

PORTLAND CHARTER COMMISSION

PUBLIC COMMENT REPORT

Date range: October 26, 2021, to November 22, 2021

From September 21 to October 26, 2021, at 8:00 a.m., **117 public comments** were submitted through the online public comment form, via email, and at the 10/28 full commission meeting. **10** out of the **117** comments were made on behalf of a community-based organization.

Raw public comments received from September 21 to October 26, 2021

Public comments:
Verbal public comment
<p>Dear Charter Commissioners,</p> <p>On behalf of the Jewish Federation’s Jewish Community Relations Council Resolution on Renewing Our Commitment to Combating Climate Change, I’m writing to ask that you address environmental justice and action on the climate crisis as a central and pressing issue in the Charter Review process.</p> <p>The Jewish Council for Public Affairs has been a strong advocate for combating climate change. Sustaining the environment is an important component of the Jewish value “to till it and tend it” (Gen. 2:15), and that we further God’s intention to maintain a habitable world. Responding to this challenge is equally motivated by the principle that one who saves a life, saves the entire world.</p> <p>I strongly encourage you to uplift environmental and climate justice in the selection of your subcommittees for Phase II of the Charter Review Process. This is a once-in-a-decade chance to comprehensively address the most pressing issues facing our City at the place where they intersect: our collective rights to live, work and play in environments that are safe, healthy, and support us to thrive, and to participate as equal partners in decisions that impact these rights.</p> <p>The climate crisis is already here, and Portland already faces deadly consequences. 60 Portlanders and 500 people across the Northwest died during a single heat wave this June as we reached record-breaking temperatures of 116 degrees, with most deaths clustered in lower income, more racially diverse neighborhoods. These deadly consequences are not distributed equally but fall most heavily on the communities that are burdened by disinvestment, unsafe or unstable housing, pollution, and many other forms of environmental racism and injustice.</p>

This is the decade in which we must act. The next Charter review will not take place until 2031. The best available scientific evidence lead us to the same conclusion: we need to act now.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and for your ongoing work towards building a more equitable and functional city.

After reading the opinion piece in the October 24, 2021 "The Oregonian" two ideas that appeared in "Opinion" came together "991,000 unaffiliated votes closed out of Oregon primary process" . The same exclusion is happening in the Portland Charter Commission work as you focus jus on person that physically reside within the official boundaries of Portland. Persons residing outside these boundaries work in Portland, shop in Portland, use entertainment and services in Portland - yet we thousand of persons that view Portland as our home are excluded from the Commission's work. This exclusion needs to be addressed as Portland is not defined by just those people that physically reside within it boundaries. What to do!

Dear Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I'm writing to ask that you include environmental justice and action on the climate crisis as a central and pressing issue in the Charter Review process. In Phase I, you have an opportunity to address many of the City's structural barriers to meaningful and inclusive climate action, reforming our government to one that is better equipped to tackle the climate crisis and the many other overlapping challenges facing our community. I also strongly encourage you to uplift environmental and climate justice in the selection of your subcommittees for Phase II of the Charter Review Process.

I am a parent, an affordable housing advocate, and a resident of East Portland. Wearing each of these different "hats", I can envision the current and future climate impacts for my children; for vulnerable people living on the streets or in homes unadapted to extreme weather events; and for residents of neighborhoods like my own, which bear the consequences of climate change more heavily due to decades of disinvestment, pollution, and other forms of environmental racism and injustice. As demonstrated by this summer's catastrophic heat wave, the climate crisis is already here, and it is time for the City of Portland to take bold action. I stand with 350PDX in asking the Charter Review committee to:

- Lead with environmental justice. To address the many overlapping challenges facing Portland, including public health, housing and houselessness, racial injustice, infrastructure, an accelerating climate crisis, and more, the City will need to use a framework of environmental justice. This ensures that everyone has the right to equal environmental protection, and to live, work and play in communities that are safe, healthy and free of life-threatening conditions..
 - Act with urgency. The next Charter Review process will not take place until 2031. This is a once-in-a-decade chance to include the City's climate responsibilities in the Charter, and to enact significant structural changes that foster comprehensive climate action.
 - Consider nature and natural systems as part of Portland's critical infrastructure. Rivers, forests, green spaces, and other natural infrastructure deliver broad and diverse benefits and protections to Portlanders, but our governance of these systems does not fully represent or respond to this diversity of benefits.
 - Move toward a more functional governance structure. Climate and environmental problems can't be addressed effectively by just one bureau, program, or commissioner. To rise to these challenges, we need a City government that prioritizes high-level coordination on the climate crisis, makes collaboration across departmental boundaries the norm, and engages the most impacted and knowledgeable communities as essential partners in developing solutions.
- Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and for your ongoing work to build a more equitable and functional city.

See attachment

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meaningful climate action.

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

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

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

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Dear Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I feel strongly that our current form of City government cannot work. The city needs to be divided into new districts -- call them "super- neighborhoods, perhaps--and council members must be elected by and then represent these districts. And the CEO of the city must be a professional City Manager who reports to these newly representative council members acting to implement the Charter in the name of the people of our City.

The Charter must assure Environmental Justice to all such super-neighborhoods, so that previous wrongs to particular populations can receive reparative focus from our City.

Everyone has the right to live, work, and play in environments that are safe and healthy. The Charter must be written to support and encourage ordinances to effect that right.

Dear Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. There are a lot of important issues facing our community, but we won't have time to solve them if we don't get a handle on the destruction that comes with the climate catastrophe that we're already seeing around us.

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Dear Charter Commissioners,

I am a pediatrician & person of faith living in Portland. I ask Council, as you work in the process of Charter Review, to center environmental justice and climate action. In Phase I, you have the opportunity to address many of the structural barriers preventing us from taking meaningful climate action as you reform City Council elections and our current form of government

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

This is the decade in which we MUST take action-- the next Charter review won't take place until 2031. The best available scientific evidence and our desire to keep our neighbors here in Portland alive and well tell us: we need to act now.

Thank you,

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In order to pass by a majority, a new voting method proposal must be **simple**. But methods like Single Transferable Vote are extremely complex. Therefore I would propose one of these methods:

1. Approval Voting: Used in Fargo, ND and St Louis, MO, this method allows voters to use the same ballot they already do, but they may vote for as many candidates as they wish. This method is so simple that these two cities spent virtually nothing on voter education, and still had high voter engagement and no indications of voter confusion. This is markedly different than what I experienced under Ranked Choice Voting (IRV) when I lived in San Francisco and Berkeley.

Approval voting is used in single-winner elections in St Louis, but also two-winner "at-large" elections in Fargo as well. There is also a simple form of proportional representation with approval voting, similar in principle to STV. You simply divide each ballot by $W+1$, where W is the number of winners that ballot has approved thus far. So if you help elect to a candidate, you then have $1/2$ your starting influence. Then $1/3$, then $1/4$, and so on each time a candidate you selected is elected. Here's a video where I demonstrate that it can be easily tabulated in a spreadsheet.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnsgo3z8UIg>

2. Candidate Transferable Voting (CTV): Voters may select ONE candidate, regardless of the number of winners (this is a single non-transferable vote, SNTV, interface which is a form of "limited voting"). Candidates have some time (e.g.

an hour) to redistribute any portion of their votes to other candidates, at which point the final winners are declared. Longer explanation here.

<https://medium.com/election-science/candidate-transferable-voting-4fa1ee608251>

In this way, a candidate needn't be a "spoiler" as she can transfer her votes to still help her constituents get their "lesser evil". Voters may check a box on their ballots to opt out, meaning those votes would be final and could not be transferred.

CTV is less expressive for the voter, as they cannot specify a preference order. However the advantage is extreme simplicity. And voters needn't be informed about a long list of candidates. They need only determine who their one favorite is, thus reducing the cognitive burden on voters, who often don't get/make time to deeply research all the candidates.

Various other more esoteric benefits discussed here.

<https://www.rangevoting.org/Asset>

As for districts, they have proven problematic in many cities including San Francisco, and can lead to "fiefdoms", NIMBYism, etc. Multi-winner "at-large" elections can be a cognitive burden on voters, because the lists can be so long. But with a delegation-based method like CTV, this problem is dramatically decreased. You just pick your one favorite, and trust her to be intimately familiar with her opponents and their positions.

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My name is Chad Neely, I am a resident of the Mill Park neighborhood. I have signed up to provide a verbal testimony during this evening's Charter Commission meeting. Additionally I would like to share the attached document as written testimony, which I will be referencing this evening.

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Anybody that is part of our current Mayor or city council that are unwilling or incapable of acknowledging that they are unqualified & that every single one of them has completely failed to do their job & the current condition of the city should be evidence enough that they all should be dismissed & criminally prosecuted for what they have allowed this once spectacular city to become. It now closely resembles a third world country. How can any of them face themselves in the mirror???????? I was born in Portland in 1958, went to school in Portland, worked all my life in Portland, got married in Portland, had & raised four children in Portland, I had grandchildren in Portland but three of my four children have taken my grandchildren & moved out of the state because of what Portland has become. I have traveled all over this nation & always felt that Portland Oregon was as good if not better than anyplace I've ever been. But now that Portland has caused me to lose my children & grandchildren I am currently in a different state away from the whole west coast working on purchasing a new home because of what weak willed politicians have allowed this place to become.

IT DISCUSSES & ANGERS ME!!!

