the discussion curated by this Commission on this voting method topic has been qualitatively far better than similar government past efforts, even the arguments based on extremely deliberative historic inquiry and statistics must be considered inferior to and less reliable than the understanding divulged by the much more authoritative voting science experts. (Note my repeated use of the critical term, reliability!) I, myself, despite quite considerable education in research and statistics and long study of voting methods and science—do not consider myself to be a qualified voting scientist. My plea to this Commission is to appreciate the well-intended best efforts by all of us who testify on this topic, but to objectively and scrupulously analyze and challenge which input is based on the best available voting science, which does not meet that standard, and assign highest precedence only to input that does. That also requires assessing which proclaimed experts actually are (a group or organization name that self-identifies as election/voting integrity or authority is hardly sufficient; appraise their credentials and publications). Fortunately, this Commission has progressed to understand the extreme flaws of the status quo first-past-the-post plurality voting method. It must be rejected, period. My own dedicated study of voting science experts has led me to conclude that more expressive voting methods are far superior. I also now believe that Ranked Choice Voting, invented 150 years ago, while better, is significantly inferior to STAR, which was formulated in 2014 to intentionally resolve the many comprehensive weaknesses of RCV. I also note that a very simple method, Approval Voting, shows the harsh misrepresentation of RCV, which is also especially plagued by the spoiler effect, wasted ballots, local subjurisdiction summability, and risk-limiting auditing problems, as well as non-transparent and delayed reporting difficulties. Any voting method that depends on overly complex computer calculations also opens the door to corrupt programming or hacking.

I personally strongly favor that our representation and voting methods provide equity for traditionally marginalized constituencies. Particularly in the west, these constituencies do not clump together in identifiable geographic neighborhoods, unlike ethnic patterns in days of old, and certainly for LGBTQ+. This is a real challenge when the respective constituency populations do not approach majority or large portions within geographic voting districts. And while I greatly respect the hopeful arguments advanced by some for RCV in this regard, I am unpersuaded at all that it reliably resolves the problem. In fact, it is especially noteworthy that Portland City Council has been remarkably more recently successful in this regard than ever even with its current all at-large districting. My sense is that voting science has barely scratched the surface for study of this objective, and that hardly any reliable pattern of data supports any given district representation or voting method for its achievement given how these constituencies reside so distributively. I am hesitant, regardless of hopeful advocacies, for the city to adopt a particular approach as an answer until better data and election science supports it. But it most certainly must be a priority and must be studied! Regardless of our lack of reliable data, my study of what seems to be available, favors multiple winners within smaller geographic districts. I hypothesize that the same sentiments that have facilitated current better representation of marginalized constituencies would continue, that smaller districts would make campaigning more affordable and accessible to more candidates, and that geographic districts would provide better accountability and access to constituents. I also recommend future focused study on proportional representation for this objective. However I am not aware of reasonable evidence for how it should be designed to achieve this purpose, nor for a data-based voting method that reliably does so.

Thank you to the Commission, again, for fearlessly taking on the scope of changes that are needed to achieve the visionary reform our city needs and deserves, particularly in this era of political polarization.

To the Commission members,

Thank you for doing this important work. I am in full agreement with the main agreements of the commission to enlarge the commission and have the members represent specific districts, to create more districts, and to have more than one commissioner represent each district. I believe that, like the U.S. Senate, there should be a fixed number of commissioners from each district regardless of the district's size. That would prevent the council from becoming too large and also prevent places like the inner city where more people reside in high rise apartment buildings from having undue influence over the single family dwellers in the outskirts of Portland.

I also am in favor of a city manager who is hired/fired by the members of city council who are seated at the time there is an opening for a city manager. To avoid frequent turnover and the having frequent long learning curve for the new

hire, the manager should serve until they resign or are fired. That person (not an elected mayor) should be hired based on relevant experience and their philosophy of city government and would manage the bureaus including hiring/firing bureau heads. For each bureau, the city council would work directly with the manager (rather than independently from them) to set criteria, benchmarks, and outcomes along with the timelines for those outcomes.

Finally, I suggest that several plans for reforming our city government would be on the ballot and voters would rank each proposal according to most to least favored.

Again, thank you for doing this work. I have been following the process via the public zooms and have been so impressed with everyone's qualifications, expertise, and insights into the task of helping Portland become a vibrant city that serves all of our needs.

If we want voters to approve this change to our city government, communications will need to be expressed in simple form, easy to understand and read and brief in content. Otherwise communications could be ignored or pushed aside.

May i Attend, even though i am unsure if i want to testify? if so please provide me the link to join the virtual meeting; thank you... i might get encouraged to testify from my attendance, thank you dearly for your Time, Works, Services, and Communications; Safety and Wellness.

sincerely,'

I am a resident in Southeast Portland, and I am writing to voice my support for changing Portland's city charter from the current structure to one that uses a city manager and more city councilors with broader geographic representation. Currently elections disenfranchise voting populations, councilors themselves have little expertise in their appointed commissions, and accountability is lost in a system that diffuses authority and decision-making capabilities across different commissions.

Portland urgently needs clear lines of responsibility and accountability in its government if we are going to address the issues of violent crime, homelessness, drug addiction, and police reform that are destroying this city right now. Please follow through with the recommendations of the City Club and reform this city's inadequate governing architecture.

I strongly support the concept of multi-member districts if winners are elected proportionally via ranked choice. I especially favor a plan with more members elected per district. This would help ensure representation of large but important minority groups such as people of color, immigrants, renters, families with children, seniors, young adults, and others.

A council that consists entirely of single-member districts would threaten to be far too parochial. It would prioritize geographic representation over every other type of representation. Geographic representation is important, but it's one of many important types of diversity.

I also favor a mayor who is elected at-large and has some amount of lawmaking (not just administrative) authority. There should be a role in the legislative process for a citywide perspective alongside district-based perspectives.

I have already signed up for updates and received none. Why is this taking so long?  
Explain what is at stake in a 30 second pitch or you will loss everyone's interest

I believe we should have council members elected through districts rather than at-large. This would help represent minority and poor populations better. However, I believe in having more than one council member per district so there's more representation. Thus, we should add more council members. I also believe we should vote in a rank choice system. Further, I don't think we should assign agencies to council members so council can focus more on the problems of the populace. I would hope there's a better way to deal with agencies that is different from how we currently do it.

As a writer and former government official, I congratulate you for pursuing your current course of action to recommend major changes to Portland's inefficient system of governance. What a challenge to have a more representative system of elected officials who are looking at big picture Portland instead of the current focus on

individual Bureau budgets with little cooperation across bureau boundaries. Please keep going as you have and please call on me for both support and advice. Many thanks.

I would very much like to see the city adopt STAR voting in its revamp of City Council elections. It is much fairer than the current system, easily accommodates multiple candidate districts, and is easy to explain to a population used to five-star rating systems.

Dear City Charter Commissioners,

My husband and I have been closely following the progress you have made on providing Portland some hope of turning the city around with the possibility of a a new Form of Government consisting of a City Manager, Mayor, and a new expanded and representative City Council. We commend you for your hard work and dedication to the task at hand. But as the New Form of Government has become clearer and clearer, I have become more and more hesitant about introducing, at the same time, a new way of voting. My concern is that if it is too complicated a process for voters to understand at one time, they may just decide to "throw the baby (New Form of Government) out with the bath water (new voting method for city elections)" and vote both down .

I urge you to keep it simple and go for the New Form of Government and once that is established, introduce Rank Choice Voting. You may find that the new expanded number of Council Districts with similar numbers and contiguous neighborhoods may provide opportunities for more representation from different groups from the district where they live than you expect. I frankly think that the false assumption that people want to "see themselves represented by someone who looks like them" is short sighted and offensive. You can already tell that Portland is beyond that by looking at the current City Council members and the demographics of the City. It could not be more racially diverse.

Rank Choice Voting may eventually be the way to go but what about the County and State elections? Would they all be on the ballot together? It would only serve to make City Council elections more difficult and confusing. Perhaps, there should be a separate effort to change all elections statewide to Rank Choice Voting at one time rather than piecemeal. Whatever you do, please don't miss the opportunity to bring Portland into the 21st Century with a New Form of Government.

Thank you for listening.

Respectfully,

Good Afternoon,

Enclosed is a copy of my written comment. Please accept this in lieu of a verbal testimony. Thank you for your time.

Having worked as a senior advisor to a Portland City Commissioner, having participated in the last two failed attempts to replace the current form of city government and having ten years of experience winning political campaigns, here is my brief comment. Do not try to create the perfect government and council election process with these first ballot measures. The measures must pass and therefore please seek out and listen to political strategists. You should recommend ballot measure language that is clear and uncomplicated for voters to understand and vote "yes." Proposals that include unfamiliar voting methods or multiple seats for each district will increase that chances of failure on election day.

Kip Silverman, Portland resident since 1998

I am really excited to see the momentum towards changing our form of city government, something I have been adamantly advocating for over five years stemming from the time I worked in city hall and getting to understand first hand why our city does not work effectively, transparently, or with a reasonable degree of accountability.

One aspect I have been advocating for along with removing executive function from the council, adding more representatives and putting in districts as well as brining in a well-audited city manager team is making sure this effort includes a reformation of our city's data and IT structures. This would allow bureaus to share data which currently exists in disparate platforms that don't talk to each other and would enable bureaus to be more effective and accountable. By consolidating and integrating the city's IT systems, it would save the city over 250 million dollars or

more each year.

This reform would not only offer better representation, but also needs to give better access for citizens to be directly involved.

This would require municipal broadband, no cost technology and training for those who need it, and building a city web site that provides meaningful and accessible information to Portland citizens. Giving us weeks to learn about upcoming votes and agendas and being able to understand what the impact of decisions would mean is critical for good government. Currently we are given less than a week to learn of an agenda.

Portland also needs to offer a public platform for citizens to engage with their representatives, find information-which is currently impossible even for seasoned IT people like myself, and have transparent knowledge of city projects and spending. None of this exists today.

I spent time researching these needs when I was in city hall and starting building a plan to implement and I know they are reachable goals. But it won't happen if it's not mandated.

Just changing the form of government is not enough- we need to include these critical reforms as well or our goals for an open, transparent, responsive, and accountable city government will still fail.

thank you

our rose city by a long shot. Move quickly to make changes and know that your community supports you!

M Bosch

Portland business and homeowner

Dear Charter Commission,

I gave public comment on Portland Fire & Police Disability & Retirement on March 10, 2022. I believe due to technical issues, the Commissioners were not able to see the powerpoint slides on screen. The slides I attempted to display are attached to this email and my comment is below. I'm happy to have this email and the attachment considered written comment for the Charter Commission. I'm always happy to discuss further.

[Slide 1] Thank you. I'm Kevin Machiz. I'm a CFA charterholder. I urge you to take action on the Portland Fire & Police Disability & Retirement Bureau.

[Slide 2] The City Charter defines both the benefit policy for future service and the funding policy of the pension plan for police and firefighters sworn before 2007, called Portland FPDR tier one and tier two. It is vital to Portland's long-term health that that the Charter require a comprehensive actuarial funding policy and to state that future cost of living adjustments would only be considered if the plan is fully funded.

The Charter puts FPDR on a pay-as-you-go basis. This is a curse on the long-term financial condition of Portland.

[Slide 3] Nearly all state and local governments that offer pensions attempt to set aside money by spending from their budgets in order to fund the pension. NASRA found that the average public pension has funded 72.8% of the total liability owed to current and former employees. The missing amount below 100% is called the unfunded liability.

[Slide 4] Take Oregon PERS as an example with a \$22.9 billion unfunded liability.

[Slide 5] Compare that to FPDR. Actuary Milliman found a total liability of \$4.46 billion and assets of about \$20 million. The Funded Ratio is less than one half of one percent. The liability is essentially unfunded.

It is stunning to me that 2,821 members of FPDR already have Portland taxpayers on the hook for so much, equivalent to one fifth the total dollar amount that taxpayers statewide are on the hook for to cover all the PERS members from

across Oregon.

[Slide 6] The unfunded liability of FPDR one and two is \$1.6 million per member, an extreme outlier compared to large state and local pension plans across the country.

[Slide 7] Please understand how the liability is expected to be paid for under the Charter's funding policy. If you saw the most recent property tax bill for a home in Portland, you may recall that FPDR already comprised over 10% of the total bill. Milliman projected that the expected Final Levy would rise from \$185 million per year in 2021 to \$404 million per year by 2039.

[Slide 8] I see several benefits to getting off of pay-as-you-go. First, it would improve transparency of compensation. Costs shouldn't be hidden by passing them off to future generations of taxpayers. Second, it would move the system toward Intergenerational Equity. Third, it would reduce cumulative long-term costs. Finally, it would mitigate the city's financial risk.

[Slide 9] The Conference of Consulting Actuaries Public Plans Community, [Slide 10] the Pension Funding Task Force, [Slide 11] and the Government Finance Officers Association all conclude that a comprehensive actuarial funding policy is a best practice.

[Slide 12] Require a comprehensive actuarial funding policy. State that future COLAs would only be permitted if the plan's funded ratio were above 100%.

Thank you,

I support STAR Voting as a preference voting method for our elections.

Learn more at [www.STARvoting.us](http://www.STARvoting.us) and [www.Equal.vote/star-vs-rcv](http://www.Equal.vote/star-vs-rcv).

I am a new Portland resident and only recently learned of this Charter Commission. The Oregon reporter who wrote the story I saw today, Shane Dixon Kavanaugh, mentioned that over half of the members of the Charter Commission identify as people of color or indigenous. Is this true? In a city that's 75% white, I would have expected a different composition.

Dear Commissioners,

I applaud your work on the Charter changes to date. My comments are as follows:

Regarding Agreement #1: The idea of a multi-member district representation is new to me. My concern lies in how will competing positions play out within these districts? Will these commissioner hold town meetings to field these issues collectively? To assure that each of the 2 or more members of a district are not representing the same demographic will there be a criteria of requirements to apply? I really think having one rep per district and having more commissioners would work best.