They should all be physically drug out of office & forced to live in one of the hundreds of homeless drug infested camps that they created. DISGRACEFUL!!!!!!

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Dear Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I live in Portland. Everyday I feel the urgent need for climate action—for all of us to act now to avert climate catastrophe. We absolutely need to step up our efforts and choose the most ambitious path for addressing the climate emergency.

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The Charter Review is a way for Portland to direct resources and policies in a timely manner to confront a time today of Climate Change as well as becoming more inclusive with people of color with their needs and desires.

Homelessness is another situation that needs to be addressed with the Charter Review finding a solution for people left out on the streets.

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See Attachment

Greetings, Commissioners Streeter, Speer, and Avalos;

I am a volunteer board member for the League of Women Voters of Portland, and I have the opportunity to be our contact point with the Charter Review Commission. As your work is of great importance to us, our board has drafted some comments addressing what we see as priorities for reform in this stage of the process.

Attached please find the testimony from the League of Women Voters of Portland regarding the Commission's work on the Form of Government. Please let us know if you have any questions or we can otherwise support your process.

Thank you for your public service!

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Dear Charter Commissioners,

I have lived in Portland since 1986. My kids were born here, and I am a teacher in Portland Public Schools. I can tell you that the number one issue on most kids minds now is climate change. It is affecting their mental health, making them feel hopeless.

And these kids are our future.

Over the last 35 years years, Portland has become hotter and drier, impacting the quality of life of its residents, particularly those in lower income neighborhoods. Over the past ten years or so it has become so bad that what is considered the green jewel of Portland, Forest Park, is in severe danger.

We are all tired of the well-meaning talk. This last summer's crazy heat wave should be a wake up call: it is time to act.

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See Attachment

Please consider what has been successful elsewhere with Community Assembly <https://nextcity.org/urbanist-news/entry/how-partnering-with-the-public-can-help-cities-solve-the-climate-crisis>

Hello,

Sorry to bother you, but I cannot find the public comments re: charter review since the AUGUST 2021 posting here. https://www.portland.gov/sites/default/files/2021/08052021_publiccommentreport_website.pdf
I am sure I am just missing it. Can you tell me what files to look for or can you send me the links to the public comments re: Charter Review since August 2021?

Thank you,

The councils inaction on the violence destroying our city is profoundly unacceptable.

How to reform the Police....Let me help you

1. Create a separate agency of police in charge of non violent crimes. A very large one. Not 10 people!
2. Hire more police focused on violent and criminal crimes only. Stop having those police go to stupid calls like a homeless guy is taking a shit in my yard.

NOT GOOD ENOUGH! NO SENSE OF URGENCY!

I just heard gun fire as I was writing this!

No longer belongs to any party.

Thank you Mingus Mapps for being the voice of reason and logic. Too bad you are held back by this failed commission system. If the Charter fails to do its job this city is hopeless.

See attachment

Chairs and members of the Commission,

Per a request in the Q&A from Commissioner Ye in the Elections Subcommittee meeting last night, I've rounded up some "primary" materials relating to the 2002 Charter amendment in Baltimore that converted their multi-member districts to single member districts. I've made some preliminary requests from Baltimore City Archives, Baltimore's Pratt Library, and the League of Women Voters in Baltimore for some additional materials (if they can find them).

1. First, here's a very good, concise, election-day description of the road to the charter amendment from the Baltimore Sun.
2. Here's the ballot language for "Question P" (scroll to the bottom). (I would strongly urge your commission to note the simplicity of the question put to the voters.)
3. I've attached a pdf that contains the current Baltimore City Charter language for the City Council which shows the implementation of "Question P"
4. I've attached a pdf of a City Resolution, passed by city council opponents, as a last minute "compromise" intended to be a competing "Question Q" charter amendment. A court removed it from the ballot due to procedural problems. (My opinion is that Question P would have easily defeated it anyway.)
5. I've attached a pdf of the redistricting resolution that created the 14 districts after Question P passed. Not that the wards and precincts will mean much to you and your commission, but I've attached it to show the simplicity with which the redistricting can be done by the council. There has been one redistricting since the original districts were created, and while the district lines shifted somewhat to accommodate population changes, the scale of the districts meant that the core neighborhoods for each district remained in each new district.
6. Finally, related to the discussions in the Form of Government committee (and because I came across it in my other research), I've attached a pdf of the current Baltimore City Charter language for the Mayor. Baltimore's is a (very) strong Mayor system. Mostly I'm providing it to you so that you can see the relative simplicity in the Charter to create such a system. (FWIW, my preference is for a (somewhat) strong Mayor.)

Anyway, while I try to track down some other materials, I hope these items are helpful. If you're interested in speaking with a Baltimore City Councilperson, or one of the "Question P" organizers, I can *try* to arrange an opportunity for you to do so.

Finally, thank you so much for this opportunity to be involved.

I would like to speak about a proposal for a Civic Participation Commission prepared by a number of groups participating in the Portland Metro People's Coalition Charter Reform working group.

See Attachments

Dear commission members,

I have just watched the 4 November 2021 session of the Portland Charter Commission.

I strongly recommend that the commission should reject STAR voting, because of the fact that this method doesn't even satisfy the majority criterion.

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

I have attached a short paper that demonstrates how STAR voting violates the majority criterion ("starvoting.pdf").

I also would like you to consider the Schulze method.

I have attached a short description of this method ("schulzevoting.pdf"). The Schulze method is currently the most wide-spread Condorcet method. It is used by more than 100 organizations with more than 1,500,000 members in total.

The Schulze method satisfies all criteria that are considered important by the STAR voting activists:

1. The Schulze method allows voters to have ties.
(In other words: Voters are allowed to give the same preference to more than one candidate.)
2. Adding a ballot and simultaneously adding the reversed ballot always cancel each other out. This criterion is called "equal vote criterion" by the STAR voting activists. They argue that the fact, that plurality voting and ranked choice voting violate this criterion, is the cause of the fact that plurality voting and ranked choice voting have vote splitting and the spoiler effect.
3. The Schulze method is precinct summable. This means that the votes can be tallied and audited on the precinct level. The end result can then be determined by adding up the precinct results.
4. The Schulze method satisfies the monotonicity criterion. This means: When some voters rank candidate A higher, then candidate A cannot be changed from a winner to a loser.
5. The Schulze method is tied for best election method according to the strategic voting simulations made by the STAR voting activists:
<http://electionscience.github.io/vse-sim/stratstuff.html>

In this graphic, an election method is the better the more it is to the upper left corner.

The Schulze method also satisfies the majority criterion and the Condorcet criterion.

Dear Charter Commission,

I'm writing to fully support many of the recommendations put forth in the November 4th City Council Elections Subcommittee. As someone who has spent significant time delving into various democracy reforms, it's clear to me that multi-member districts hold many advantages over single-member districts. I think the points about holding elections when most voters show up are key, and lastly, I'm very pleased to see STAR voting get recommended - modern election science gives STAR the win for most notable voting criterion, showing it to be a big improvement over our current plurality and even its more well-known competitor, RCV (as an aside, the "Counter Arguments against STAR" points (p. 36-37) are disappointingly incorrect in many ways, but those will undoubtedly be repeated by folks paid by FairVote come election time. Even something as...esoteric as voting reform is, unfortunately, tainted by

foul-play politics, which I've unfortunately seen first-hand during Oregon legislative meetings on the topic). The final note on "Why Star?" (p. 33) is worth special consideration: While Portland should ultimately pick what's best for Portland (which I believe to be STAR anyway), adopting STAR for a major city's election would give it a much needed boost nationally. We are, after all, not an island, so it's in Portland's interest to boost the most representative system available elsewhere in the country as well.

While multi-member geographic districts elected in a single STAR election might not guarantee the better outcomes the Commission is targeting, it definitely gives us the best opportunity to try. I hope all of these are adopted by the wider Commission and, ultimately, Portland voters.

P.S. Some unrelated minor technical items: The October 21st e-mail from Commissioner Álvarez-Castro contained a broken link to the e-mail address I'm submitting this e-mail to - it looks like it's actually to a portland.gov login page instead of an e-mail address. Additionally, the public comment form via SurveyMonkey would really be better suited having a multi-line expandable textbox for public comment instead of a single-line textbox, which makes it very difficult to submit anything of length or substance.

From The New York Times:

There Is No Good Reason You Should Have to Be a Citizen to Vote

Giving the franchise to noncitizens wouldn't just be fair; it would improve America.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/28/opinion/noncitizen-voting-us-elections.html?smid=em-share>

I am sending this to the attention of Robin Ye and Yasmin Ibarra, as co-chairs of the City Council Elections Committee of the CRC, for consideration by the full Committee in response to the question, "Who should have the ability to vote on Portland's elected leaders?" This author argues that legal resident non-citizens should be allowed to vote. He notes that local governments in some Maryland, Vermont, and Massachusetts towns already do so and that the cities of Chicago, Washington, and Portland, Maine are considering the idea.

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Dear Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I am a recent transplant to Wilsonville from Bakersfield, CA. I am thrilled to be here where people truly care about creating systems that will guarantee us a continued livable planet.

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

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The only path forward is through equitable action, where we ALL win. Please, do not miss this opportunity. We are LUCKY to be alive at this juncture--let's not waste this opportunity!!