As you plan for creating these districts please consider using Neighborhood Association boundaries, other elective representative boundaries, AND corridor planning, including BOTH sides of the major corridor in the same district. Neighborhoods have historically served as the ONLY geographic representation for residents in Portland. I strongly recommend building on the broad outreach contacts of these volunteer organizations to help promote your request for input on district formation.

Regarding Agreement #2

The Mayor can serve as the tie-breaker for the City Commission/ Council.

Otherwise there are other duties as a representative of the City is important. A City Manager should be hired by the majority of the City Council.

Regarding Agreement #3

Ranked voting sounds like the best options published so far.

Other: I am so saddened that elected officials such as Jo Ann Hardesty are sponsoring bureaus such as Civic Life with total disregard for the Municipal Code 3.96, managing neighborhood associations. Right now 20% of the Portland population has been disenfranchised since Hardesty dissolved SWNI and has NOT followed her own ordinance to provide those neighborhoods a voice. Allowing City Council members to act as accuser, judge, and jury serves to give them too much power. The result is currently as the city council is designed we have 5 separate mayors with 5 different directions.

Please, make sure that punitive measures apply to City Commissioners who fail to meet the sworn pledge to support the Municipal code and charter.

Thank you for your consideration

The communication and outreach of this public hearing was not very good and did not reach North Portland until this evening.

As a Portlander who has lived in cities with a strong city manager form of government, I found it good for second tier cities and towns that want to be efficient, non-inclusive, non-innovative and non-participatory. All characteristics that do not apply to Portland.

The City Manager will be the Tsar or effective controller of the City's destiny. In Tacoma all information was controlled by the Manager who could and did limit the information provided to City Council and their access to employees. This can lead to private or backroom deals and contract negotiations. It can also limit the operations and effectiveness of the Portland City Auditor.

Finally it is undemocratic and reduces the power of the citizen/voter to determine the policies and administration of the City since they cannot vote for the Manager (and unlike Tacoma will not be able to vote for the majority of the Council).

The problems facing cities on the West Coast are the same in size and scope in each city regardless of the type of government (strong or weak Mayor, Commission or Manager). So changing the form of government provides no assurance of better outcomes, voter/citizen participation or support or economic performance.

Hi, I'm Sara Wolk, Executive Director of the Equal Vote Coalition, and longtime voting rights and voting reform activist from NE. I'm writing to encourage the Charter Commission to please recommend STAR Voting to Portland voters because it is the only voting reform that delivers on ALL of the excellent goals and priorities that the commission has already found consensus on.

The commission wants a voting reform which can allow voters to honestly express their preferences, which eliminates vote-splitting, and as a result will allow us to skip the low-turnout primary and streamline Portland elections to a single accurate, equitable, representative, and accessible election. The commission has narrowed this choice down to two methods, STAR Voting and RCV, and is considering single-winner, multi-winner, or proportional implementations.

Following over 6 years of intensive study on this issue, I believe that RCV would not function as advertised, or as Portland needs for the single-winner elections for mayor and auditor.

Portland has large, competitive elections, and it needs a voting method that does well and produces accurate results, but RCV has serious and well documented issues in large competitive fields due to the fact that RCV doesn't actually count all the rankings voters put down.

In RCV, some voters who have their favorite eliminated will not have their next choice counted, and voting for your honest favorite in competitive RCV elections can actually backfire. On average over 10% of RCV ballots are exhausted

and multiple studies from real elections around the country show that wasted, voided, and spoiled RCV ballots are more likely to happen to low income voters and people from already marginalized communities. This is a deal breaker, and there's no reason we need to accept it when there are upgrades available.

STAR Voting was invented to address these well documented issues and it does so elegantly by empowering voters to show their honest preference order and level of support, 0-5 stars, on as many candidates as they like. In STAR, all the ballots are counted, and no data is discarded. The two highest scoring candidates advance to the runoff, and your full vote goes to the finalist you prefer. STAR Voting guarantees that every vote is equally powerful, the legal definition of One person, One vote, unlike RCV.

STAR also does not have the wasted vote issues, and studies show that it's by far the more accurate, more equitable, and more logistically viable option as your own subcommittee on voting reform found after extensive study. Both for single-winner, and for Proportional STAR Voting if you should choose to go that route. I think that the rest of you on the commission would have come to the same conclusion if you had the time to do the deep dive.

Thank you for taking the time to hear us out! I invite you all to hear another batch of public testimony from our supporters in Eugene as well, which is rooting for Portland to lead on this issue. When STAR was on the ballot in Eugene in 2018 over 54% of voters voted yes, and every precinct that had a single lawn sign voted yes, despite the fact that the campaign had almost no budget, no campaign manager, and ran out of lawn signs. People want STAR Voting, not because we tell them to, but because they get it! Now, four years later we are in another place entirely, ready and committed to lead a great, inclusive and accessible voter information and outreach campaign for STAR Voting if you put this on the ballot, and we have a fund dedicated to that project for when the time comes.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtQ-ooY-ReE&list=PLdi1cwRPPnuJdWs9OluzLvhaWD5fDQdRZ>

Lastly, I know how many factors are in play here, and navigating how they all interact is a lot to process, even for people who have spent lifetimes studying this field. For that reason, we've made a flow chart that can help navigate the decision process and the intersections of ballot style, tabulation type, districting, proportional representation, and primaries. You'll find that attached to this email, and I hope you enjoy it and find it helpful.

I'm also attaching a number of other visual resources. Please give each of them a look though. A picture's worth a 100% words.

And a few great articles:

- More on comparing STAR and RCV: <https://www.equal.vote/star-vs-rcv>
- On RCV wasted votes compared to STAR: [https://www.starvoting.us/wasted\\_votes](https://www.starvoting.us/wasted_votes)
- On the recent NYC Mayoral election with RCV that did not deliver on almost every claim made, and that wasted over 10% of votes, and where over 135 thousand votes were accidentally added to the count and elections officials didn't catch the error until a candidate (correctly) called out the results posted. <https://medium.com/3streams/assessing-the-promises-of-ranked-choice-voting-in-new-york-city-d46748d5e6af>
- On Proportional representation vs multi-winner and when you might want each in general: <http://starvoting.us/multi-winner>
- On Proportional Representation and Proportional STAR Voting: <http://equal.vote/pr>
- And last but not least, on voting reform accuracy, (with all the citations) not to be taken for granted! <http://equal.vote/accuracy>

If you have any questions please don't hesitate to call, text, email, or request a meeting. We are here to help.

Thanks again for your time and consideration,

Yes to geographic commissioners, yes to city executive reporting to council, yes to voting for ranked list. No to mayor solely choosing executive; big no to multiple commissioners or a district, yes to election of district reps who interact with the commissioners in each district (nonpartisan precinct captains?); place fire and police under public safety executive; appointed police commission approved by commission vote. Commissioner removal by super majority vote

of entire commission; suspension of mayor pending recall by > 90% vote of commissioners; city executive position 3 year term reapproved by commissioners. So just a few tweaks to present system 😊.

Comments attached

My name is Isabela Villarreal, I use she/her pronouns and I'm the Policy and Communications Manager with Next Up Action Fund. We work to build political power with diverse young people to achieve a more just and equitable Oregon. We have been working closely with APANO, an organization that unites Asians and Pacific Islanders to build power, develop leaders, and advance equity through organizing, advocacy, community development, and cultural work, and we both would like to amplify this message. For too long we have seen the dysfunction of winner-take-all elections, which leads us to one fundamental conclusion: Portland needs proportional ranked choice voting elections.

In a winner-take-all system, one group of voters can control 100% of the seats, leaving those that make up less than half of the population with no pathway to fair representation - which significantly leaves communities of color, low income, young people, renters, and many other groups underrepresented and excluded from our local government. So, if our current winner-take-all system isn't equitable, what is the alternative?

While no system is perfect - for us, there's really only one answer: electing candidates through proportional ranked-choice voting for multi-member districts. It works by expanding beyond "majority rule" and ensuring that there is fair representation in our political system. Fair representation means that nearly all voters will help elect a candidate they support and that different groups of voters will elect winners in proportion to their share of voters.

What this looks like in practice is that voters have one vote but are able to rank candidates in order of preference. Under this system, more than one candidate wins.

Proportional ranked-choice voting makes more votes count, more often, and ensures that all voices in our community win their fair share of representation. I agree with others that we need a system that has been shown to have equitable outcomes and the reason we support proportional RCV over other methods of voting is that it is the only method that has been successfully implemented in elections across the country and around the world.

There is wide support for RCV from organizations who serve underrepresented communities - just this year in the 2021 state legislative session our organization, the Coalition of Communities of Color, APANO, AFSCME, Forward Together, NAYA, More Equitable Democracy Action, Oregon Student Association and more worked to collectively advocate for RCV.

In conclusion, proportional ranked-choice voting ends winner-take-all politics. We know this is absolutely necessary for just and equitable representation for our communities, and I encourage Commission members to support the system of voting that is proven, tested, used around the world, and works.

It's imperative that the Portland Charter Commission takes this once-in-a-decade opportunity to move us towards a system that allows voters to express their preference for candidates.

Members, Portland CRC-

I have been involved with a small number of activists who have had years of local government experience. We interviewed more than a dozen local elected officials and staff who have worked in various governmental structures. Following is a combination of what was gleaned from these interviews plus my own experience as a former Portland School Board and husband of a former Metro Councilor, in addition to lots of discussion with knowledgeable folks.

>>>

>>> 1. Everyone agrees on the need for a strong central executive. I have heard that the phrase "strong mayor" does not poll well. Therefore, while having a mayor with executive authority is necessary, the focus should be on a professional city manager, as most other cities have.

>>> 2. Everyone agrees on a council of members with strictly legislative functions that represent different areas of the city. One of the proposed reasons for this is to allow for successful minority candidates, who theoretically cannot win city-wide elections because of their inability to raise sufficient funds for a city-wide campaign. However, that rationale is obsolete, looking at the present makeup of the council. Public financing has eliminated this former barrier.

>>> 3. One proposal is to have multi-member districts. To me this runs counter to the concept of having one member representing one district to increase accountability to local citizens. With more than one member, responsibility could be divided, leaving no one with responsibility.

>>> 4. There have been suggestions about having as many as 12 councilors. In my view, that is far too many. The first objection is the cost, both to the public financing system, and to the city, where each member would need a salary plus staff plus offices. The second objection is that without administrative duties, there wouldn't be much for them to do, which could encourage attempts at micro-managing and/or just generally encouraging mischief. The county (with many more citizens than the city) gets along just fine with 4 commissioners who have only legislative duties, in addition to the county executive. The third objection is that this large number is intended to create representation for a number of minority groups. This could encourage members who are elected with narrow agendas, rather than seeking city-wide answers to city-wide problems. Realizing the public demand for an increase in the size of the council, I would argue for two more than the present number of commissioners for a total of 7 plus the mayor. This would have each commissioner representing roughly 93,000. That is approximately the number of citizens in a state senate district.

>>> 5. Election by district is a complex issue. Everyone agrees the mayor should be elected citywide. It is assumed by most that under a new structure councilors would represent specific districts, and would be elected by voters in those districts.

>>> Let me propose an alternative based on my personal experience. While I was a member of the school board, the legislature directed us to change from having all board members elected at large to having them run from individual districts. While realizing that this could allow citizens to have a board member who understood and could respond to local issues, the danger of parochialism would be present. Who would be on the lookout for the good of the district as a whole, and all its students?

>>> My solution, which has worked well for several decades, was to draw member districts, and require that candidates must live in those districts to run. This gave geographical

>>> distribution to the board. However, the candidates all ran at large, do that they did not represent parochial interests, but focused on school district-wide issue.

>>> I have run this idea past several folks interested in the charter change, and it has met with their approval.

My suggestion for process is to put several individual measures on the ballot. This will allow citizens to choose which portions of the reforms they want, and would protect against the whole concept being defeated owing to the unpopularity of one particular proposal. This is what has caused previous reform proposals to be defeated at the polls.

As there appears to be near universal support for a strong executive position, and taking administrative functions away from the individual commissioners this could be one measure. The subject of the election of commissioners: how many, single or

multi-member districts, etc, could be a second measure. This will be more controversial, and should not be the issue that brings down the whole reform.

Lastly, the subject of removing the primary election system and replacing it with some sort of instant runoff will be difficult to explain, and history has shown that complexity can be the death of a measure, so it should definitely be a separate measure.

Thank you for your service on the commission, and for reading my testimony.

Proportional voting works well in a system with multiple strong parties. In America we don't have multiple strong parties, and I think our elections for Portland city government are technically non-partisan. In that situation, I think proportional voting would create chaos. Parties help voters understand what candidates stand for. Without party labels candidates will have to get that information across to voters in other ways -- and that is hard, especially with busy, uneducated or low-information voters. Proportional voting also undermines the connection between voters and their representatives. Again, that works in countries with multiple strong parties and strong party affiliation. To me proportional voting and multi-member districts will not solve the problem we have in Portland -- a lack of connection between citizens -- all citizens -- and their representatives. People want to be represented and to feel represented. The best way to achieve that is more city council members -- and have elections be from districts. If there are enough districts it won't matter if the system is winner take all. Even in a winner take all system voters have the advantage of

their representative being geographically connected to them. I don't think you should try to do too many things at once. Adopting representation by district (and also taking the bureaus away from the City Council) would be enough. I don't think you should change the method of election. I know it is the shiny new penny, but that is not our city's main problem. Let's create more districts and change the form of government and see how that works. Later, if that's not enough, let's revisit elections. We don't know if we need ranked choice voting until we try districts. Ranked choice voting has been adopted in other places to solve problems that we don't even know if we have. Making things too confusing all at once isn't voter friendly.

Comments attached

Here are my thoughts

1. City Council with a professional City Manager
2. City council that is elected by Rank Choice voting (RCV)
3. ½ by district and ½ by Multiple Winner Districts Proportional representations

Please focus on three top priorities which will provide the voters of Portland a plan that is readily understood and will markedly improve our city's government.