Dear Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I've lived in Portland since the mid-60s. For the last 8 or 9 years I've been a climate activist. We need you to be sure and include environmental justice and climate action in the Charter Review process.

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Thank you for paying attention to my comments and others.

Just change the city government to a "strong city manager" and get the city council out of the way.

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Julia, Sofia, Members of the Commission,

At the risk of annoyingly over-promoting Baltimore's relevant experience with single and multi-member districts, I've reached out to a number Baltimorean friends of mine who were prominently involved in the transition in Baltimore

and who told me they would be available to discuss their first-hand takes with Portland's Charter Commission.

1. Carl Stokes, former Baltimore City Council member who chaired the Commission on size and structure of the City Council in 2001-2002 that kicked off discussions leading to the change in district representation.
2. Odette Ramos, current Baltimore City Council member, leader of Baltimore's foundation-sponsored "Neighborhood Congress" in ~1998-2000 which identified the too-large multi-member districts as being problematic. A beneficiary of the single member districts, Odette was recently elected as the first Latinx member of the City Council.
3. Mitch Klein, currently living in New Orleans, was the lead organizer for the late lamented Baltimore ACORN, which led the Baltimore coalition that passed the citizens' initiative "Question P" on single-member council districts.

I realize that the Commission and the sub-committees are very short on available time, but I do think the perspectives are very relevant to what Portland is trying to accomplish. My Baltimore friends understand this acutely, and they are willing to discuss it with you. And I'm happy to connect them with you.

To the Portland Charter Commission,

I hear that the Commission is considering electoral reforms, and I applaud these efforts to improve our democratic process. When you start examining alternative voting methods to our current (and very flawed) Plurality method, here is some input in three quick bullets:

- The most well-known alternative method is Ranked Choice Voting (RCV), a.k.a. Instant Runoff Voting (IRV). It's a good idea and provides a more expressive ballot than Plurality, but it has proven difficult to implement and prone to confusing misfires (i.e., failures to elect the voters' majority preference), with the result that RCV often gets repealed soon after being passed.
- Approval Voting is a step above RCV: It's both simpler and better at electing the majority preference. However, an Approval ballot provides limited expressiveness, and has been criticized for incentivizing "bullet-voting" for one's favorite candidate only -- potentially devolving the "choose all you like" Approval method back into the "choose just one" Plurality method.
- STAR Voting is the youngest method and the most promising. It combines the expressiveness of RCV with the simplicity of Approval. Unlike RCV, it has no mathematical quirks that will elect the wrong person; and unlike Approval (and Plurality), it never makes the voter choose between voting honestly vs. voting strategically (because on a STAR ballot, honest voting is strategic). STAR stands the best chance of minimizing the "spoiler effect" and providing a truly level playing field, regardless of how many candidates enter a race.

I'm sure my own preference is clear. I would be an immensely proud Portlander if my city were to adopt STAR voting: a simple electoral improvement (and homegrown Oregon innovation!) that could benefit not only us, but democracies the world over. Let's plant this seed here and watch it spread!

See Attachments

Chairs, Members of the Commission,

Please find attached some detailed comments regarding single and multi-member districts, relevant to both the Form of Government and Elections subcommittees.

As always, I appreciate the time and effort you all are putting into this important work, and I thank you for the generous opportunities to participate.

See Attachments

Dear Charter Commissioners,

First of all, thank you for all of the hard work you have put in to date, and for all that's left to do. We are grateful that you have identified voting method reform as an important subject of study, and even more excited that your initial subcommittee of commissioners has recommended STAR Voting for consideration.

For those of you to whom STAR is very new, we recommend starting with these articles from our website, which will lead you from the very basics, to the differences between STAR and the most well-known alternate voting method, Ranked Choice Voting (RCV), to how STAR can be implemented with the most cutting edge Proportional Representation system:

About STAR Voting

How to vote with STAR Voting

¿Cómo votar con Votación de Estrella?

RCV vs. STAR

On Primaries

Single or Multi-Winner STAR?

Proportional STAR Voting

More articles on STAR and Electoral Reform

We also wanted to answer the potential concerns that were expressed in the November 4th City Elections Subcommittee meeting—speaking from my own experience, voting method science can be confusing and counterintuitive, and we are glad for the opportunity to help deepen your understanding of the issues. Attached is a document of detailed responses to those concerns (with some citations for those of you who like deeper dives) that will hopefully allay any misgivings or misunderstandings about STAR.

Please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions. Like most voting method reform advocates, I really love to talk about this issue (admittedly sometimes to the detriment of interpersonal relationships), so I am at your service for long conversations or short follow-ups. If you would like to hear from other organizations or people who are avowed fans of STAR Voting, you can find some here: Organizations and individuals that have endorsed STAR Voting

I hope it's clear that STAR Voting supporters are committed to educating policymakers and voters about the voting method we think will deliver the best results to Portlanders, and confident that Portland is ready to adopt STAR. We are excited to work on this further with you all.

I support changing the charter to our structure of City Government.

It's outrageous that a question at a city council meeting was ignored and went unanswered.

"You've heard us talk for the last 2 hours about the needles, the feces, the garbage, the dangerously addicted, the gangs and drug dealers and the criminals who now own our streets. You've heard us talk about the violence and how many of us are afraid to leave our homes. Many on the streets are weaponized. They have stolen our way of life.

What can we see tomorrow in terms of action that tells us you've hear us, see us and have our backs."

What proceeded was 30 seconds of silence. With 60 seconds left, the moderator went to the next person in line. Did not let me back in to try and get a comment.

These are our leaders. Not a single word of hope and leadership to acknowledge us residents, shopkeepers, employees, employers = taxpayers.

It's outrageous that a question at a recent city council meeting was ignored and went unanswered.

Portland City Council Meeting. Nov 10.

At the Portland City Council meeting this afternoon. In attendance were, Wheeler, Hardesty, Mapps, Ryan.

Question:

"You've heard us talk for the last 2 hours about the needles, the feces, the garbage, the dangerously addicted, the gangs and drug dealers and the criminals who now own our streets. You've heard us talk about the violence and how many of us are afraid to leave our homes. Many on the streets are weaponized. They have stolen our way of life.

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Did not let me back in to try and get a comment. These are our leaders.

Not a single word of hope and leadership to acknowledge us residents, shopkeepers, employees, employers = taxpayers.

That's a comment from someone else, not me. I'm merely outraged.
Shouldn't we be doing more than defunding the police? i mean... instead of...

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Please keep me updated in the Charter Review Commission

Strongly in favor of hiring a City Manager. Strongly in favor of single member city council districts.

I think a strong mayor system would make our government more efficient.

Dear Members of the Portland Charter Review Committee,

As a representative of a district that includes part of Portland, I would like to encourage you to adopt STAR voting as an electoral reform as you redesign the Portland Charter. STAR voting is beneficial to any election, but it is particularly necessary for the kinds of elections that one sees for Portland Mayor and Commissioners--nonpartisan races that can have more than two viable candidates.

STAR voting is one among many electoral reforms that seeks to prevent the "spoiler effect", in which two good candidates split votes between them and let a third (bad) candidate win. Good candidates, especially those out of the mainstream, are often dissuaded from running because doing so would hurt their allies more than their ideological opposites. The result is dissatisfied voters who cannot support a true favorite.

STAR voting is, in my opinion, the best electoral reform for solving this problem. Though much has been said about Ranked Choice Voting, it does not allow a voter to safely vote for a true favorite. Because RCV requires a "first choice", a vote for an outsider candidate can still spoil the election for a mainstream candidate if the outsider gets too popular--which is a terrible position for an aspiring outsider.

STAR voting, on the other hand, asks voters to score, not to rank, the candidates. Voters can therefore give favorite candidates the same score and not worry about either acting as a spoiler. STAR has the further advantage of allowing

greater expression to voters and being easier to tally by precinct.

STAR voting was found to be extremely successful when used previously for the Independent Party of Oregon's 2020 primary election and also for the election of National Delegates by the Democratic Party of Oregon. It would be a wonderful opportunity for the citizens of Portland.

Sincerely,

Hello,

I strongly support a change in the form of Portland government. I have worked in 3 government agencies and as an engineer sought permits and land use approvals in over 100 so I have seen the pros and cons of forms of government. Portland is the least effective.

Please keep me informed and how I can have a voice to get this changed

Josh Wheeler

See Attachments

Hello Charter Commissioners:

Thank you for doing such a great job! Here's my latest comments:

I just viewed your November 4 meeting and found it very informative. However, I did find one glaring hole in the presentation on proportional voting – neither schemes you are considering (RCV, STAR) were analyzed for how they would perform in multimember district elections, which is the form of government scheme that both the Elections committee and the Form of Government committee is favoring. In fact, your presentation was skewed towards runoff schemes that you would use in a single member district election. I think having multimember districts may mean that YOU WON'T NEED TO HAVE RUNOFF SCHEMES. Not only would eliminating runoff schemes make things simpler as far as tallying the votes, but you'd be able to explain it much easier to the constituents!

Take the STAR voting without the automatic runoff scheme. I favor this approach and I'm calling it point value voting. Boy, this type of voting is also much easier to analyze in terms of results than the schemes with runoffs. I used a simple excel file and analyzed 3 different scenarios, breaking voter groups down into ten groups, each representing 10% of the vote for a particular 3-member district. The voters would get this instruction: Score each candidate on how well you think they would perform on the issues that you value. Five is best, zero is worst. Then the election people add up the scores for each candidate and pick the three highest scores.

I came up with all of these ideas in less than an hour so feel free to further analyze this idea and more specific scenarios.

I think in general the ranked voting is a bit more opaque so I'll leave some other clever person to develop that.

Dear Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. My name is Katie, and I have lived in Portland for the past 12 years with my husband and my two-year-old son. I am the sustainability chair of my neighborhood association (Foster-Powell), and a fundraiser and communications officer at a local nonprofit affordable housing developer.

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

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The climate crisis is the most pressing issue of our lifetimes, and it is crucial that we prioritize historically marginalized voices to find and implement solutions. Environmental justice for our city cannot lie with one commissioner, bureau, or program and must be engaged across all branches and departments of our city government. Our future depends on it.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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Get rid of Portland 's City Council form of government. It is ineffectual and corrupt. TIME FOR CHANGE!!!

Sent from Yahoo Mail on Android

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"The existing form of city government is ineffective, inefficient and expensive. It is old and is keeping Portland behind. Things are not getting done quickly due to bureaucracy inherent in group decision making. No one is responsible and accountable. We need a one mayor, or one city manager system to get things done and save Portland. Get rid of all commissioners, save tax payers money and get things done fast."

The existing form of city government is ineffective, inefficient and expensive. It is old and is keeping Portland behind. Things are not getting done quickly due to bureaucracy inherent in group decision making. No one is responsible and accountable. We need a one mayor, or one city manager system to get things done and save Portland. Get rid of all commissioners, save tax payers money and get things done fast.

My husband and I retired and moved to Portland from the East Coast about 14 years ago. Committed to community service, I have volunteered for a number of organizations including Elders in Action, Portland Japanese Garden, Peninsula Park Rose Garden, Irvington Historic Home Tour, Portland Food Project as well as co-founding a non-profit, Giving Connection, that provides community support to survivors of Child Sex Trafficking throughout the metropolitan area. Each of those roles have allowed me to witness first-hand the negative impact of Portland's archaic form of city government on the City staff and the services they provide through their bureaus. I have watched them labor under a parade of well-meaning, civic minded, amateurs. If your adopted "Desired Outcomes" do not first and foremost

address creating a form of government that will provide consistent and efficient leadership for City staff in the delivery of municipal services, then none of the other "Desired Outcomes" will matter. I urge you to revise your adopted "Desired Outcomes" to be more explicit about the efficient, effective delivery of municipal services. It feels like Portland is at a tipping point ... Thank you for your service to this very important and crucial task at hand.

Portland needs to change its form of government! It is urgently needed. I favor a City Council legislative body chaired by the Mayor, and a City Manager who serves at the pleasure of the Council. Department heads likewise should be Exec. positions serving at the pleasure of the Council and City Manager and not subject to collective bargaining agreements. With regard to council elections, I favor city-wide rank choice voting of a 9-member legislative body, or rank-choice voting for three legislators from three city districts of roughly the same population. I do not favor geographic wards. These likely will lead to representation by myopic zero-sum interests rather than those taking a broader view of public interests. I favor a "weak" mayor whose role is to serve as the Council parliamentarian and to build consensus for policy issues and decisions, and to represent the City on local, state and regional inter-governmental matters. Another approach that I would support would be for the Mayor to be elected by the Council as its parliamentarian, but this could diminish the legislative authority of the person in that seat. With regard to future topics, I am concerned about the Council's ability to reduce and consolidate the bureau structure, of which we have too many and too much "silo" thinking within our public service ranks. The question would be: should the Charter specify a limited number of departments that are structured around function and budget responsibilities? For example, should the Charter call for a Dept. of Public Works that would include water, sewer, and transportation - our enterprise funded Bureaus? Other departments might include Public Safety, Parks and Open Space, Planning and Development, Budget and Finance. Not more than six or seven. My concern is that self-interests within the existing bureaus may derail attempts by Council to restructure the city's service delivery system. The Bureau delivery system is as broken as the governance structure itself. It must be reformed along with the legislative structure.

I am an advocate for electing government officials using proportional representation voting methods. In the case of Portland's city government, that would mean multimember districts. I am willing to volunteer my time working on this issue if the subcommittee could use help. I'm also willing to be a teacher and advocate for proportional representation voting methods if that would be appropriate or helpful. Please contact me to let me know how I can participate. Thanks, Dave J

I believe Portland's commission form of government no longer serves the people of Portland. Commissioners should be elected to represent geographic districts of the city.

City council elections should be for both district-based positions, and for citywide at-large positions. For the districts, the neighborhood coalition boundaries should correspond to the council districts, with one or the other changing as needed to make this possible, to ensure full integration between local, district, and citywide place-based organizations. The boards of neighborhood associations and district coalitions should also be directly elected via county-administered ballot, to ensure equitable access to representation.

We are long overdue for a change in city government. Our current government does not adequately represent its citizens.

My background includes a professional degree in architecture from the U of O which gave me a strong interest in urban planning and civic affairs in general. In the mid 1970 I worked for the city of Portland as the Director of the Neighborhood History Project which gave me a good perspective about the growth and change of Portland. The 1970s was a time of change and the growth of neighborhood associations and we purchased a home in the Buckman neighborhood and got involved in improving one of Portland's low income neighborhoods. This gave me about 40 years of experience with Portland civic activities. I was honored with a Spirit of Portland award in 2010. I followed the Charter Review Commission closely in 2010-2011. I am generally retired now, but I still write articles for the SE Examiner. I am also a 10+ year member of the Portland League of Women Voters. I feel I have some important ideas to share about the changes to be made in our city government. This commission will make some great improvements to the charter that would improve the City of Portland. I would like Portland to come up with changes that would lead the governance of larger cities in a new direction in America. While the commission form of government becomes more flawed as Portland grows and the nation changes, I know of no large city in this country whose form I would want copied and brought to Portland. The key to the form of government is in Portland's motto; "Good citizens are the riches of the city." I believe that communities should be a major organizing factor within a city. Geographical neighborhoods are one type of community, but there can be many other types of communities

based on ethnicity, commerce, religion, education, etc. People can participate in more than one, but one person can only have one vote. Geographic neighborhoods allows the individual to participate based on where they make their home. To much of all government is based on the individual vote. The smaller the unit of government the more power the single vote has. To often people are not familiar with the activities of the city, state and nations so they rely on others to learn about the candidates running for election. They would be more likely to know someone living in their neighborhood. My idea is to divide the city into neighborhoods of approximately equal population and then 5-10 of them into a district that would election a city commissioner to sit on city council. This would allow neighborhoods to be from 8,000 to 15, 000 residents which is about the average size of the existing neighborhoods. A district would then be about 75,000 people. The commissioner would need to live in the district and have an office there with regular meetings and activities within the district. They would have a district council where the work of the city and the district would be discussed. The city bureaus would also be organized as much as possible to reflect the neighborhoods they are in so the residents would interact with the city employees. Neighborhood volunteers would participate in activities supporting the neighborhood. Schools would be a major focus of meetings and activities.

I support moving away from Portland's commissioner form of government. We need to move to a system used by nearly every major city in the USA that utilizes a city manager, mayor with veto power, and a larger city council. Council members should also be elected by geographic areas to ensure respresentation across the city. Eliminate primary elections and institute a ranked choice or similar system on a single election day in November to increase voter participation.

We need representation in this city. This Commissioner System is ineffectual and outdated. Portland is the last large city to have this form of governance. There is no one who advocates for the specific needs of my area. We need to change this now if we want this city to run like a 'real' city.

I recommend that elections to the Portland City Council be done using ranked choice ballots and a good STV-like vote-counting method that elects city council members without involving districts, and in a way that gives good "proportional" representation. Specifically I recommend: * The city council have 9 members, with each member serving for 4 years. * Hold elections every two years, but only elect half (either 4 or 5) the members in each election. * Use ranked choice ballots on which voters indicate a first choice, second choice, third choice, and so on. (This requirement disqualifies "STAR" voting because it uses the numbers zero through five. Also consider that teaching voters how to use both the STAR numbering convention and the first-second-third numbering convention would confuse voters, and would increase voter-education costs.) * Use a good candidate-based multi-winner method. I recommend either the "single transferable vote" -- with adjustments to allow a voter to rank two or more candidates at the same preference level -- or the STV version of "VoteFair representation ranking" -- which is described at: https://electowiki.org/wiki/VoteFair_representation_ranking This approach will ensure that women and minority candidates can get elected. Also it will ensure that a diversity of political opinions will be represented. The city council MUST represent as many voters as possible. It must not give excessive preference to the few wealthy citizens who give the biggest campaign contributions. I live here in Portland, yet I'm the author of the book titled "Ending The Hidden Unfairness In U.S. Elections," and I've been working on election-method reform for three decades (starting when I lived in Corvallis). Also I'm the subject-matter expert for the Ranked Choice Oregon ballot initiative, which is explained at: RankedChoiceOregon.org I'm available to help you design a great election system for the Portland City Council. I can be reached by email at: electionmethods@votefair.org (Note that the domain name is "VoteFair". Please don't confuse me with the east-coast-based "FairVote organization.") You can reach me by landline phone (no texting) at: 503-246-5067 Richard Fobes "The VoteFair guy" Author of "Ending The Hidden Unfairness In U.S. Elections" and "The Creative Problem Solver's Toolbox" (which has been published around the world in 10 languages)

I think we need representation on the council of all Portlanders, including EJ communities, non-human residents, and also future generations. The barriers to climate action and environmental justice we're encountering are baked into our city's structure. Our solutions must be as well. The people closest to the problem will be best equipped to lead on the solution, and our political systems have traditionally been set up to do the opposite, limiting community access to and participation in the spaces and processes that create policy. Nature and natural systems are part of our critical infrastructure; rivers, forests, green spaces, and other natural infrastructure deliver broad and diverse benefits and protections to Portlanders, but our governance of these systems does not represent or respond to this diversity of benefits. Climate and environmental problems can't be addressed effectively by just one bureau, program, or commissioner. To rise to these challenges, we need a City government that makes collaboration and integration

across departmental (as well as species and temporal!) boundaries the norm, and that engages the most impacted and knowledgeable communities as essential partners in developing solutions. Our current governance structure and culture discourages these essential practices. I think this would require taking publicly-funded elections to the next level, using ranked-choice voting, and even possibly establishing precedent for having multiple people share a council seat. It's REALLY hard to see what I've written in this box, so I will stop there for now. But I will probably give more input at another time!