1. A strong, professional city manager responsible to manage department/bureau heads who have executive experience.
2. A city council with 15 or more members, each responsible to collaborate with city departments/bureaus to address the needs and concerns of a defined district.
3. Transfer of the quasi-judicial functions of the city council to a separate administrative court with an elected panel of judges.

Dear Charter Commission,

When you have decided on the changes in government to be placed on the ballot, will all the changes be lumped together or separated out into different initiatives? ie: Changing from the Commission form of government to a more functional form of government be a initiative. And ranked choice voting, the number of city council members, and if they are at large all be a separate initiatives. Please do not put everything together.

We really need a different form of government that should be the focus. Keep it simple.

Rank choice voting would be nice but it is not essential. The number of council members and if they are representing a district or at large is not as important. The city is so dysfunctional. We have city council members running departments they have no expertise in. We need a city manager and qualified people running the city bureaus.

The mayor or elected city officials should not appoint the city manager or the heads of bureaus. The best person should get the job through a interview process. The city bureaus should hire their department heads. Just like us if they are not doing a good job they should be fired.

In the voters pamphlet please include the information from this site. Or even better mail this to every voter with the head line Do you think Portland needs a change in how the city is run? Here is your chance to create a functional government.

This is the link to the article:

<https://www.sightline.org/2021/09/01/everything-you-wanted-to-know-about-portland-charter-review-but-were-afraid-to-ask/>

Please include the section titled the first area of focus is form of government. (It's a brief history of the Commission form of government and why it doesn't work.) Then explain the proposed changes.

Thank you for your time.

I would encourage the Commission to limit its recommendations to the most essential to avoid risking a backlash on more extreme recommendations that will influence voters to not accept any of them. It is essential to change the form of government and to enlarge the council, and perhaps recommend elections by district. But please do not include recommendation for "how' one votes, as in ranked choice, etc. That can come later once the initial

recommendations are put into place and voters see that they made good choices by accepting limited recommendations.

Dear Commissioners;

I hope you will accept my written comments below. It turns out my original message was not addressed to the right party so was returned after several tries at delivery.

Thank you for your understanding

----- Forwarded message -----

Dear Charter Commission Members,

I know you have been working hard the last few months to come up with a proposal for the new city charter on how city government is structured in Portland. Thank you so much for that work. I believe this change is long past due and needs to be as simple as possible so it has the highest chance of passing in November, 2022.

I support having the city council elected by district. We are more likely to get a diverse council when people run in their familiar home districts, rather than at large. I like the idea of 5 or 6 larger districts with 2 members from each district. I also agree with expanding the size of the city council, but please don't let it get too large. Over 13 people total will be a nightmare to facilitate in any coherent way. And a large council will make it difficult for citizen activists to work with so many councilors to share their concerns, while the paid lobbyists will always find a way to influence the outcome of issues.

While I strongly support rank choice voting, I am deeply concerned that it will complicate the process and certainly the marketing of this proposal to the general public. Rank Choice can be difficult to understand and needs to be a focused effort for all local elections.

I also support a strong mayor and city manager form of government. We need to separate the roles of city management from the executive/legislative function. A city manager must have the ability to hire professional bureau chiefs who will manage more efficiently and, hopefully, have less conflict between bureaus.

Thank you,

Honorable Members of the Charter Review Commission,

First, and of primary (pun intended) importance, is our strong opposition to any inclusion of a ranked choice method of voting in a Charter reform initiative. Our opposition stems from our belief that any such proposed change to first past the post voting, apart from whatever the final proposed ballot initiative is or the merits of the other recommendations that the Charter review commission may make, and apart from the arguable merits of RCV, will certainly doom those proposals to defeat. In spite of the public's demonstrated strong support for Charter reform (<https://www.opb.org/article/2022/01/31/portland-voters-poll-support-change-form-of-government-oregon-politics/>) that support will not have the coattails to support such a drastic rupture from our current voting system.

As to our other views on Charter Reform:

The position of Mayor should have executive power. She/He should be tasked with appointing an administrative city manager. Perhaps subject to council approval(?). The Mayor would serve a term of 4 years. For an outline of executive mayoral powers see: <https://www.sightline.org/2017/06/14/7-key-questions-about-how-to-change-portland-city-government/#powers-and-responsibilities-mayor>

Given Portland's population size The council should be composed of at least 9 members. Current size and at large election of the council diminishes the representation provided to our citizenry. cf. p.17

(<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1y74WRaWJA3j2QEYqsAOtZwcLOvT97VcZ/view>)

The size of the council could also be greater and if the number is an even one then the Mayor would have the tie-breaking vote. Council should be elected by district, and not at large ( a method to review and redistrict in 10 year

intervals needs to be part of new charter).

Not all of council however, need be elected by district. e.g. If the total number of council was say 11, then 7 would be district elected for a term of 2 years and 4 would be elected at large for a term of 5 years. This would provide council with an elasticity to the political climate for the district members and the at large members would provide continuity and an institutional framework for deliberative and longer term vision.

Finally we are opposed to multi-member representation for districts. Such an arrangement would not be conducive of consensus building, lead to confusion on the part of the public as to who to reach out to and aid in further increasing the city's polarization.

Thank you for your serious consideration of our views and we are grateful for the time and the service you have provided our city offer the past 18 months.

Be Well,

I am offering my support for the use of STAR voting in all future city elections. It satisfies the requirements of the voting agreements reached by the charter commission in phase 1, as does rank-choice voting. However, rank-choice voting is not summable and would not allow for each of the three counties included in city elections to collect and tally votes separately using their established county elections structures. STAR voting does allow for summability in this way.

Allowing the counties to proceed with using their own established ballot counting procedures preserves the trust those voters have in their usual systems. Centralizing the voting system and taking the county offices out of the process could erode some of that confidence and even add to overall cost.

Hi Sofia, it was a pleasure to speak to you yesterday. I have read the 24 page report (progress report #2) and it impressive. What a lot of issues to process and think through.

We are excited to have Andrew Speer speak to our Firewise Committee on May 5.

I am hoping that after recommendations and voting take place we will have a government that can hear us. My experience has been that it is difficult when trying to find city bureau leaders to take an interest in the problems we face. There are many anecdotal tales, but they do paint the same picture: grass roots concerns, public employees trying hard, surveys being done and few if any recommendations being implemented, time passes, a new survey and similar recommendations. Again.

I was so interested in the meeting on 3/10. After reading Progress report #2 I am looking forward to hearing final suggestions. Hopefully, we can have improved government in the city. My concern as I told you is about the immediacy of the climate change dangers and the very slow pace of response. We need a government that can be agile. At this time there are disparities in mitigation recommendations by Ezones, Portland Fire, Multnomah County and the city of Portland. Very confusing for people.

Again Sofia, thank you for your time.

Geographic representation should be accomplished by electing a councilor from each of the 7 Neighborhood District Coalitions. 2 at large councilors should represent the 2 largest minority groups, Black and Latino. A total of 9 Councilors .

I am encouraged by everything you have presented as recommendations so far --with the exception of having having multi member representation for districts. The concept is a bit confusing. I want one rep for my district. What if I have 2 and they disagree on the solutions for our district? who do I contact? Ultimately, they are politicians, so who may want to get ahead in their careers, which may mean they offer less cooperation. Let's stick with one rep please..

Please DO NOT INCLUDE the new election choices on the same NOVEMBER ballot. Please divide the NOVEMBER ballot issues into (1) FORM OF GOVERNMENT and (2) a second ballot measure for CITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS. MY CONCERN is that educating the public on FORM OF GOVERNMENT will be difficult enough without putting ELECTIONS in the same ballot. I want to make sure that voters get to vote on FORM OF GOVERNMENT separately. Otherwise, the confusion, of both issues on one ballot, may sabotage this opportunity to change the form of government during 2022. We don't want to wait another 10 years to try this again. Also, the Secretary of State has to divide out each issue into a single-issue ballot. Sincerely offered from a CITY CLUB MEMBER, who has been studying this issue for several years.

I am very much in favor of district representation vs. the at-large system we now have. I have no idea how many geographic districts the city will be carved up into, but I do know that those decisions will have a big impact on the size of the city council. I am against the idea of having multiple representatives for any one district, mainly because I think it is confusing, especially without knowing how many districts there will be. In two cities where I have lived or worked in, that made the change to district elections, having one go-to representative for each district was a very clean way to structure the city council, it worked well, and is a concept that is easy to understand. I am also in favor of a professional, nonpartisan city manager rather than having council members running city departments. Again, this is something that I have seen work well in cities I have lived in or worked in. I am unclear about some of the other proposals, like a "strong mayor" structure and how that works, but I believe it's better to have non-political officials supervising, coordinating, and administering city departments. The political officials can focus on legislative matters. Finally, I am very concerned about some of the proposals to change the voting methods to RCV or STAR. While I can sympathize with issues like doing away with excess elections and trying to insure that elected officials have actually earned a majority of the votes of their constituents, rather than just a plurality, I fear that adding too many changes - especially complicated ones like voting methods - to one ballot measure, will give opponents something to point to as a reason to reject it. The ballot measure will be viewed as overly ambitious and hard to understand. So, I feel that voting method changes should be addressed in a separate, subsequent ballot measure.

I moved to Portland in 2008 after living in Denver for 41 years. In 2008 Portland was a beautiful, vibrant city. Now it's a mess for many reasons but, in my opinion, due to an obsolete and arcane form of city government. The city of Denver has a strong-mayor council form of government. Denver is divided into 11 council districts of approximately equal population. In addition to the 11 district council members two council members are elected "at large". All members serve four (4) year terms. In my experience in Denver this form of city government worked very well and the people were/are well represented. In my district our City Council member often attended our monthly neighborhood meetings to update us on city matters. I hope the Portland Charter Commission will strongly consider this form of government. More information and research on the "Denver model" would be helpful I believe.

I've lived in Portland since 1987 and while the current antiquated form of government was fine back then when it was just a town versus a real city, it now needs to dump the council form of governing in favor of a strong Mayor. The current system is a debilitating form of group think which, by design, results in hard decisions and accountability being avoided by all concerned.

In Portland's latest tribute to the 14th amendment, the 1984 Civil Rights bill, and the charming notion that "All men are created equal," we present.... The Black Youth Leadership Fund! Brought to you by Commish Jo Ann Hardesty and the rest of the deep-thinkers on the City Council. Deep thoughts; your deep pockets. Hardesty, who has made racism pay off (mostly for her career advancement from self-dealing at the NAACP to a \$125,000 annual city paycheck\*) ran out the usual progressive verbiage praising her shiny new program: "These investments will provide hope and opportunities for our Black community that has always been left behind in Portland." Short version: let's forget that POCs now have an absolute majority on City Council, prominent positions in local business, unions, school boards—let's solve the problems of the 1930s. We'll feel better. It's chump change, in terms of money tossed around by the Council—\$1-million—but one might want to note that this dough was sucked out of the Police Bureau (looted for a total of \$15-million) in the last city budget. The crime/homicide spree is a small price to pay for Hardesty, who celebrated, at the time... "Never in my life would I have imagined that we or any government would be able to cut that much significant resources out of a police budget." One reminder: think about that the next time you call 911 and get put on hold. It goes without saying that this is as overtly racist as, say, other race-specific programs (such as aid to black farmers) that courts have routinely batted down. And it begs the question: what about every other race's "leadership" needs? Asians (they get the short end of the stick, as usual, even though the city's record on Asians is even worse than that for blacks); the Indigenous (need we say more?); and even the city's Jewish population (which still puts up with genteel upper-crust antisemitism). And then there's the nagging question: who is actually black? The city's sizeable Somali community (who should be giving thanks that the US took them in from the most dysfunctional failed state on the planet)? Nigerians (well known as the most successful immigrants in the country)? Indians of a certain hue? Arabs? And how much black DNA do you need to be properly part of this "protected class?" Half? (Obama got away with that canard); 25%, based on long-ago great grandparents? It's the Nuremberg Laws redux, in their purest form. Which bothers progressives—especially the white group-definers and favor-granters—not at all. Predictably, the Oregonian gushed over the Leadership program with typical progressive chest-thumps... The

leadership program aims to close racial wealth and inequality gaps in Portland that stem from racist practices like residential segregation and a lack of financial investment in historically Black neighborhoods and communities. More of that “historic” stuff. Mindless that the Charter Commission, in its search for a reliable guaranteed BIPOC district, made the astonishing confession that, despite its best efforts... Portland does not have a geographic distribution of BIPOC residents that could allow for a drawing of a majority BIPOC district... In other words, the city is too damn integrated for our separatists. Typically, the O couldn’t resist giving itself a nice tip ‘o’ the hat in its stenographic-reportage. The program (no specifics, of course) was devised by one S. Renee Mitchell. Her cred? As the O notes... Mitchell said Hardesty’s office approached her several months ago to develop the program based on Mitchell’s doctoral research at the University of Oregon and I AM M.O.R.E., a program she designed while teaching journalism at Portland’s Roosevelt High School. Mitchell, a former columnist for The Oregonian, said she was inspired to create dedicated spaces and research-backed methods for healing Black youth... No word about what she will be paid for “designing” this new program. Or what “healing” will actually occur. Or, for that matter, how anything else in the program will be judged, beyond getting funds into the pockets of the Black United Fund (\$753,250), whose head, Dr. LM Alaiyo “Dr. A” Foster, wrote... For us here at the Black United Fund, June gives us the opportunity to reflect on the deeper purposes of our work, especially the historical and oft overly-generalized collective Black oppression in these united states known as America.... The letter was written in June 2021; it’s doubtful his opinion has changed since then. It will also plump up the bank account of the Oregon Community Foundation (\$196,750). It’s a big outfit, its colorful website sprinkled with the usual code-words... “diversity,” “underserved,” etc. With a mega-budget of \$334-million, one suspects the Leadership program will be a rounding error. Short version: only the merest trickle of money will go to any of the proto-leaders; as usual in progressive machine politics, it will be creamed-off by the professionals and, in particular, to the racist organizations that need—desperately—to have all that nasty Racism!!! that they can monetize. Thus we get the universal knee-jerk/fall-back of the history argument. It gets thinner with every “first of...” article in the Oregonian and the rest of media. Ending with the weirdness of our elderly president’s selection for the Supreme Court. Bottom line... Jo Ann Hardesty gets a nice bullet-point with voters and another slush-fund. (Ms. Mitchell tells us this is a program that will live, essentially, forever.) No definition of what the plan is beyond the usual gas-bag of progressive wishes. The Oregonian isn’t going to put today’s story in the tickle-file and check back in, say, a year, to check up on all of those newly-minted “leaders.” Much less what they are “leading.” The non-profits, our true 4th estate, will get fatter, happier, out of sight, out of mind. As the Bible says, “There is nothing new under the sun.”

Candace Avalos should resign immediately Her behavior along with the behavior of Shaina Pomerantz show that she is not fit for duty on a public commission due to bias and racial profiling. If she doesn’t resign she should be relieved of her duties.

It is time to realize that Portland is no longer a town; it is a city. And like any city, Portland needs responsible, professional leadership that can be held accountable for financial planning and expenditure oversight. We can no longer allow unqualified city council members with little to no experience in handling multimillion dollar budgets to run city bureaus as though they were lemonade stands on the street corner. Some of our prior city council members even had terrible previous business records of their own which should have immediately disqualified them from running large financial organizations like PBOT or Parks and Recreation. We can no longer tolerate city council members to have a "learning period" in which those members bankrupt a city bureau while trying to figure out how to oversee a budget and a workforce. We need city managers. We need professionals. We need change now if this city has a hope of surviving its troubled return from the pandemic to regain its prior glory. It is time to rewrite the city charter and remove the city council/mayor control model in favor of a modern, current format that will save money, promote success, and provide accountability at the end of the day.

I am totally in favor of the Charter form of government. Our present system is not working and have seen some huge costly mistakes made by our city council in their bureau assignments in my 74 years of living in Portland. And now we are at a crisis point of seeing our city taken over by serious crime and homelessness. Surely we can do better with better representation and the charter system seems to be the answer in many larger cities

It is so past time to get a representational form of government in this city that doesn’t really work! Grew up in Chicago where your city council person actually lived in neighborhood they represented...oh wait, neighborhoods pretty much dead here too..just expensive jail cells where no one stays more than a couple of years...

<p>I am in favor of multi-member districts and ranked choice voting to better represent Portland's diverse communities, and eliminate the primary system. I am also in favor of a City manager to run the bureaus, accountable to Council and the Mayor, rather than the current system with each Councilmember overseeing a few bureaus without relevant managerial or content expertise.</p>
<p>I strongly support multiple-member districts with ranked choice voting. I want to be able to accurately vote for who I prefer, and I love proportional representation because winner-take-all voting destroys nuance and causes bitter divisions. Portland's residents deserve a government that represents them.</p>
<p>JULIA MEIER NEEDS TO BE FIRED. She created a charter commission that is not look the city and was former to further her agenda of racial justice over and above all other considerations. We need to clean house of all the extremists appointed to city positions.</p>
<p>Your BIPOC only "public" meeting is flat out racist. These discriminatory practices need to end. Would a "white only" meeting be allowed?</p>
<p>We should move away from city council running bureaus this isn't something other cities do and our city council lacks the experience. We need a city manager who reports to city council and experienced bureau managers. As for elections each neighborhood coalition should get a district and be able to elect a city council member</p>
<p>Keep. It. Simple. Elect strong mayor. Hire city manager. 9 neighborhood coalitions. Elect 9 comissioners, one from each. Use the coalition offices as new offices for commissioners. Give them same budgets. This is not rocket science.</p>
<p>I strongly disagree with using ranked choice voting. It does allow a voter to property describe how they feel about each candidate since it only asks them to rank the candidates as opposed to scoring the candidate. For example, if I ranked someone as second, it doesn't capture if I like them a lot, or I think they are the least worst. Scoring would allow me to specify this option. Additionally, if a candidate doesn't receive votes in the first rout, they are eliminated. This means if they are everyone's second choice and get zero votes for first, they are eliminated! The effect, as seen in Australia, is that it doesn't encourage more diverse elections. Most placed that have implemented RCV ultimately repeal it for most of these reasons. Please choose any score based voting. Approval voting is well tested and used in Cincinnati and St Louis. Score based voting is great. Star voting would work as well.</p>
<p>On behalf of BOMA Oregon, thank you for the opportunity to submit comments regarding the Portland Charter Commission's consideration of the City of Portland's Charter, and possible amendments. BOMA applauds the Commission and its efforts to address and remedy the aspects of our City Charter that are interfering with our leaders' efforts to lead Portland past the issues that have plagued our city for too long, and into a future that holds promise for all our citizens, and for the return of the robust business environment that serves them. Even a brief review of our City's current situation shows that our "weak mayor" governing structure is ineffective in the face of today's realities. Ongoing public safety issues continue to worsen in Portland, with no tangible solutions in sight. Once thriving retailers have left downtown and neighborhood commercial areas in droves, their previously attractive storefronts now boarded up, and windows often broken, and then broken again when repaired. There is lack of confidence among our citizens in the PPB, as crime goes unpunished, often without any response from our Police. There are staffing and other ongoing issues at the BOEC, rendering that Bureau largely ineffective. Houselessness continues to grow in staggering numbers in Portland, in spite of promises of more badly needed shelter beds and affordable housing. The lack of communication and cooperation between City bureaus impedes our ability to achieve real progress on many of these Issues, often crippling our efforts, no matter how well intended. Ongoing sidewalk camping, trash, graffiti, open drug dealing and use, and gun violence deeply damage Portland and tarnish our long time reputation as among the most livable cities in the country. And these are only a few of our many challenges. The already substantial negative social and financial impacts on our City that have been caused by the above issues, and others, are making Portland unattractive, or worse, for developers, businesses, and homeowners alike. It is time for meaningful positive change, and we support amendments to our Charter that are thoroughly considered and carefully crafted to address our City's great challenges, and restore Portland to the great City it was, and still can be. Thank you for your consideration. BOMA Oregon represents 55 million SF of commercial real estate, consisting of 45 Building members, 46 Allied members, and a distribution reach of 1,000+.</p>
<p>want : (1) city manager to be in charge and report to mayor and council. (2) mayor, elected at large; "first among equals." (3) eight commisioners, each representing a district. A total of nine voting comissioners. Keep it simple! All this other talk of multiple comissioners for districts and ranking candidates in elections is ALL WRONG. TOO HARD! Keep it simple! Just vote! Cansdidate that gets the most wins that spot and reps that dist. Primary? Maybe. Then</p>

top two run off in general. That's it. I am pessimistic. It's Portlandia. You'll screw this up. I still took the time to respond because we have become "The City That DOESN'T Work."

City Charter Commissioners,

Dear Commissioner on the Portland Charter Review Committee,

I urge you to continue your service as a Commissioner by voting to strengthen democracy and expand decision-making power in the City of Portland. Specifically, I write urging you to vote to refer the following City Charter changes to Portland voters:

Expand City Council to at least 23 seats, and adjust the size of council in the future to maintain a ratio of residents:councilors of no greater than 30,000:1.

Implement multi-member districts, elected with proportional representation, with a minimum of 4 councilors per district.

Change the city's voting method from First-Past-The-Post to a method that allows voters to express preference levels for multiple candidates.

Eliminate Primary elections.

Establish a City-wide participatory budgeting process with an allocation to such a process of a minimum of 10% of the annual General Fund budget and a minimum of 5% of annual parks and transportation-related capital improvement expenditures.

Establish City standards and programs to ensure fair and equitable opportunities for all Portlanders to engage and participate in government decision making, including 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.

Establish new policies and programmatic capacity for using democratic lottery for selecting some or all participants on City-administered commissions, boards, advisory committees, task forces, or other policy making or oversight bodies.

Open the civic participation process outlined in the previous three reforms to non-citizens and people age 16 and older, with the goal of reforming Oregon state law to expand voting rights to non-citizens and people age 16 and older.

In 2022, it is time we commit to Portland's Charter a full program of guaranteed representation and decision-making power distributed throughout our neighborhoods and communities. Rather than staying in our current structure or settling for modest changes, I urge you to vote to refer these deep changes to the Charter.



March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022

Dear City Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to the Portland City Charter Commission as they consider and vote on both the city form of government and which voting system proposal they will recommend and pass either as a majority or will refer to voters in the fall. My name is Crystalyn Black, and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of the Urban League of Portland. The Urban League of Portland is one of Oregon's oldest civil rights and social service organizations, empowering African Americans, and others to achieve equality in education, employment, health, economic security and quality of life. We do this by investing in stable housing; through workforce development; community health; education and well-being; for our youth, adults, and seniors. Our culturally specific programs and services, combined with our powerful advocacy and civic engagement, empowers Black communities to thrive across Oregon and SW Washington.

For the communities that we represent, this is an issue of equity and inclusion. For far too long the current commission form of government and voting system, has forced communities of color to make pragmatic choices when it came to leadership decisions; the Commission government currently does not create many pathways for people of color to have a seat on City Council, and it reduces the chances of our communities to elect the candidates we want as our leaders. Since 1913, only five people of color have served on the Portland City council. This matters because the leaders we choose determine which issues get championed.

In partnership with the Coalition for Communities of Color, the Urban League held a series of community workshops. The goals of these workshops were to walk our communities through the current form of government and voting system and what could be some alternative solutions to consider. More importantly, it was our opportunity to hear from them if the current form of city government and voting was working for them and the overwhelming response was no.

Much of the feedback we received from community members is in alignment with where the Charter Commission has currently come to agreement. Many of the community members that attended also voiced the following:

- That the City Council needed to increase in size.
- End oversight of City bureaus from City Commissioners and shift the management authority elsewhere.
- Clearly redefine the responsibilities of the Mayor and City Council.
- To shift to a form of voting that allows results in one election and captures people's preferences.



- Shifting to a mayor-council government or a council-manager government structure.
- Eliminating the primary election and only having the general election.
- Shifting to an alternative voting method so voters can *rank or score* more than one candidate.
- Creating geographic districts wherein voters will be represented by more than one elected leader.
- That elected leaders live in the geographic areas they are elected with representing so that there is a vested interest in seeing improvements.
- That there needed to be clarity around who oversaw what department and who could make decisions if they personally had a problem.

Above all else, our communities wanted to see transparency and accountability in our city form of government. Many of our participants felt that they had no clear idea of who oversaw which issues and if they had a problem, who that person would be that could have a possible solution. Many felt that no matter the size of the commission, it was vitally important that their voices be heard and centered in all policies and decisions; especially those that would impact their community. Lastly, we would just reiterate that the current structure of city government is not working for our communities and our communities are asking for and open to changing to a new structure that is more equitable and serves all Portlanders.

Respectfully,

Crystalyn Black, Policy Analyst  
Urban League of Portland  
Portland, OR 97227  
Phone: 503.280.2600  
Fax: 503.281.2612

## Alvarez-Castro, Sofia

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**From:** Mary Hill <msmlhill123@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 10, 2022 12:47 PM  
**To:** Charter Review  
**Subject:** Fwd: Testimony for March 10 Charter Commission meeting

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Mary Hill** <[msmlhill123@gmail.com](mailto:msmlhill123@gmail.com)>  
Date: Thu, Mar 10, 2022 at 12:41 PM  
Subject: Testimony for March 10 Charter Commission meeting  
To: <[CharterReview@portlandor.gov](mailto:CharterReview@portlandor.gov)>

I only found out about tonight's meeting of the Charter Commission this morning.

Although my comments are not being submitted 48 hours before the meeting, I hope they will be taken into consideration. (I have also signed up for the email notification list)

I've lived in the city limits of the City of Portland since 1985.

From the National League of Cities website, <https://www.nlc.org/resource/forms-of-municipal-government/>

I find the following:

Among all cities proposing a change to their structure of government, the most common proposal was to add the position of [chief administration officer/city manager](#).

I support:

- 1) A shift to a form of government in which City Commissioners do not directly manage bureaus.
- 2) I favor a non-elected City Manager (see above from NLC website) who is supervised by the Mayor and City Council and is responsible for hiring and firing the head of city bureaus that deliver city services. I support this to ensure budget coordination, to create similar working structures within the bureaus, and to prevent politically based competition between the bureaus.
- 3) RCV for candidates for city council
- 4) Increasing the number of elected city commissioners to reflect the large growth in the population. Among other things, this could lower financial barriers to compete for district based city commissioner elections
- 5) Shift to one November election for city council, eliminating the May primary election.

From the NLC website, Portland is the ONLY city among the largest cities in the USA that still retains a Commissioner form of government. It is time for this to be reformed.

Thank you for working so hard to update the form of city government, in Portland, that will be more responsive to individual citizens (geographic representation, more councilors) and be more efficiently run (adding a City Manager, who will supervise the hired supervisors of city bureaus.)