I don't think the current form of government is serving our city very well. I believe Portland would be better off with a City Manager and a City Council that represents all of the areas of our city. City Council should be focused on big-picture issues of policy, while the City Manager and Bureau Directors handle the day-to-day running of our City. I am currently a City employee (Portland Water Bureau) and I experience first-hand the problems with how our city is currently governed. We were in a meeting yesterday about how SDC's are structured and someone mentioned that many (if not all) of our current City Council members have never voted on something having to do with SDC's. That is not an optimal situation. Is there really time to successfully educate all members of Council about the intricacies of how SDC's are calculated and applied such that they can make a truly informed decision about how our City is run? I am sure that the answer is "no". Which means we'll have something that's very important to several of our bureaus, and very important to our development community, being decided by a group of people who don't, and can't, have all of the information needed to make the best decision.

PortlandOregon.gov states clearly, "The City of Portland has the last remaining Commission form of government among large cities in the United States." Why? Is it working? I would argue no. I don't feel represented by much of the city council, and the weak mayor system deflects blame from them. I believe we need separation of legislative and administrative powers. The laundry list of responsibilities each council member has is ridiculous for a single person with little to no experience heading up their departments. The current government structure has been outgrown and no longer serves the people of this wonderful city. It's time to make a change.

I read with interest the Editorial in the Oregonian Nov 24th. As a resident of Portland and board member of Centennial Community Association I concur that our current commissioner oversight of Bureaus is not working. Personally I had a remodel to my home under the oversight of 3 commissioners. This is not efficient or responsible to the public. My project took months longer for approval due so much confusion. The city manager form of government and oversight must be implemented. Our system is totally out of date, wasteful and does not serve residents needs.

Dear Charter Commissioners,

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

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

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

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

Dear Charter Commissioners,

I appreciate the opportunity to testify. I live in NE Portland. I am concerned about reducing climate risks with a focus

on justice toward most impacted communities. I encourage you to make environmental justice and climate action central in the Charter Review process. As you work towards reforming City Council elections and our current form of government in Phase I, you have the opportunity to address many of the structural barriers preventing us from taking meaningful climate action.

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"Protestors" that continue to destroy this city, ruin business already struggling, are domestic terrorist and should be legally treated as such. But we have a lame attorney general too!

What will it take to stop all this madness and incompetence from our government....voting for a Republican?

Most Democrats are moderate leaning and the party has seriously misjudged its base. No party seems to ever learn that when you go to far left or right it doesn't work!

You can't stop 200 destructive rioters? Wow this city is in for a world of hurt one day of you can't get 200 under control.

The city should be liable for all the damage for its utter incompetence!

Ex Democrat

Get RID of this INEFFECTUAL, CORRUPT form of government.

Dear Charter Commissioners,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I live near SE 18th and Division. I am deeply concerned about the climate crisis that is affecting my community, from the historic heat dome of this past June, to the extreme smoke and attendant impacts on air quality, especially as occurred in September 2020. (Portland had the worst air quality on Earth at one point). In addition to these local issues, a centering of environmental justice in the City Charter will help in the global struggle to keep planetary heating to 1.5 degrees C.

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Environmental justice also calls on us to uplift the people closest to these problems as essential and equal partners in building solutions - communities of color, low-income communities, and so many others living on the front lines of these crises. In particular, there is no population more vulnerable to the effects of climate change and extreme weather than our unhoused neighbors. I urge you to include the voices of the homeless in updating the City Charter. This will require a commitment to homeless outreach, an activity that has bDear Charter Commissioners,

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Sincerely,een sorely lacking. I urge you to embed this practice into your work on the Charter Review as a whole and in the selection of your subcommittees for Phase II of the Charter Review process. Through this collaboration, we can uproot our most deep-seated challenges together and transform our city for the better.

I wish to co-present a charter reform proposal for a Civic Participation Commission and a charter mandates for participatory budgeting and use of democratic lotteries in the City of Portland.

ARTICLE IV
MAYOR

§ 1. Election, term, etc.

(a) *Election and qualifications.*

- (1) The voters of Baltimore City shall elect a Mayor on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November 2016, and on the same day and month in every succeeding fourth year.
- (2) The Mayor shall be a person of known integrity, experience, and sound judgment. The Mayor also shall be over 25 years of age, a citizen of the United States, and a resident of the City for at least 1 year next preceding the election and during the term of office.

Editor's Note: § 9-113 of the Local Government Article (enacted as former Article 24, § 1-108, by Chs. 8 and 9, Acts of 1999) provides that "a candidate for chief executive officer [of a county] shall be a resident of the county for at least 6 months before the general election for chief executive officer" {LG §9-113(c)}. By constricted definition and scope, however, this requirement applies to but two "counties" (Baltimore City and Montgomery County) and two "chief executive officers" (the Mayor of Baltimore City and the County Executive of Montgomery County) {LG § 9-113(a) and (b)}.

The section further provides that a "county" may retain a Charter-imposed residency requirement that is longer than 6 months if that political subdivision "reaffirms the requirement by enactment of an Ordinance effective no later than 4 weeks before the filing deadline specified in § 5-303(a) of the Election Law Article" {LG § 9-113(d)}.

In response to these provisions, the Mayor and City Council enacted Ordinance 99-433, effective June 1, 1999, to "reaffir[m] and retai[n] the residency requirement for Mayor that is imposed by the Baltimore City Charter".

(b) *Term.*

The term of Mayor shall commence on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in December succeeding the election and continue for four years and until a successor shall have been elected and qualified.

(c) *Salary; Expense account.*

The salary of the Mayor shall be set as provided in Article VII, §§ 117 through 125 of this Charter.

(*Res. 99-016, ratified Nov. 2, 1999; Res. 04-049, ratified Nov. 2, 2004; Res. 05-009, ratified Nov. 7, 2006; Res. 12-003, ratified Nov. 6, 2012.*)

§ 2. Removal; Vacancy; Absence.

(a) *Removal.*

The City Council, by a three-fourths vote of its members, may remove the Mayor from office for incompetency, misconduct in office, wilful neglect of duty, or felony or misdemeanor in office, on charges preferred by the City Council's Committee on Legislative Investigations, a verified petition signed by at least 20% of the qualified voters in Baltimore City, or by the Inspector

General, and after notice of those charges and an opportunity to be heard by the City Council are given to the Mayor.

(b) *Vacancy.*

In case of vacancy in the office of the Mayor by death, resignation, or permanent disqualification, the President of the City Council shall be Mayor for the remainder of the term for which the Mayor was elected.

(c) *Absence.*

In case of, and during, sickness, temporary disqualification or necessary absence of the Mayor, the President of the City Council shall be ex officio Mayor of the City.
(Res. 20-024, ratified Nov. 3, 2020.)

§ 3. Staff.

(a) *In general.*

The Mayor may appoint such persons to aid in the discharge of the Mayor's duties as provided in the Ordinance of Estimates.

(b) *City Administrator.*

The Mayor shall appoint and directly supervise a City Administrator, who shall be the chief administrative officer of the City.
(Res. 20-026, ratified Nov. 3, 2020, eff. July 1, 2021.)

§ 4. General powers.

(a) *Conservator of peace; Financial oversight; Report on state of City.*

The Mayor, by virtue of the office, shall have all the powers of a conservator of the peace.

The Mayor may call upon any officer of the City entrusted with the receipt or expenditure of public money, for a statement of account as often as the Mayor thinks necessary, and may at any time by expert accountants and bookkeepers, examine the books and accounts of any department, commission, board, officer, assistant, clerk, subordinate or employee.

The Mayor shall report to the City Council as soon as practicable after the end of each fiscal year, the general state of the City, with an accurate account of the money received and expended, to be published for the information of the citizens.

(b) *Chief executive officer.*

The Mayor is the chief executive officer of the City and shall see that ordinances and resolutions are duly and faithfully executed.

(c) *Economic development.*

Subject to more specific provisions of the Charter, the Mayor shall have general responsibility for the economic development of the City.

(Res. 20-026, ratified Nov. 3, 2020, eff. July 1, 2021.)