Thank you!  
Mary Hill  
3411 S.W.Luradel St

<b>Rank</b>	<b>City Name</b>	<b>State</b>	<b>Form Of Government</b>
1	New York	NY	Mayor-Council
2	Los Angeles	CA	Mayor-Council
3	Chicago	IL	Mayor-Council
4	Houston	TX	Mayor-Council
5	Philadelphia	PA	Mayor-Council
6	Phoenix	AZ	<b>Council-Manager</b>
7	San Antonio	TX	<b>Council-Manager</b>
8	San Diego	CA	Mayor-Council
9	Dallas	TX	<b>Council-Manager</b>
10	San Jose	CA	<b>Council-Manager</b>
11	Indianapolis	IN	Mayor-Council
12	Jacksonville	FL	Mayor-Council
13	San Francisco	CA	Mayor-Council
14	Austin	TX	<b>Council-Manager</b>
15	Columbus	OH	Mayor-Council
16	Fort Worth	TX	<b>Council-Manager</b>
17	Louisville-Jefferson County	KY	Mayor-Council
18	Charlotte	NC	<b>Council-Manager</b>
19	Detroit	MI	Mayor-Council
20	El Paso	TX	<b>Council-Manager</b>
21	Memphis	TN	Mayor-Council
22	Nashville-Davidson	TN	Mayor-Council
23	Baltimore	MD	Mayor-Council
24	Boston	MA	Mayor-Council
25	Seattle	WA	Mayor-Council
26	Washington	DC	Mayor-Council
27	Denver	CO	Mayor-Council
28	Milwaukee	WI	Mayor-Council
29	Portland	OR	Commission
30	Las Vegas	NV	<b>Council-Manager</b>



**Terry J. Harris**  
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Portland, OR 97239  
[terryjharris@gmail.com](mailto:terryjharris@gmail.com)

Portland Charter Commission  
Via email: [CharterReview2020@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:CharterReview2020@portlandoregon.gov)

March 12, 2022

Charter Commissioners,

As you all approach some serious decision points, I would urge caution. Most of the reforms you are proposing are critically important to Portland's future. But, failing in this reform effort in a courtroom or a ballot box would be devastating. As you know, I have deep reservations about multi-member districts, and I believe that your insistence on bending over backwards to accommodate them could prove to be a tragic mistake for the very purposes you hope to deploy them. I urge you to have solid answers to the following questions before moving forward with multi-member districts.

**1. Does the proportional representation math work for your proposal?**

As you know, proportional representation is the method you will be employing in multi-member districts to enhance minority representation. But for Portland, where minority residents are not geographically concentrated, there will be a minimum number of members per district required to deliver on its promise. For example, two members per district won't be enough. Three members per district won't be enough except in carefully drawn (gerrymandered?) districts. (There's a reason [Portland DSA is recommending at least 23 council members](#).) If the proportional representation scheme isn't mathematically going to work for your intended purposes, there is literally no reason whatsoever to implement multi-member districts.

**2. Will the voting scheme and district representation be in the same ballot question?**

As you also know, multi-member districts would be disastrous for minority representation unless it is coupled with a different method of voting. Therefore, *the two issues MUST be linked in the same ballot* question, lest the district scheme pass without an appropriate voting method.

**3. Will your proposal clearly satisfy the one-person-one-vote requirement?**

Multi-member districts with single-transferable vote and ranked choice voting is [not used anywhere in the U.S.](#), so this particular formulation has not been tested directly in the courts. There are a number of potential legal pitfalls in constructing such a system. First, and most obviously, the districts will need to be substantially equal in size and perfectly equal in the number of representatives afforded to each voter. But ranked choice transferable voting results

in different ballots counting more heavily in choosing a winner than other ballots. If a court were to toss the voting scheme but leave multi-member districts, it would again be a result directly counter to the commission's stated purposes. If a court were to toss them both together, we're right back where we started.

**4. Will the size of your multi-member districts provide adequate geographic representation?**

With fewer districts, more neighborhoods will need to be combined into the same districts. And as you well know, some neighborhoods come with more political power than others. Those neighborhoods that currently dominate citywide races will be even more powerful within a district. Therefore, multi-member districts may be too dominated by powerful neighborhoods to guarantee geographic diversity within the district itself. However, smaller and more numerous (single-member) districts can shrink the sphere of influence of these more powerful neighborhoods. I realize that the Commission declines to draw the district lines, but I would encourage some back of the envelope sketches to see where the votes will be coming from in the few very large districts that you will be recommending.

**5. Would your proposal defeat a competing single-member district ballot question?**

A major lesson from the Baltimore charter changes in 2002 is that voters understand and value the simplicity in smaller single-member districts. If a competing ballot initiative with 12 single-member districts were to qualify for the ballot, do you honestly and reasonably believe that your proposal of much larger multi-member districts would be more popular? A citizen initiative is a lot of work, but also a real possibility once the benefits of smaller districts enter the mind of voters.

**6. Is lobbying on the voting scheme wagging the dog?**

Although I'm a strong opponent to multi-member districts, I'm agnostic as to which voting method is best. But the amount of organized lobbying and testimony and attention given to the decision between ranked choice and STAR voting seems to greatly overshadow the more important decision of single- versus multi-member districts. The decision between voting methods should follow the decision on districts, not the other way around. With single-member districts, your voting decision is much less fraught.

**7. Does proportional representation in multi-member districts require recall reforms?**

As I testified at your public comment session. The existing opportunity for recall elections in Portland could end up being a tool for the majoritarians in multi-member proportional districts. A councilmember elected with a less-than-majority vote is instantly vulnerable to a majority-vote in a recall. Indeed, because proportional representation is likely to mean ALL councilmembers are elected without a majority of "first choice" votes, a recall vote majority is easily possible on each the councilmembers individually. Again, in single-member districts this would not be an issue. (Personally, I prefer impeachments for cause over recalls to provide stability in representation, but I would guess that Portland charter voters might not look kindly on removing the recall provisions entirely.) You may need to consider additional barriers to recall or different thresholds for a recall vote in proportional representation schemed districts.

**8. Does proportional representation in multi-member districts require term limits?**

As I testified at your public comment session, multi-member districts with proportional representation have fundamental structural problems with direct accountability such that the incumbent advantage in any subsequent election is almost unsurmountable. If you insist on moving forward with such a system, you should very seriously consider imposing term limits on the system at the same time. Imposing term limits after you have entrenched incumbents in office is much more difficult.

**9. Can you solve the timing of district elections problem fairly?**

Given the premise that voter participation is much higher in presidential years than in off years, it would make sense to make all city offices up for election in presidential years. But there are strong counterarguments that voters should be able to weigh in more often than every four years. Unfortunately, that would mean that off-year elections will always be in the same districts.

One solution would be to make ALL districts subject to alternating two-year term/four-year term rotations with a six-year cycle for full city-wide elections. This provides for some city election every two years, each district rotates in and out of presidential years, and big citywide elections every six years. (It also solves the “transition” problem in 2024.)

For example:

- Even district terms: 2024-2026, 2026-2030, 2030-2032, 2032-2036 ...
- Odd district terms: 2024-2028, 2028-2030, 2030-2034, 2034-2036 ...
- President/Mayor: 2024-2028, 2028- . . . . . -2032, 2032-2036 ...

**10. Given all the problems, are oversized, untested, multi-member districts REALLY worth it?**

Ultimately, this is the decision you will need to make. Regrettably, I think there was a predisposition on your commission for multi-member districts, rooted in some thinly researched but well-meaning reports, and in organized lobbying on voting methods. Unfortunately, this meant that much of the consideration of multi-member districts has been rooted in wishful and motivated thinking and not critical or objective analysis. The recent progress reports, for example, already have an appearance of “announce and defend” rather than the more reasoned analysis that should dominate this phase of your deliberations. Nevertheless, I still hope you will carefully and objectively consider the pros and cons, the costs and benefits, the unintended consequences and collateral issues, and especially the risks and rewards embedded in this particular decision. Smaller single-member districts are proven, they’re better for neighborhoods, they’re intuitive, and they are the much safer choice for the ballot.

Thank you all for your efforts,

Terry J. Harris

To: Portland Charter Commission  
From: Janice Thompson

March 11, 2022

Thanks for all your hard work. The extensive opportunity for public testimony last night was great and several of my comments, outlined below, are informed by listening to the input of others.

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- Don't be swayed by "keep it simple" sentiment on single member districts
- Multi-member districts—imperative to pair with Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)

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- RCV vs STAR (score then automatic runoff)
- Terminology background to provide context for historical and academic analysis

Page 3

- The success of P-RCV is illustrated by its opposition history
- Multi-member district considerations—advantage of larger districts with more seats

Page 4

- Lessons from other countries and other analysis
- Which elected officials should run when

Page 5

- Public education advantage of electing the entire Council in one cycle and both citywide officials in the next election

#### Don't be swayed by "keep it simple" sentiment on single member districts

Please disregard "keep it simple" opinions in the press and comments that call for geographic representation in single member districts because this sentiment is, well, too simplistic and inappropriately ignores the equity and other representational advantages of multi-member districts in combination with ranked choice voting (RCV). The Portland reality is that an interconnected set of policy changes are needed: ending the commission form of government, increasing the size of the city council, and changing how that body is elected. This comprehensive package of reforms will require public education during their implementation but are well within the ability of Portlanders to understand. Focusing on just one element of this comprehensive policy package and framing support for single member districts, that only provide geographic representation and a continuation of problematic winner-take-all elections, as a "keep it simple" stance is disingenuous given the needed scope of charter revisions and can be reasonably viewed as underestimating the intelligence and learning ability of Portlanders. To be clear financial support for public education will be needed and an explicit reference requiring public education support should be in the revised charter.

#### Multi-member districts—imperative to pair with Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)

Some comments have raised concern with multi-member districts and cited examples of other cities shifting to single member districts. As was noted during a Commission meeting, though, current examples of multi-member districts are as close as Washington state. There each legislative district elects one Senator, but is a two-member district for state House of Representatives with voters from the entire district voting for two representatives.

I support multi-member districts for Portland's City Council members but only if coupled with a preference voting method using a ballot style like Ranked Choice Voting (RCV). Though there have been shorthand references to multi-member districts it seems clear that what is being discussed is this pairing

of RCV with districts from which more than one Councilor would be elected. As you know, it is the combination of multi-member district with RCV that provides for proportional representation.

#### RCV vs STAR (score then automatic runoff)

Implicit in my previous comment is that I prefer RCV to STAR voting since STAR is an untried governmental election system that is vulnerable to tactical voting. It also fails the Later-No-Harm criteria that means expressing a preference beyond the favorite can harm the voter's favorite candidate while RCV meets this Later-No-Harm criteria.

Regarding the monotonicity criteria it is mathematically possible for RCV to fail. Monotonicity is that after ballot counting and assuming that all other candidates remain ranked or rated the same, ranking or rating should not cause a candidate to lose and that a lower ranking or rating should not cause that candidate to win. Though STAR does pass the monotonicity criteria, it should be noted that many think the Later-No-Harm criteria that it fails is more important. The frequency of RCV failing monotonicity merits consideration and was assessed in a July 2020 paper, *Lack of Monotonicity Anomalies in Empirical Data of Instant-runoff Elections*. Rather than trying to summarize its findings, below is the paper's abstract:

"The instant runoff voting (IRV) method fails the monotonicity criterion. This means in an IRV election it is theoretically possible for a winning candidate to lose an election if certain ballots are changed to raise the otherwise winning candidate higher on the ballot. We analysed data from over 100 real-world IRV elections to ascertain if any demonstrated a monotonicity anomaly. Despite theoretical research indicating potentially high incidence of such voting anomalies, our investigations found only one election showing a monotonicity anomaly: the 2009 Burlington mayoral election."<sup>1</sup>

This 2009 election contributed to repeal of RCV in Burlington. However, in March 2021 voters in Burlington voted to return using RCV for council elections with a 64 percent "yes" margin.

Of greater concern are implementation concerns about RCV given that small portions of Portland are in Clackamas and Washington counties and consultation with Multnomah County elections is prudent. However, consultation with the Ranked Choice Voting Resource Center is also recommended since they are staffed by folks with considerable election administration experience and expertise. They can be a particularly well-informed resource about this concern and their website is at the link below:

<https://www.rcvresources.org/>

#### Terminology background to provide context for historical and academic analysis

My understanding is that preferred terminology for multi-member districts plus RCV is gravitating towards Proportional RCV (P-RCV) and this does seem to be a clear term to convey how use of RCV in multi-member districts provides proportional representation. Single transferable vote (STV), multi-winner RCV, multi-seat RCV, and choice voting are other terms sometimes used for P-RCV. I will support whatever terminology the Charter Commission selects for this policy change, but use P-RCV in these comments. I include this terminology background to provide context for the following discussion of historic use of P-RCV in cities in the United States and current use of P-RCV in other countries since the STV terminology is so frequently used by election method analysts.

### The success of P-RCV is illustrated by its opposition history

A criticism of P-RCV is that this is a little used option. However, several cities in the United States have previously used P-RCV and the one measure of its success is illustrated by its opposition. A particularly thorough analysis of this dynamic is a study by Professor Kathleen L. Barber on proportional representation used in many Ohio cities in the last century.<sup>2</sup> Professor Douglas Amy discusses Barber's Ohio findings as well as historical use of P-RCV in New York City. The following paragraphs summarize Professor Amy's "forgotten history" of the use of P-RCV (which he refers to as STV) as well as how representation improvements were sometimes used (or mis-used) as an opposition argument:

"While the repeal of STV in these American cities was taken by opponents as evidence that this electoral system had failed, it is probably more accurate to conclude that this system was rejected because it worked too well. STV worked too well in throwing party bosses [note: at that time city officials were commonly elected with party designations] out of government, bosses who never relented in their attempts to regain power. More importantly, STV worked too well in promoting the representation of racial, ethnic, and ideological minorities that were previously shut out by the first-past-the-post system. The political successes of these minorities set the stage for a political backlash that was effectively exploited by opponents of STV."

Race and increased representation of African Americans was a particular factor in the 1957 repeal of P-RCV in Cincinnati:

"The single transferable vote had allowed African Americans to be elected for the first time, with two blacks being elected to the city council in the 1950s. The nation was also seeing the first stirrings of the Civil Rights movement and racial tensions were running high. STV opponents shrewdly decided to make race an explicit factor in their repeal campaign. They warned whites that STV was helping to increase black power in the city and asked them whether they wanted a 'Negro mayor'. Their appeal to white anxieties succeeded, with whites supporting repeal by a two to one margin."<sup>3</sup>

Professors Amy and Barber both discuss the multiple factors affecting the effectiveness of P-RCV in communities where it was adopted but repealed, though its use in Cambridge, MA continues to today. No election reform will achieve political or public perception nirvana and caution about overpromising charter reforms in Portland is prudent. But instead of past repeals of P-RCV being viewed as a reason for discarding this idea for Portland, many reasons behind its repeal are actually good arguments for the Charter Commission to recommend P-RCV.

### Multi-member district considerations—advantage of larger districts with more seats

The P-RCV terminology is applicable both when a city is separated into several multi-member districts or all the members of a City Council are elected on an at-large basis and the entire city is the multi-member district. Professor Amy suggests that in a city with a relatively small council of five to nine members, an entire city could be treated as one district with all candidates running against one another. But in cities with councils of ten or more members, Professor Amy suggests dividing the council seats among fairly large districts that each elect five or seven council members. He cautions against smaller districts that elect only two or three members because they are more vulnerable to gerrymandering and do not as definitively meet the goal of proportional representation.<sup>4</sup> I highlight this point since at the beginning of your meeting yesterday evening it seemed that your group is leaning towards only electing two or three Councilors from each district which undermines the equity value of proportional representation.

For Portland I support multi-member Council districts to achieve both proportional representation and an element of geographic diversity. I also support increasing the size of the City Council which makes Amy's point regarding citywide multi-member districts less applicable. Professor Amy, and many other election experts, would prefer multi-member districts that elect no fewer than five Councilors. But due to a concern that the size of the Portland council not jump from the current four members to too large a group, my thought is that three districts that each elect four Councilors for a twelve-member Council is the reform "sweet spot" for Portland. As noted above, I am concerned about your leaning towards electing only two or three Councilors from each district since it would undermine the proportional representation value of P-RCV.

One comment from last evening's hearing highlighted the challenge of removing an incumbent in a P-RCV system which I think has been anecdotal criticism in Cambridge elections. On one hand this criticism may be a factor in not opting for Professor Amy's preference for electing five candidates from a multi-member district, though I continue to view four candidates from each district as a "sweet spot" for Portland and respectfully request that you do reduce that number to just two per district. Just as important though is recognizing that there are multiple reasons for incumbent advantage, that an incumbent's record can be a disadvantage, and that knocking off incumbents shouldn't be a primary goal of election methods policy making.

#### Lessons from other countries and other analysis

The merit of the Charter Commission considering several interconnected policy changes - increasing Portland's Council size, multi-member districts, and how many Councilors to elect from each district - is illustrated in a brief of a 2021 paper, *Multi-seat Districts and Larger Assemblies Produce More Diverse Racial Representation*. Of particular note is the following paragraph that highlights Australian cities that use P-RCV though the reference to political parties is not applicable to the Portland discussion.

"One major takeaway is that U.S. reliance on small assembly sizes, single-seat districts, and winner-take-all electoral rules may limit the number of parties that effectively compete for voters of color. As point of comparison, some of the most diverse Australian cities that use multi-seat ranked-choice voting systems (single transferable vote) may not achieve perfect proportional representation, but they nevertheless elect candidates of color from multiple parties."<sup>5</sup>

The full paper includes analysis of numerous cities in the United States examining the connection between people of color representation and electoral systems and points to P-RCV advantages.

P-RCV is also used in the Irish and Maltese parliaments, and the Australian Senate. As cited by Drutman and Strano in *What We Know About Ranked-Choice Voting*<sup>6</sup>, election experts give these systems high marks. This recent and extensive review of ranked choice voting may also be useful to assess some of the comments raised yesterday evening in opposition to this ballot style. For example, Drutman and Strano conclude that voters can understand RCV and that most voters utilize their ranking options. Even so, I repeat my point about the charter revision needing to include a directive to provide resources for public education on election method changes.

#### Which elected officials should run when

There is no need for a May primary in Portland given that all elected officials run on a nonpartisan basis and focusing on the November general election ensures that an electorate that better reflects Portland's demographics is participating in that higher profile election with greater turnout. However, holding the

election for every office, Council, Mayor, and Auditor, in November of presidential election years seems too much.

I recommend electing all 12 Councilors, four elected from three multi-member districts using P-RCV, in the same November. Ending the current practice of splitting City Council elections between two different election cycles is appropriate since having all Councilors be elected by the same set of voters using P-RCV seems more equitable.

The next November is when the citywide election for Mayor and Auditor would occur. I lean towards having these elections in the November of presidential years and holding all the Councilor elections in the November of mid-term elections when there could be more bandwidth for public review of a larger number of candidates, but am open to the opposite timing approach.

#### Public education advantage of electing the entire Council in one cycle and both citywide officials in the next election

I see a public education advantage to electing all Councilors from multi-member districts using RCV in one election cycle and electing the Mayor and Auditor using RCV on a single winner basis in another election cycle. In both cases RCV would be used, but in one election cycle all candidates (for Council) would be running in multi-member districts while in the following election cycle all candidates (for Mayor and Auditor) would be running on a citywide basis.

The public education needed would be more challenging if both multi-member (for half of the Council) and citywide (for either the Mayor or Auditor) use of RCV occurs in the same election cycle.

In general, public education during and after policy implementation must be a priority with a specific reference for resources in the revised charter not only to ensure effective application of a comprehensive set of changes but also public understanding of the interconnected nature of the reforms and the time involved in achieving policy goals.

Thanks again for all your hard work and the opportunity to share these comments.

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<sup>1</sup> Adam Graham-Squire and Nick Zayatz, *Lack of Monotonicity Anomalies in Empirical Data of Instant-runoff Elections*, July 2020, *Representation: Journal of Representative Democracy* 57 (4):1-9

<sup>2</sup>Kathleen L. Barber, *Proportional Representation and Electoral Reform in Ohio* (Columbus, Ohio: State University Press, 1995)

<sup>3</sup> Douglas J. Amy, *The Forgotten History of the Single Transferable Vote in the United States*, *Journal of Representative Democracy*, Volume 34, 1996-Issue 1

<sup>4</sup> Douglas J. Amy, *Real Choices New Voices: The Case for Proportional Representation Elections in the United States*, Columbia University Press, 1993, page 185

<sup>5</sup> Michael Latner, Jack Santucci, Matthew S. Shugart, *Multi-seat Districts and Larger Assemblies Produce More Diverse Racial Representation*, full paper is at [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3911532](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3911532), brief produced as part of a series by the Electoral Reform Research Group, a collaboration between New America, Stanford University's Center on Democracy, Development, and the Rule of Law, the American Enterprise Institute, and the Unite America Institute contains the quoted material and is at: <https://www.newamerica.org/political-reform/reports/multi-seat-districts-and-larger-assemblies-produce-more-diverse-racial-representation/>

<sup>6</sup> Lee Drutman and Maresa Strano, *What We Know About Ranked-Choice Voting*. Last updated November 10, 2021. New America, <https://www.newamerica.org/political-reform/reports/what-we-know-about-ranked-choice-voting/>

# Chapter 5: Portland Fire & Police Disability, Retirement

Kevin Machiz, CFA, FRM

# Charter and FPDR

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- ▶ Charter defines the funding policy and benefit policy of FPDR one and two
  - ▶ Oregon law protects benefits on past service (work already completed)
- ▶ FPDR, namely tier one and tier two, “is essentially funded on a pay-as-you-go basis.”
  - ▶ This is detailed in the City Charter: Section 5-103 Levy by Council
  - ▶ FPDR tier one and tier two includes police and firefighters first sworn before 2007 (2,821 members)

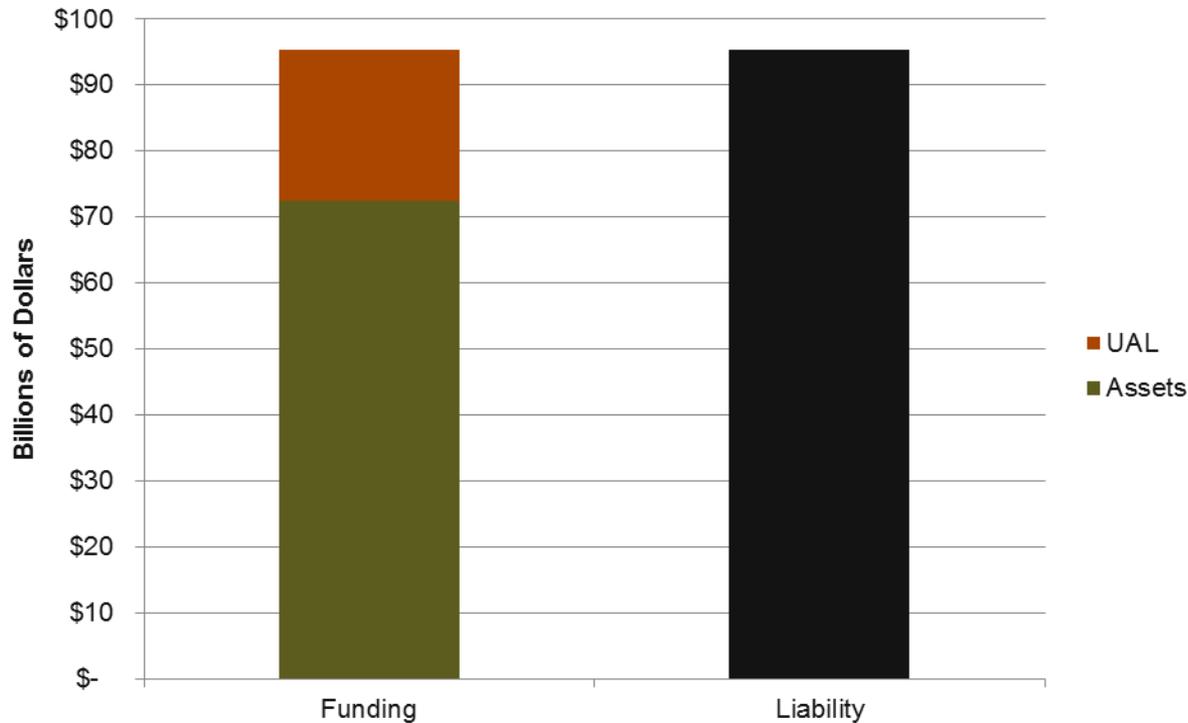
# Pension Funding

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- ▶ The vast majority of state and local governments that offer pension plans attempt to set aside money (spent from their budgets) to fund the plan
  - ▶ The average public pension has funded 72.8% of the total liability owed to current and former employees
  - ▶ The missing amount below 100% is called the Unfunded Actuarial Accrued Liability (UAAL, UAL, sometimes called net pension liability for FPDR)

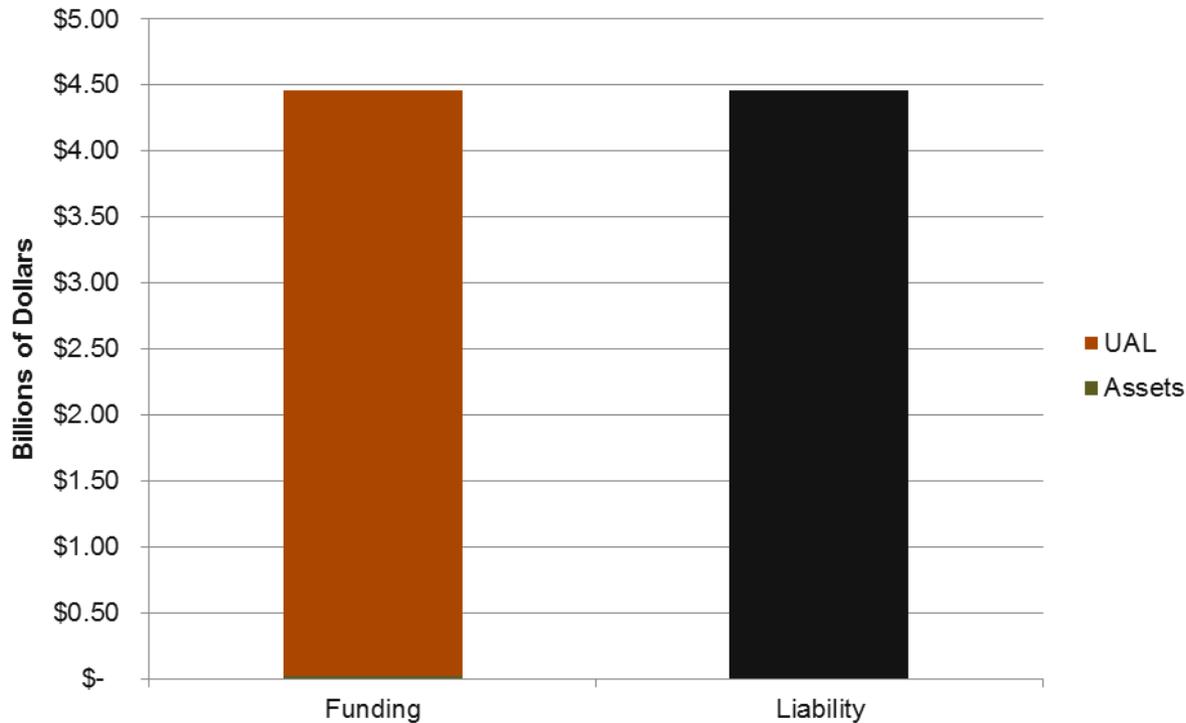
# Example: Oregon PERS

- ▶ Liability (\$95.3) – Assets (\$72.4) = UAL (\$22.9)
- ▶ Funded Ratio (75.9%) = Assets (\$72.4) / Liability (\$95.3)