§ 5. Approval or veto of legislation.(a) *Delivery to Mayor; Approval.*

All ordinances or resolutions duly passed by the City Council, after being properly certified by the President of the City Council as having been so passed, shall be delivered by the Clerk of the Council to the Mayor for approval. The date of delivery shall be noted on the ordinances or resolutions and, when approved by the Mayor, they shall become ordinances or resolutions of the City.

(b) *Veto; Return to Council.*

(1) If the Mayor does not approve of an ordinance or resolution passed by the City Council, the Mayor shall return it with written objections to the City Council within three actual regular meetings, not more than one of which shall occur in any one calendar week, of the City Council after the delivery of the ordinance or resolution to the Mayor.

(2) On receipt, the Mayor's objections shall be read promptly to the Council and entered on its Journal. The Council may proceed to reconsider and vote on the ordinance or resolution:

(i) after 5 calendar days from when the Mayor's objections have been read to the Council; and

(ii) either:

(A) within 20 calendar days from when the Mayor's objections have been read to the Council; or

(B) if no regular meeting is held during that 20-day period, at the first regular meeting that is scheduled after that 20-day period.

(3) Notwithstanding paragraph (2) of this subsection, no vetoed ordinance or resolution may be reconsidered by a City Council that has been newly-elected and sworn since the passage of the vetoed ordinance or resolution.

(4) If the ordinance or resolution, after reconsideration, is again passed by the City Council by a vote of two-thirds of its members, it becomes an ordinance or resolution of the City. In these cases, after the reconsideration, the votes on the question of the passage of the ordinance or resolution over the veto of the Mayor shall be determined by yeas and nays, and the names of the persons voting for and against passage of the ordinance or resolution over the veto of the Mayor shall be entered on the Journal of the City Council.

(Res. 20-020 and Res. 20-21, ratified Nov. 3, 2020.)

(c) *No action by Mayor.*

If an ordinance or resolution duly passed by the City Council shall not be returned by the Mayor to the City Council within three actual regular meetings, no more than one of which shall occur in any one calendar week, after it shall have been delivered to the Mayor, it shall become an ordinance or resolution of the City in the same manner as if the Mayor had approved it, unless the City Council by an adjournment sine die, or for a period exceeding one month, shall prevent its return, in which case it shall not be law.

(d) *Items of appropriation.*

If an ordinance or resolution duly passed by the City Council shall embrace different items of appropriation, the Mayor may approve the provisions thereof relating to one or more items of appropriation and disapprove the others, and in such case those the Mayor shall approve shall become effective and those which the Mayor shall not approve shall be reconsidered by the City Council, and shall become effective if again passed over the veto of the Mayor by the vote as above prescribed for the passage over the veto of the Mayor of entire ordinances or resolutions. The procedures governing the Mayor's veto of an item of appropriation and the Council's reconsideration of that item shall be the same as those in this section that govern the passage, veto, reconsideration and override of ordinances and resolutions.

§ 6. Appointments of municipal officers.(a) *Appointment subject to confirmation.*

Except as otherwise provided in the Charter, the Mayor shall have the sole power of appointment of all municipal officers, subject to confirmation by the City Council by a majority vote of its members; provided the Council shall take action on the nomination within the first three regular meetings of the Council after the nomination is sent to it by the Mayor. If the Council fails to take action within this time, then the person nominated shall be, by operation of this subsection, confirmed by the Council. If the Council, by the required vote and in the prescribed time, shall refuse to confirm the nomination, the Mayor shall send to it another name for the office, who shall be subject to confirmation pursuant to this subsection.

(b) *Terms of officers.*

The terms of all municipal officers appointed by the Mayor shall expire at the end of four years or at the end of the Mayor's term of office, whichever first occurs, with the exception of the terms of the City Administrator and some members of the Board of School Commissioners, the Civil Service Commission, the Planning Commission, the Board of Municipal and Zoning Appeals, and those boards and commissions governed by State or federal law. The terms of the City Administrator and the members of these boards and commissions are prescribed elsewhere in the Charter or by other law.

(c) *Removal – In general.*

The Mayor shall have the power to remove at pleasure all municipal officers, except members of boards and commissions established by Charter or other law, appointed by the Mayor in the manner prescribed in this section and confirmed by the City Council; provided, however, that

appointees holding office pursuant to the provisions of the Charter relating to the Civil Service may be removed from office only in accordance with such provisions.

(d) *Removal – Boards and commissions.*

Except as otherwise provided by law, the Mayor may remove members of boards and commissions established by Charter or other law by majority vote of the members of the City Council. Removal shall date from the time of City Council approval.

(e) *Term limits.*

No person, except ex officio members, shall serve more than two consecutive full terms, in addition to any unexpired term served, on the same board or commission.

(f) *Vacancies – In general.*

Upon the vacancy in any office subject to this section, whether by resignation, removal, death, end of a term or otherwise, the Mayor shall fill the vacancy by an appointment in the manner prescribed in this section for the remainder of the term, if any, of the former incumbent.

(g) *Vacancies – Boards and commissions.*

When a vacancy occurs on a board or commission established by this Charter, or other law, the Mayor shall have, for 120 days after the occurrence of that vacancy, the sole power of appointment to the vacant office. Such appointment shall be subject to confirmation by the City Council in the manner prescribed in this section.

If the Mayor fails to submit a nomination within the time prescribed in this subsection, the power of appointment shall vest and be held by the board or commission to which the vacancy shall apply, and that board or commission, by majority vote, shall certify the name of a person to the City Council for confirmation in the manner prescribed in this section.

For the purposes of this subsection only, a vacancy shall occur upon the occurrence of an event enumerated in subsection (f) hereof, and also upon the rejection by the City Council of a nomination to a board or commission.

(h) *Vacancies – Office of director or similar.*

When a vacancy occurs in an office to which a municipal officer may be appointed who is subject to removal as provided in subsection (c), the Mayor may, in the interest of governmental efficiency and in order to provide uninterrupted municipal services, designate a person within the department or agency affected to perform the duties of the vacant office. Such a person shall cease to perform the duties of the office when a municipal officer is appointed and confirmed in the manner prescribed in this section, or one year after designation, or sixty days after the City Council shall by resolution, passed by majority vote and not subject to veto, direct the Mayor to appoint, subject to confirmation, a municipal officer, whichever first occurs; provided, however, that the City Council shall have no power to direct the appointment of any individual.

(i) *Oath and commission.*

All persons appointed by the Mayor, as well as those municipal officers elected by the people or by the City Council, shall qualify for office by taking before the Mayor an oath faithfully to perform the duties of their offices, and to support the laws and constitutions of the United States and of the State of Maryland. A test book shall be kept by the Mayor, which shall be signed at the time of taking the oath, and after qualifying, the Mayor shall issue to the officers a commission signed by the Mayor with the corporate seal attached.

(j) *Recess appointments.*

Whenever a vacancy that the Mayor is empowered to fill subject to confirmation by the City Council shall occur during the recess of the City Council, the Mayor may temporarily appoint a person to fill that vacancy until the next regular meeting of the City Council. At that meeting, the Mayor shall present such appointment for confirmation as provided for in this section for other appointments by the Mayor.

(k) *Holding over; Dual offices of profit prohibited.*

All elected municipal officers provided for in the Charter or other law, shall hold their offices until their successors are appointed or elected and qualified.

No person shall at any time hold more than one office yielding pecuniary compensation under the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore.

(l) *Residency requirement.*

(1) The City Administrator and all heads of departments and bureaus, including presidents of boards and commissions, provided for by this Charter or any other law, and appointed by the Mayor or by the governing board of the department, shall be residents and registered voters of Baltimore City at the time of their appointment and shall remain residents and registered voters during their entire term of office.

(2) The provisions of this subsection shall not apply to those holding office prior to January 1, 1975, as long as they shall retain that office, and further, shall not apply to a City Administrator, a department head, or bureau head appointed after January 1, 1975 who signs a declaration of intent to become a City resident and registered voter within six months of the date of appointment. If that department or bureau head fails to abide by this declaration of intent, then the appointment shall be terminated.

Editor's Note: See City Code Article 1, § 7-10 {"Residency requirements for City officials"} and its accompanying Editor's Note. That section codifies the City's residency requirements in accord with controlling limitations imposed by State Local Government Article, § 1-201.

(Res. 20-026, ratified Nov. 3, 2020, eff. July 1, 2021.)

§ 7. Appointment of municipal employees.

The heads of departments, municipal officers not embraced in a department (including the Comptroller), commissions and boards shall have the sole power of appointment and removal of all

deputies, assistants, clerks and subordinate employees employed by them, subject to the Civil Service provisions of Article VII, unless otherwise provided in the Charter.

The head of each municipal agency shall designate the functions and prescribe the duties of the several assistants, clerks and employees of such agency, consistent with the Charter and with the classification of such assistant, clerk or employee as previously determined by the Civil Service Commission.

§ 8. Minority party representation.

Except as otherwise provided in the Charter or by other law, at least one member, in the case of commissions or boards composed of not more than five members, and at least two members, in the case of commissions or boards composed of more than five members, shall be registered voters in Baltimore City who are not registered as members of the majority party. The “majority party” shall be that political party which had the largest number of registered voters at the time of the municipal election next preceding the date of the appointment.

(Res. 12-005, ratified Nov. 6, 2012.)

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be sent to the Secretary of the Maryland State Department of Housing and Community Development.

Approved June 17, 2002

MARTIN O'MALLEY, Mayor

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
RESOLUTION 02-032
(Council Bill 02-654)**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL CONCERNING

Charter Amendment — City Council — Members and Districts

FOR the purpose of amending the Charter of Baltimore City to reduce the number of Councilmembers, to modify the number of Council Districts and repeal provisions for subdistricts, and to correct, clarify, and conform certain language; and submitting this amendment to the qualified voters of the City for adoption or rejection.

BY proposing to amend
Article III - City Council
Section(s) 2(b) and (c)
Baltimore City Charter
(1996 Edition)

BY proposing to repeal
Article III - City Council
Section(s) 7(c)
Baltimore City Charter
(1996 Edition)

SECTION 1. BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the City Charter is proposed to be amended to read as follows:

Baltimore City Charter

Article III. City Council

§ 2. Members.

(b) The Council [shall consist] **CONSISTS** of [eighteen] 14 members in addition to the President. There shall be [six] 7 districts[. Three], **WITH** 2 members [shall] **TO** be elected from each district.

(c) The election of members shall be held by council districts [or subdistricts, as provided in Section 7(c), and no]. **NO** person [shall be] **IS** entitled to vote for any member of the City Council except for the members or member for the district [or subdistrict] in which the voter is duly registered.

§ 7. Council districts.

[(c) To comply with the requirements of law, the Mayor may propose, the Council may enact (with or without amendments), and the Mayor may approve an ordinance subdividing any one or more of the six (6) council districts into either three (3) single member subdistricts or one single member subdistrict and one two (2) member subdistrict.]

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this proposed amendment to the City Charter be submitted to the legal and qualified voters of Baltimore City, for adoption or rejection, in accordance with Article XI-A, § 5 of the Maryland Constitution, in the following form:

CHARTER AMENDMENT

To reduce the size of the City Council by establishing 7 Council Districts,
with 2 members to be elected from each District,
in addition to the Council President.

FOR CHARTER AMENDMENT

AGAINST CHARTER AMENDMENT

Approved August 16, 2002

MARTIN O'MALLEY, Mayor

**CITY OF BALTIMORE
RESOLUTION 02-033
(Council Bill 02-806)**

A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL CONCERNING

Charter Amendment — Social Services Commission

FOR the purpose of conforming to State law the authorized composition of the Social Services Commission; correcting, clarifying, and conforming certain language; allowing the designation of the Commission's President to be as provided by Ordinance; and submitting this amendment to the qualified voters of the City for adoption or rejection.

BY proposing an amendment to
Article VII - Executive Departments
Section(s) 58
Baltimore City Charter
(1996 Edition)

SECTION 1. BE IT RESOLVED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE, That the City Charter is proposed to be amended to read as follows:

Baltimore City Charter

Article VII. Executive Departments

**ARTICLE III
CITY COUNCIL**

§ 1. Legislative Department; Qualification and salary of members.

(a) *Legislative Department.*

The Legislative Department of the City shall be the City Council, which shall consist of a single chamber.

(b) *Qualifications.*

Members of the City Council, except the President whose qualifications are provided for in Section 3, shall be citizens of the United States, at least 18 years old, and registered voters of Baltimore City. They also shall be residents of the districts the members have been chosen to represent for at least 1 year next preceding their election, except as provided in Section 7(e), and during their term of office.

(c) *Salaries.*

The salary of each member shall be set as provided in Article VII, §§ 117 through 125 of this Charter.

(Res. 05-009, ratified Nov. 7, 2006; Res. 11-034, ratified Nov. 9, 2011.)

§ 2. Members.

(a) *Election and term.*

- (1) The voters shall elect the members of the City Council on the Tuesday next after the first Monday in November 2016, and on the same day and month in every succeeding fourth year.
- (2) Their term of office shall commence on the Thursday next after the first Monday in December succeeding their election and shall continue for 4 years.

(b) *Number.*

The Council shall consist of fourteen members in addition to the President. There shall be fourteen districts with one member elected from each district.

(c) *Districts.*

The election of members shall be held by council districts, and no person is entitled to vote for any member of the City Council other than member for the district in which the voter is registered.

(d) *Removal.*

The City Council, by a three-fourths vote of its members, may remove an individual member from office for incompetency, misconduct in office, wilful neglect of duty, or felony or misdemeanor in office, on charges preferred by the Mayor, the City Council's Committee on

Legislative Investigations, or by the Inspector General, and after notice of those charges and an opportunity to be heard by the City Council are given to the individual member.

(Res. 99-016, ratified Nov. 2, 1999; Initiative "Question P", ratified Nov. 5, 2002; Res. 04-049, ratified Nov. 2, 2004; Res. 12-003, ratified Nov. 6, 2012; Res. 20-024, ratified Nov. 3, 2020.)

§ 3. President.

(a) Election, qualifications, duties, etc.

At the same time that they elect the members, the voters shall elect from Baltimore City at large, a person to be the President of the City Council, who shall possess the qualifications required for the Mayor of the City. It shall be the President's duty to preside over the City Council, vote on all questions and perform such other duties as may be prescribed by law. The salary of the President shall be set in the Ordinance of Estimates {read: *shall be as provided in Article VII, §§ 117 through 125 of this Charter*}.

(b) Removal.

The City Council, by a three-fourths vote of its members, may remove the President of the City Council from office for incompetency, misconduct in office, wilful neglect of duty, or felony or misdemeanor in office, on charges preferred by the Mayor, by the City Council's Committee on Legislative Investigations, a verified petition signed by at least 20% of the qualified voters in Baltimore City, or by the Inspector General, after notice of those charges and an opportunity to be heard by the City Council are given to the President.

(Res. 20-024, ratified Nov. 3, 2020.)

§ 4. Vacancy in presidency.

If it becomes necessary for the President of the City Council to fill the unexpired term of the Mayor, or in case of the death, resignation, removal or other disqualification of the President, the City Council, by a majority vote of its members, shall elect a new president for the unexpired term. The person so elected as President may, but need not, be, at the time of election, a member of the City Council.

§ 5. Emergency vacancies.

If, by reason of any catastrophe, a majority of the members elected to the City Council are killed, or are sick, or incapacitated, missing, or otherwise unavailable, so that for a temporary or indefinite period there is not a quorum of the City Council available to permit that body to function, the Mayor, if the Mayor is available, or the Governor of Maryland or the other person acting in that capacity, if the Mayor is unavailable, is authorized to appoint for a temporary or indefinite period persons to fill the vacancies thus existing. If possible, each of the appointees shall have the qualifications required of members of the City Council.

During their tenure, all such appointive members of the City Council shall possess and may exercise the powers and prerogatives of regularly elected members. Each appointee shall continue to hold office during the incapacity or unavailability of the member whose position the appointee was appointed to fill, or until the position is filled pursuant to the regular election and qualification of a successor.

§ 6. Individual vacancies.

Each vacancy in the City Council shall be filled without delay. After public notice, the City Council, by a majority vote of its remaining members, shall elect a person possessing the qualifications prescribed in Section 1 of this article to serve the remainder of the unexpired term of the former incumbent.

(Res. 04-055, ratified Nov. 2, 2004.)

§ 7. Council districts.*(a) Criteria for redistricting.*

The City shall be divided by ordinance into districts for the election of members of the City Council. The criteria in redistricting shall be equality of population, contiguous territory, compactness, natural boundaries, existing council district lines, and the standards established by the Supreme Court of the United States.

(b) Redistricting plan.

Following each census of the United States the Mayor shall prepare a plan for council redistricting. The Mayor shall present the plan to the City Council not later than the first day of February of the first municipal election year following the census.

After the Mayor's plan is presented to the City Council, the Council may adopt it or amend it or the City Council may adopt another plan. If no plan has been adopted by the City Council within sixty days after the Mayor's plan is presented, the Mayor's plan shall take effect as the redistricting ordinance.

*(c) {Vacant}**(d) Incumbent's residency.*

No member of the City Council shall be required to vacate that office by reason of a change of boundary lines of that member's council district made during that member's term, as long as that member remains a resident of Baltimore City.

(e) Residency duration for next election.

For elections following the adoption of redistricting plans, members of the City Council shall have been residents of the districts they have been chosen to represent since the preceding July 1.

(Initiative "Question P", ratified Nov. 5, 2002.)

§ 8. Sessions.

The City Council shall meet annually on the Thursday next after the first Monday in December and may continue in session for such period it deems necessary. The Mayor may convene the City Council in special session when, in the Mayor's opinion, the public business demands it. The President also may call the City Council to meet in special session whenever in the President's opinion such action is desirable, and shall call it into special session upon the written request of two-thirds of its members.

§ 9. Floor privileges of municipal officers.

The heads of departments, municipal officers not embraced in a department, and members of commissions and boards shall appear before the City Council if requested by a majority vote of its members and at other times shall have the privilege of the floor of the City Council at its meetings, and shall be entitled to participate in the discussion of matters relating to their respective departments, offices, commissions or boards, but shall have no vote. In the case of a commission or board, the President, or a member designated in writing for that purpose by the President, shall be entitled to the privilege provided for in this section.

§ 10. Procedures; Council officers.**(a) Attendance of members.**

The City Council may compel the attendance of absent members in such manner and under such penalties as it may provide by ordinance.

(b) Vice-President — in general.