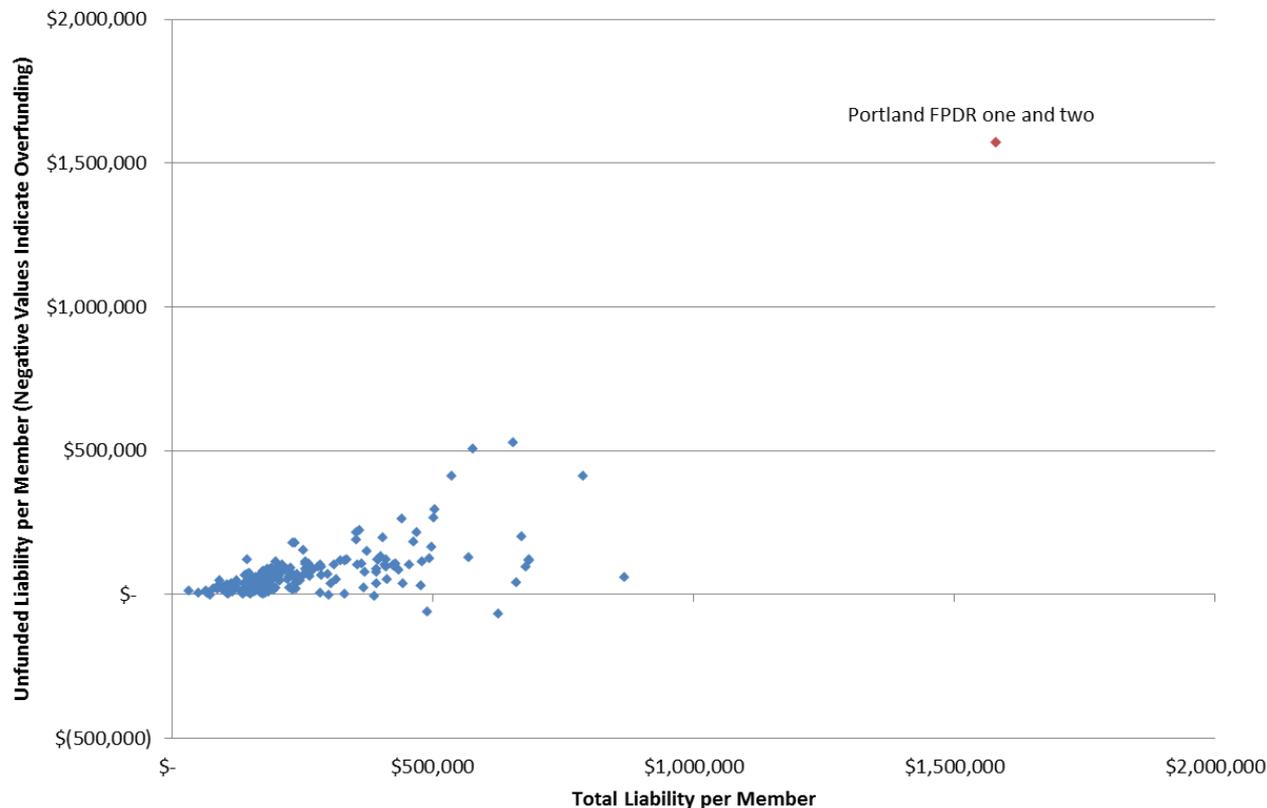
# FPDR

- ▶ Liability (\$4.46) – Assets (\$0.02) = UAL (\$4.44)
- ▶ Funded Ratio (0.45%) = Assets (\$0.02) / Liability (\$4.44)



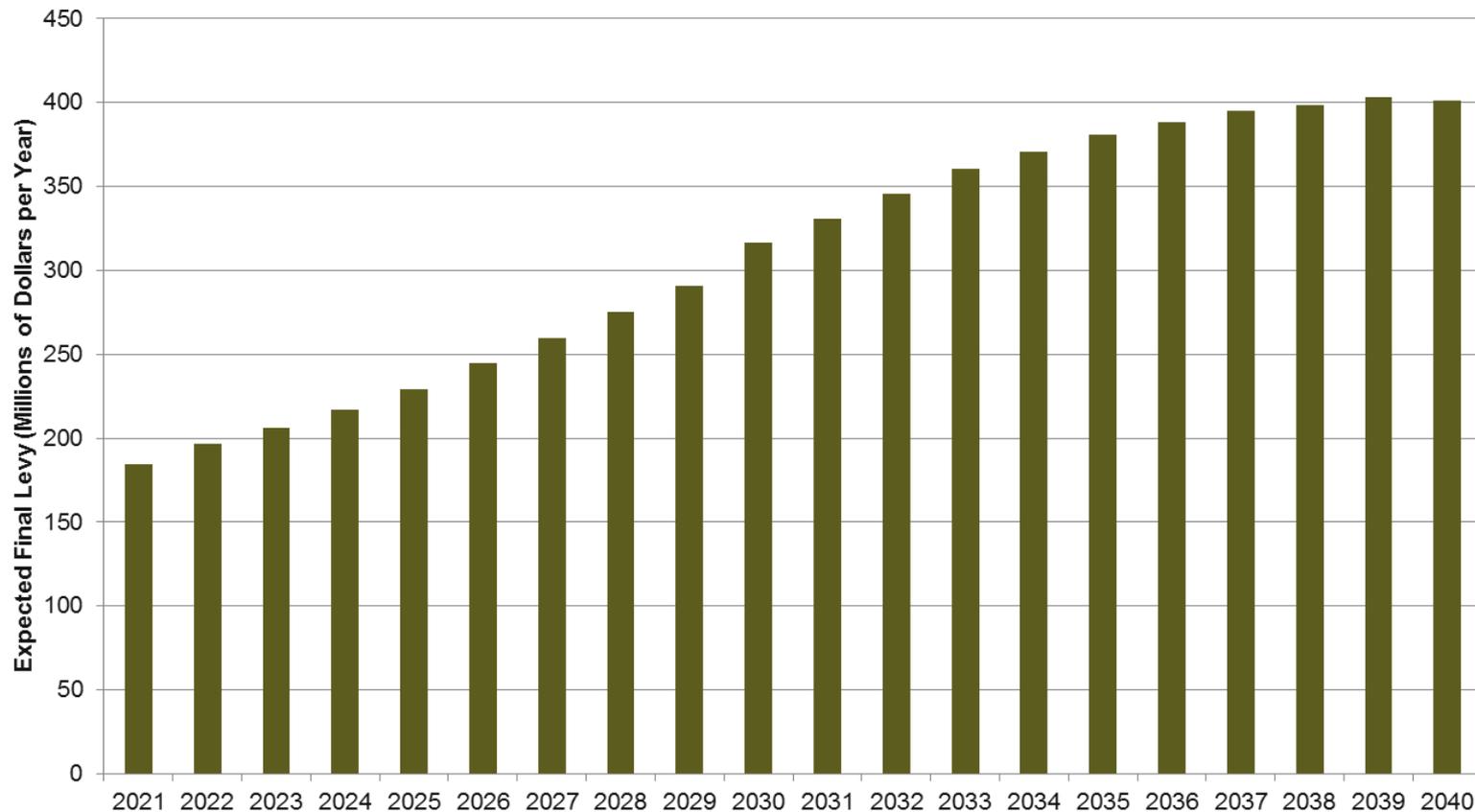
# FPDR One and Two Comparison

- ▶ UAL per member (\$1.6 million) =
- ▶ UAL (\$4.4 billion) / Members (2,821)



# FPDR Levy Projection

- ▶ Estimated Final Levy request expected to rise to \$403.9 million per year by 2039



# Should FPDR Get Off Pay-As-You-Go?

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- ▶ Improve transparency of compensation in the Portland Police Bureau and Portland Fire & Rescue Bureau
  - ▶ Mitigate a lack of transparency that can hide costs by passing them off to future generations of Portland taxpayers
- ▶ Intergenerational Equity
  - ▶ The costs of employee benefits are paid for by taxpayers who employed them
- ▶ Paying the bills sooner is expected to reduce the cumulative long-term costs of those bills.
- ▶ Mitigates risks of any potential deterioration in the city's finances

# Comprehensive Actuarial Funding Policy

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- ▶ One component of a comprehensive actuarial funding policy is an amortization policy:
  - ▶ “Determines the length of time and the structure of the increase or decrease in contributions required to systematically (1) fund any Unfunded Actuarial Accrued Liability or UAAL, or (2) recognize any Surplus, i.e., any assets in excess of the AAL.”
- ▶ A comprehensive actuarial funding policy is a best practice and must be implemented in a reasonable manner

# Pension Funding Task Force Conclusion

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- ▶ “The most important step for local and state governments to take is to base their pension funding policy on an actuarially determined contribution (ADC). The ADC should be obtained on an annual or biannual basis. The pension policy should promote fiscal discipline and intergenerational equity, and clearly report when and how pension plans will be fully funded.”

# Government Finance Officers Association

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- ▶ “GFOA recommends that governments adopt a funding policy that provides reasonable assurance that the cost of those benefits will be funded in an equitable and sustainable manner.”
  - ▶ “Every government employer that offers defined benefit pensions or OPEB should obtain no less than biennially an actuarially determined contribution (ADC) to serve as the basis for its contributions to those respective plans”
  - ▶ “A funding policy could state that future benefit enhancements would only be considered if the cost of those enhancements do not cause the plan’s funded ratio to go below 100%”
    - ▶ Future cost of living adjustments (COLAs) for FPDR Two and Three benefits are applied annually at the discretion of the Board of Trustees, up to the current Oregon PERS statutory maximum of 2% per year.

# For Consideration

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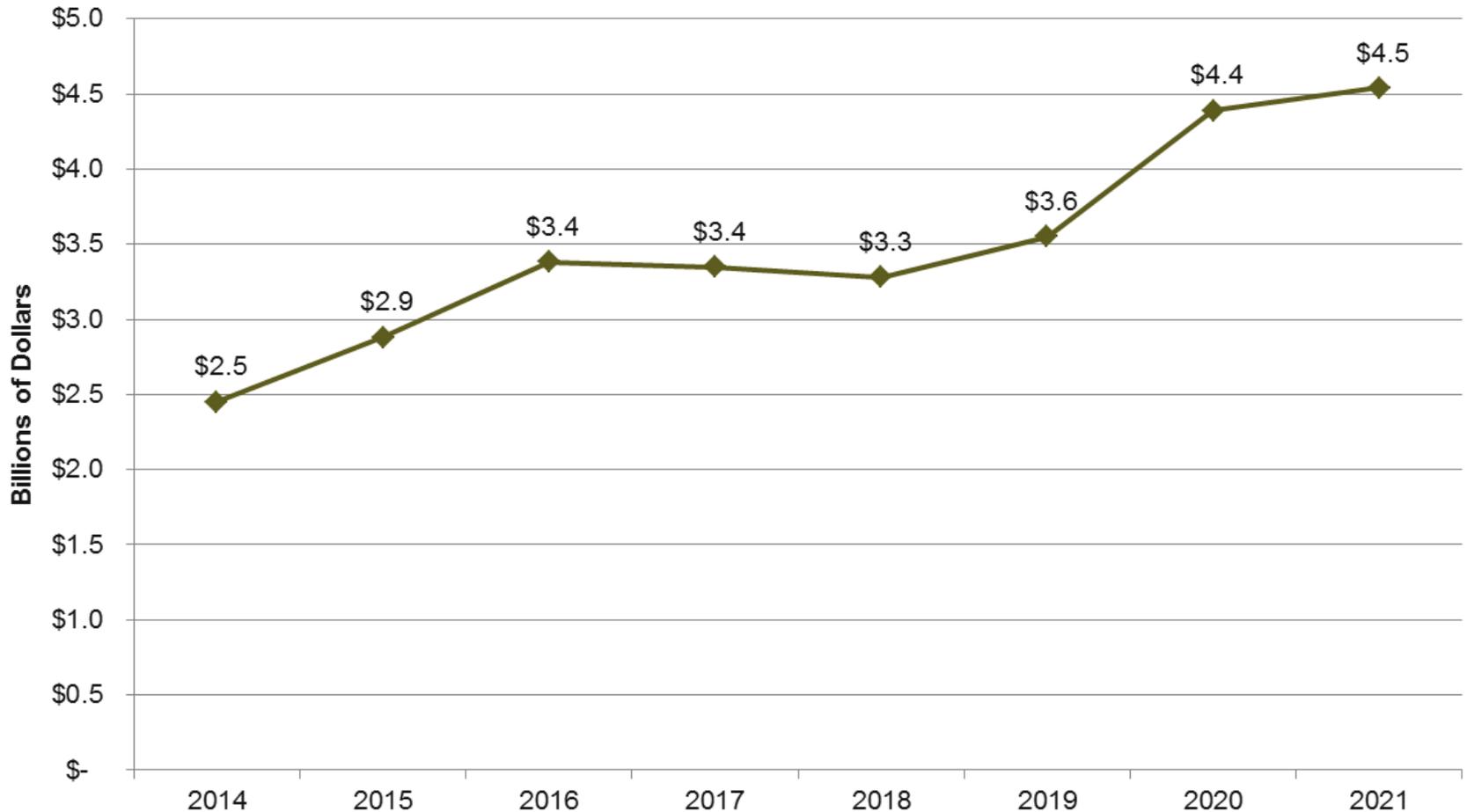
- ▶ Revise Chapter 5 of the City Charter to require a Comprehensive Actuarial Funding Policy
- ▶ Revise Chapter 5 of the City Charter to state that future cost of living adjustments would only be permitted if the plan's funded ratio were above 100%

# Appendix

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# FPDR One and Two: How did we get here?

## FPDR One and Two Net Pension Liability



# How does STAR Voting work?

## STAR VOTING

SCORE - THEN - AUTOMATIC - RUNOFF

- Give your favorite(s) five stars.
- Give your last choice(s) zero stars.
- Show preference order and level of support.
- Equal scores indicate no preference.
- Those left blank receive zero stars.

Candidates:	Worst	0	1	2	3	4	Best	5
Andy	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Ben	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Cassie	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Daniel	0	1	2	3	4	5		
Erin	0	1	2	3	4	5		

The two highest scoring candidates are finalists.  
Your vote goes to the the finalist you prefer.

## Scoring Round

The two highest scoring candidates are finalists.

Candidates:	Scores:
Cassie ★★★★★	1,624,057
Ben ★★★★★	892,103
Erin ★★★★★	723,099
Andy ★★★★★	533,768
Daniel ★★★★★	19,463

Cassie and Ben advance to the Automatic Runoff.

## Automatic Runoff

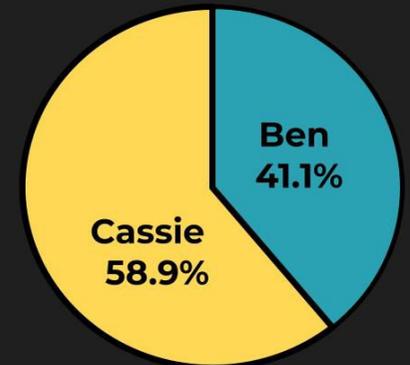
Your vote goes to the finalist you prefer.

Andy	0	1	2	3	4	5
Ben	0	1	2	3	4	5
Cassie	0	1	2	3	4	5
Daniel	0	1	2	3	4	5
Erin	0	1	2	3	4	5

This vote goes to Cassie because she was scored higher than Ben.

## Results

The finalist preferred by the majority wins!



Each ballot counts as one vote.

**Whether or not your favorite can win, your vote goes to the finalist you prefer!**



JOURNAL ARTICLE

## Frequency of monotonicity failure under Instant Runoff Voting: estimates based on a spatial model of elections

Joseph T. Ornstein and Robert Z. Norman

Public Choice

Vol. 161, No. 1/2 (October 2014), pp. 1-9

(9 pages)

Published By: Springer

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/24507512>

“[IRV] suffers from a defect ... wherein increasing support for a candidate ... may adversely affect that candidate's election outcome.”

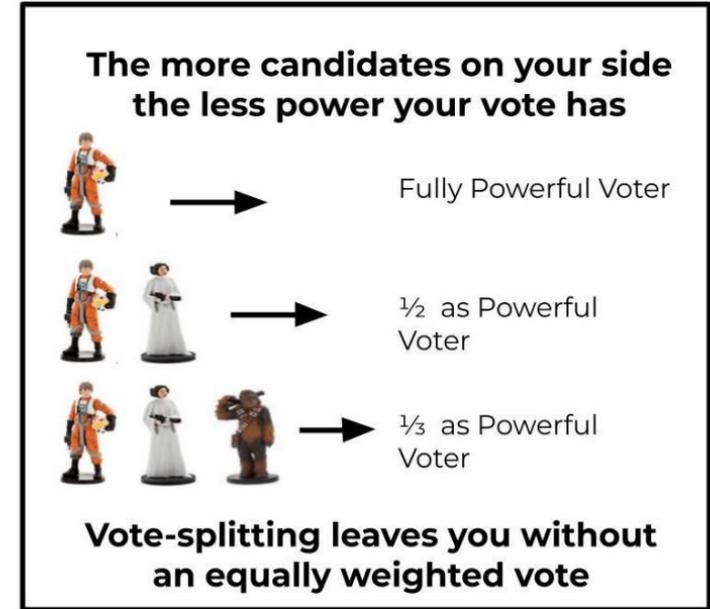
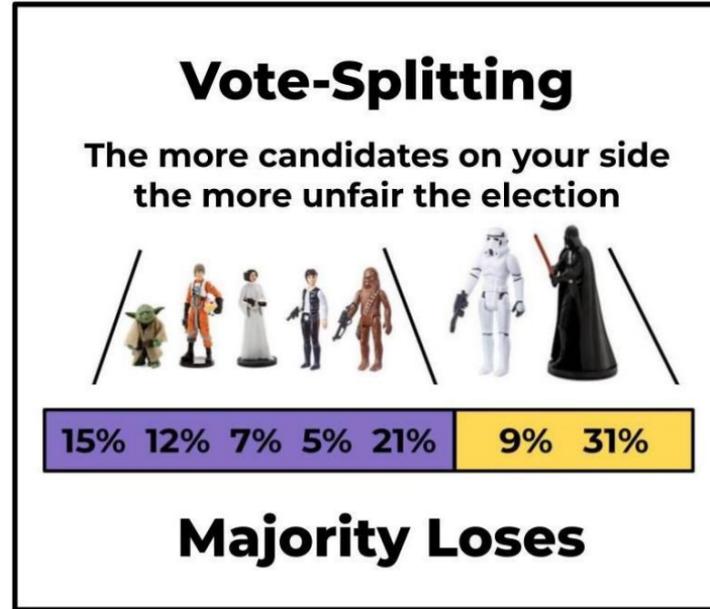
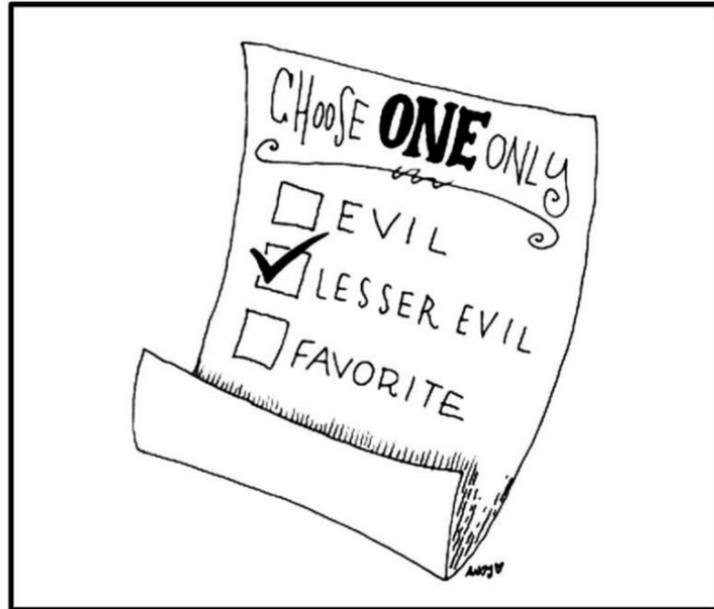
<https://www.jstor.org/gstable/24507512?seq=1>

## Abstract

It has long been recognized that Instant Runoff Voting (IRV) suffers from a defect known as nonmonotonicity, wherein increasing support for a candidate among a subset of voters may adversely affect that candidate's election outcome. The expected frequency of this type of behavior, however, remains an open and important question, and limited access to detailed election data makes it difficult to resolve empirically. In this paper, we develop a spatial model of voting behavior to approach the question theoretically. We conclude that monotonicity failures in three-candidate IRV elections may be much more prevalent than widely presumed (results suggest a lower bound estimate of 15 % for competitive elections).

In light of these results, those seeking to implement a fairer multi-candidate election system should be wary of adopting IRV.

# Choose-One Voting and Ranked Choice Voting can both suffer from frequent vote-splitting



# FALSE MAJORITY

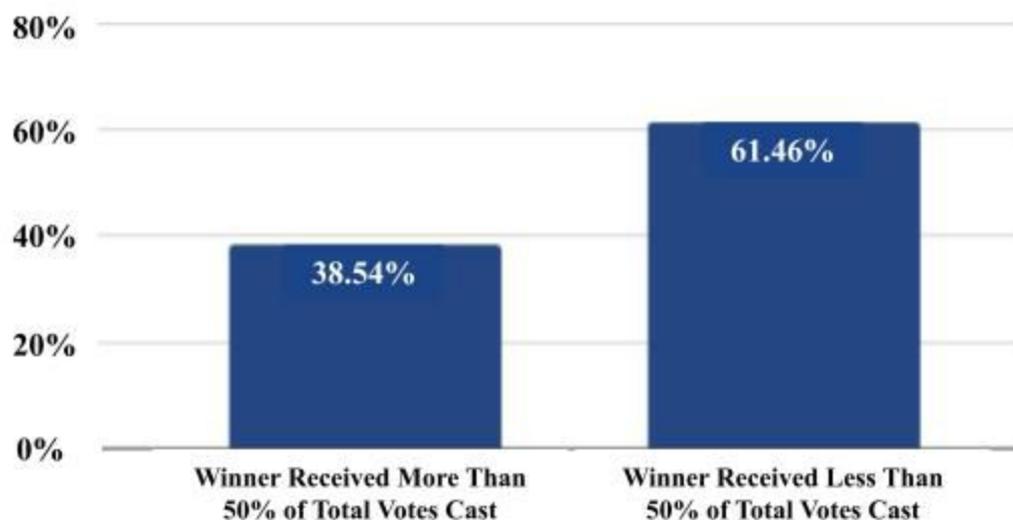
"Too often, proponents of ballot initiatives advance lofty claims to win support at the ballot box."

"In examining 96 ranked-choice voting races from across the country where additional rounds of tabulation were necessary to declare a winner, The Maine Heritage Policy Center concludes that the eventual winner failed to receive a true majority 61% of the time."

"the claim that ranked-choice voting always provides a majority winner ... is false and deserves further scrutiny from voters."

"While candidates sometimes do receive a majority of the total votes cast, a winner is often declared only after a large number of exhausted ballots have been removed from the final denominator."

**Figure 5: Percentage of Competitive RCV Elections That Did Not Result In A Majority Winner**



Source: The Maine Heritage Policy Center

# How does Proportional STAR Voting work?

## **STAR VOTING** Proportional Representation

This election will elect 3 winners.

- Give your favorite(s) five stars.
- Give your last choice(s) zero stars.
- Show preference order and level of support.
- Equal scores indicate no preference.
- Those left blank receive zero stars.

Candidates:	Worst	0	1	2	3	4	Best	5
Andre		0	1	2	3	4	5	
Blake		0	1	2	3	4	5	
Carmen		0	1	2	3	4	5	
David		0	1	2	3	4	5	
Ella		0	1	2	3	4	5	

## Winner Selection

The highest scoring candidate in each round wins a seat.

Candidates:	Scores:
Carmen ★★★★★	256,785
Blake ★★★★☆	203,621
Ella ★★★★☆	175,902
Andre ★★★☆☆	143,309
David ★★★☆☆	93,261

Carmen wins the first seat!

## Win Quotas

This election has three seats so the win quota is  $\frac{1}{3}$ .

The  $\frac{1}{3}$  of ballots which scored Carmen highest count toward her win quota and are set aside.



The remaining ballots are recounted to find the next winner.

The process is repeated until all seats are filled.

## Results

Winners each represent at least  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the voters.

### Winners:

- ★ Carmen
- ★ Ella
- ★ Andre

These three winners best represent the diversity in the electorate.

**Voters and factions within the electorate are represented proportionally!**

# RCV EXHAUSTED BALLOTS



	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Burgers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Curry	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Salad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tacos	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sushi	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

A red arrow points from the 'Sushi' row towards the right side of the table, indicating that this choice has been eliminated.

- By the time Sushi was eliminated this voter's other choices were gone already. This is an exhausted ballot.
- If all rankings had been counted, this election would have shown that curry was actually preferred over burgers.
- This voter should have strategically ranked curry first, but they were told that if their favorite was eliminated their next choice would be counted.

# WASTED VOTES - Ballot Limitations

## Ranked Choice Voting aka Instant Runoff Voting

Rank candidates in order of preference.  
You can't give the same ranking twice.

Rank Candidates:	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
Abby	①	②	③	④	⑤
Ben	①	②	③	④	●
Carmen	①	②	●	④	⑤
DeAndre	①	●	③	④	⑤
Eric	①	②	③	●	⑤
Francisco	①	②	③	④	⑤
Graham	●	②	③	④	⑤
Hector	①	②	③	④	⑤
Irma	①	②	③	④	⑤

- RCV ballots only allow voters to rank a limited number of candidates.
- Limiting the number of ranks in RCV helps prevent spoiled ballots, but increases the number of exhausted ballots in races with large fields of candidates.
- With STAR, voters can score as many or as few candidates as they want because equal scores are allowed.

## STAR VOTING SCORE - THEN - AUTOMATIC - RUNOFF

- Give your favorite(s) five stars.
- Give your last choice(s) zero stars.
- Show preference order and level of support.
- Equal scores indicate no preference.
- Those left blank receive zero stars.

Score Candidates:	Worst	0	1	2	3	4	Best	5
Andre	①	②	③	④	●	⑤		
Blake	●	①	②	③	④	⑤		
Carmen	①	②	③	④	⑤	●		
David	①	②	③	④	⑤	●		
Ella	①	●	②	③	④	⑤		
Fernando	①	②	●	④	⑤			
Gabe	①	②	③	④	⑤	●		
Helena	①	②	③	●	⑤			
Ira	●	①	②	③	④	⑤		



### **Overvoting and the Equality of Voice under Instant-Runoff Voting in San Francisco**

"The controversy surrounding the 2000 U.S. presidential race fueled a variety of efforts to improve the administration of elections. Activists, benefiting from that momentum ... found some purchase at the local level in San Francisco, California. Proposition A passed in a 2002 March primary and replaced a two-round runoff system with instant-runoff voting (IRV).<sup>1</sup> ... As the largest and longest-running application of IRV in the States, this serves as both a vanguard on the reform front and a test case for interested parties.<sup>2</sup>

"One concern in the discussion of any electoral reform is how well the public will understand a new system and what that implies for the equality of political voice. This is our focus. ... Concerns about the fairness of IRV led at least four jurisdictions to repeal similar reforms shortly after enacting them: Burlington, VT (2006–2009), Cary, NC (2007–2009), Pierce County, WA (2006–2009), Aspen, CO (2009).

"Higher counts of overvotes were also found, at times, among San Francisco communities with more Latino residents (Neely and Cook 2008), something shown in a similar analysis of voters in Los Angeles (Sinclair and Alvarez 2004), and in areas with more foreignborn residents."

"What has not changed is the nature of the discrepancies in who tends to overvote: consistently, precincts where more African-Americans reside are more likely to collect overvoted, voided ballots. And this often occurs where more Latino, elderly, foreign-born, and less wealthy folks live. The additional years of data show no meaningful increase or decline in these tendencies but rather bolster the earlier study's findings. In all of the elections we examined, some voters were more at risk than others of making disqualifying errors."