The City Council, by a majority vote of its members, shall appoint from its members a Vice-President, who in the absence, sickness or disqualification of the President shall preside at all its meetings. The Vice-President also shall be an acting member of the Board of Estimates in the absence, sickness or temporary disqualification of the President.

(c) Vice-President — as acting Mayor.

In case of, and during, necessary absence, sickness or the temporary disqualification of both the Mayor and the President of the City Council, the Vice-President shall be acting Mayor.

(d) Judge of member qualifications.

The City Council shall be judge of the election and qualifications of its members, subject to appeal by petition of the party aggrieved as provided by law.
(Res. 20-024, ratified Nov. 3, 2020.)

(e) Rules of procedure; Officers.

The City Council shall adopt rules of procedure not inconsistent with the Charter, appoint its own officers, regulate their respective compensation, not to exceed in the aggregate the amount appropriated therefor in the Ordinance of Estimates, and remove them at pleasure.

(f) Journal of proceedings; Public deliberations.

The City Council shall keep a journal of its proceedings and enter yeas and nays on any question, resolution or ordinance at the request of any member, and the deliberations of the City Council shall be public.

§ 11. Legislative powers.

The Mayor and City Council of Baltimore shall have power to pass all ordinances, not inconsistent with the Charter, necessary to give effect and operation to all powers vested in the City.

§ 12. Evidence of legislative acts.

Ordinances and resolutions of the City may be read in evidence from the printed volumes thereof published by its authority.

§ 13. Style of ordinances.

The style of all ordinances shall be: "BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF BALTIMORE".

§ 14. Passage of ordinances and resolutions.*(a) In general.*

Every legislative act of the City shall be by ordinance or resolution. No ordinance or resolution shall be passed by the City Council except by a majority vote of its members, and on its final passage the vote shall be taken by yeas and nays, and the names of members voting for or against the same shall be entered on the Journal.

(b) Single-subject, title, and content requirements.

Every ordinance enacted by the City shall embrace but one subject, which shall be described in its title, and no ordinance shall be revived, amended or enacted by mere reference to its title, but the same shall be set forth at length as in the original ordinance.

(c) Readings and printing requirements.

No ordinance shall become effective until it be read on three different days of the session, unless the City Council by a vote of three-fourths of its members shall otherwise determine by yeas and nays to be recorded on the Journal, and no ordinance shall be read a third time until it shall have been actually printed or engrossed for a third reading.

(d) Oaths and witnesses.

The City Council, by resolution, may authorize any standing or special committee to administer oaths and to summon witnesses as to any matters relevant to its investigation of any municipal agency.

§ 15. General Counsel.*(a) Authority to employ.*

The City Council may employ the services of an independent General Counsel. The selection and employment of the General Counsel shall be consistent with this section, as supplemented by the Rules of the City Council.

(b) *Qualifications.*

The General Counsel:

- (1) must be a member of the Maryland Bar;
- (2) must meet all other qualifications for the position set by the Rules of the City Council;
- (3) during his or her term, is subject to the Rules of the City Council that generally govern officers and employees of the Council; and
- (4) during her or his term, may not engage in any other practice of law unless:
 - (i) it is uncompensated and in the nature of community service, such as pro bono advice to or representation of indigent clients; or
 - (ii) it is on behalf of her- or himself or her or his parent, spouse, or child.

(c) *Term.*

The General Counsel serves at the pleasure of the City Council.

(d) *Duties.*

As the City Council directs, the General Counsel shall:

- (1) provide independent legal advice to the City Council, its committees, and subcommittees;
- (2) assist the City Council in investigations undertaken by the City Council or any of its committees or subcommittees; and
- (3) generally serve as attorney for the City Council.

(e) *Compensation; Expenses.*

- (1) The General Counsel's compensation shall be at least equal to that of a full-time Chief of the Law Department's General Counsel Division.
- (2) The Board of Estimates shall annually include in the Ordinance of Estimates submitted to the City Council an amount sufficient to fund the General Counsel's compensation and necessary expenses.
- (3) The amount appropriated for the General Counsel's compensation and expenses shall be in addition to and may not supplant, be deducted from, or serve as a basis for reducing any part of the operating budget of the City Council.

(Res. 13-013, ratified Nov. 4, 2014.)

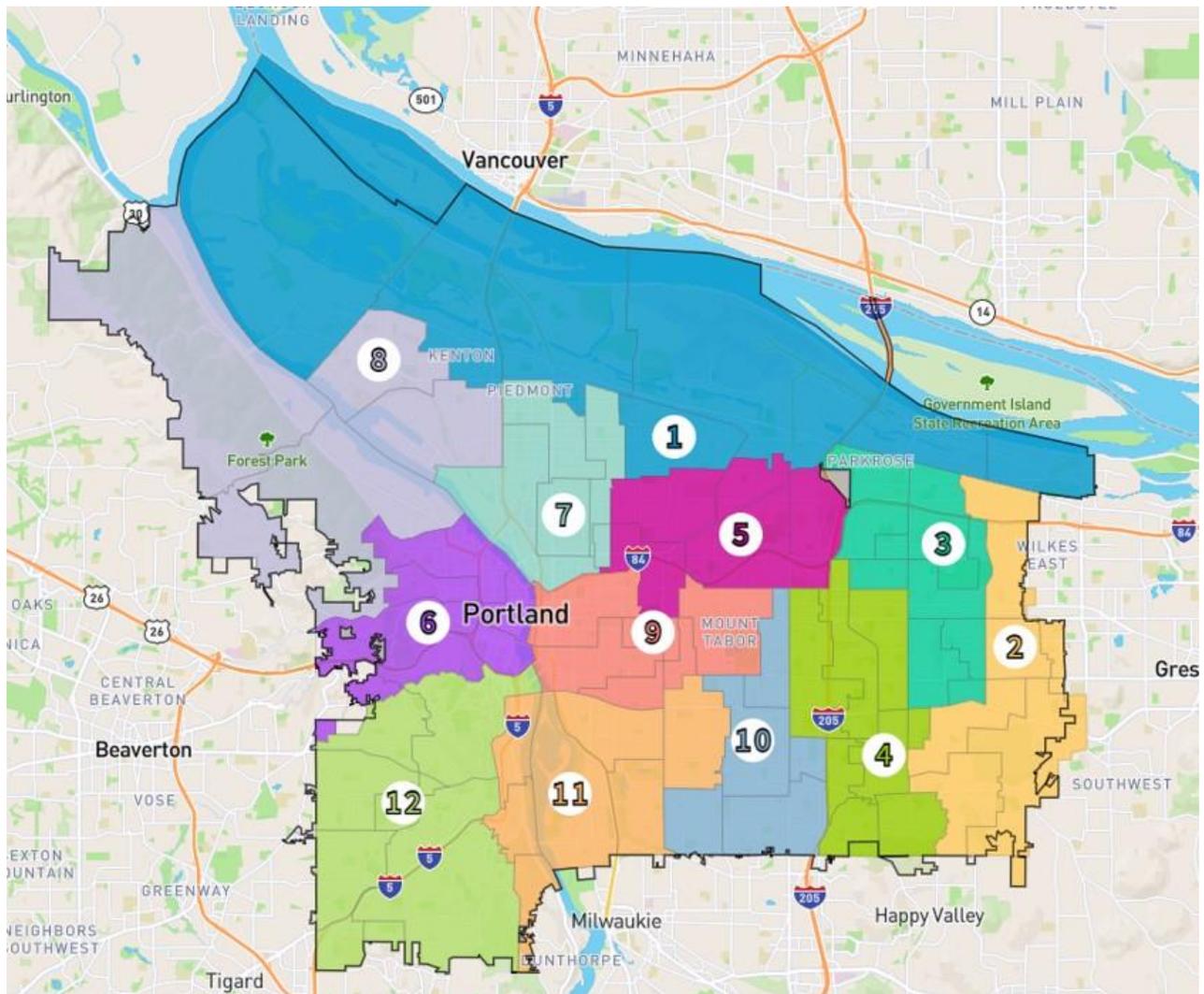
Portland Charter Commission
Via: email submittal
RE: Form of Government
City Council Elections

November 10, 2021

Chairs and members of the Commission,

Because I'm not sure that the Commission has actually seen what 12 single-member districts might look like, I took an afternoon to draw some. There are obviously infinite numbers of ways that 12 districts could be drawn, and obviously many ways these districts could be refined for different electoral purposes. But here's a simple example intended to show the neighborhood scale of the single-member districts. I don't put this forward as an actual proposal, but instead as an illustration.

A rough-sketch single-member district example



I used Districtr, which is a free web-based redistricting tool to generate 12 “communities” of roughly 50,000 residents in each. Because I used very coarse precinct-level settings, my districts may be off a few thousand residents in either direction. Obviously, a finer-grained census-block level approach would result in more accurately apportioned (and more flexibly mapped) districts. In a more perfect version, for example, the eastern border of slightly underpopulated district 6 needs to move eastward across the river into a few census blocks of slightly overpopulated district 9.

Nine of these districts have BIPOC percentages significantly higher than the city average. Most existing neighborhoods are intact (or could easily be intact with finer-scale mapping) and most neighborhoods are grouped together with similarly situated neighborhoods. Each district is reasonably manageable for a single council member who wants to do a good job. And each district is sized such that individual neighborhoods can have significant political power and influence.

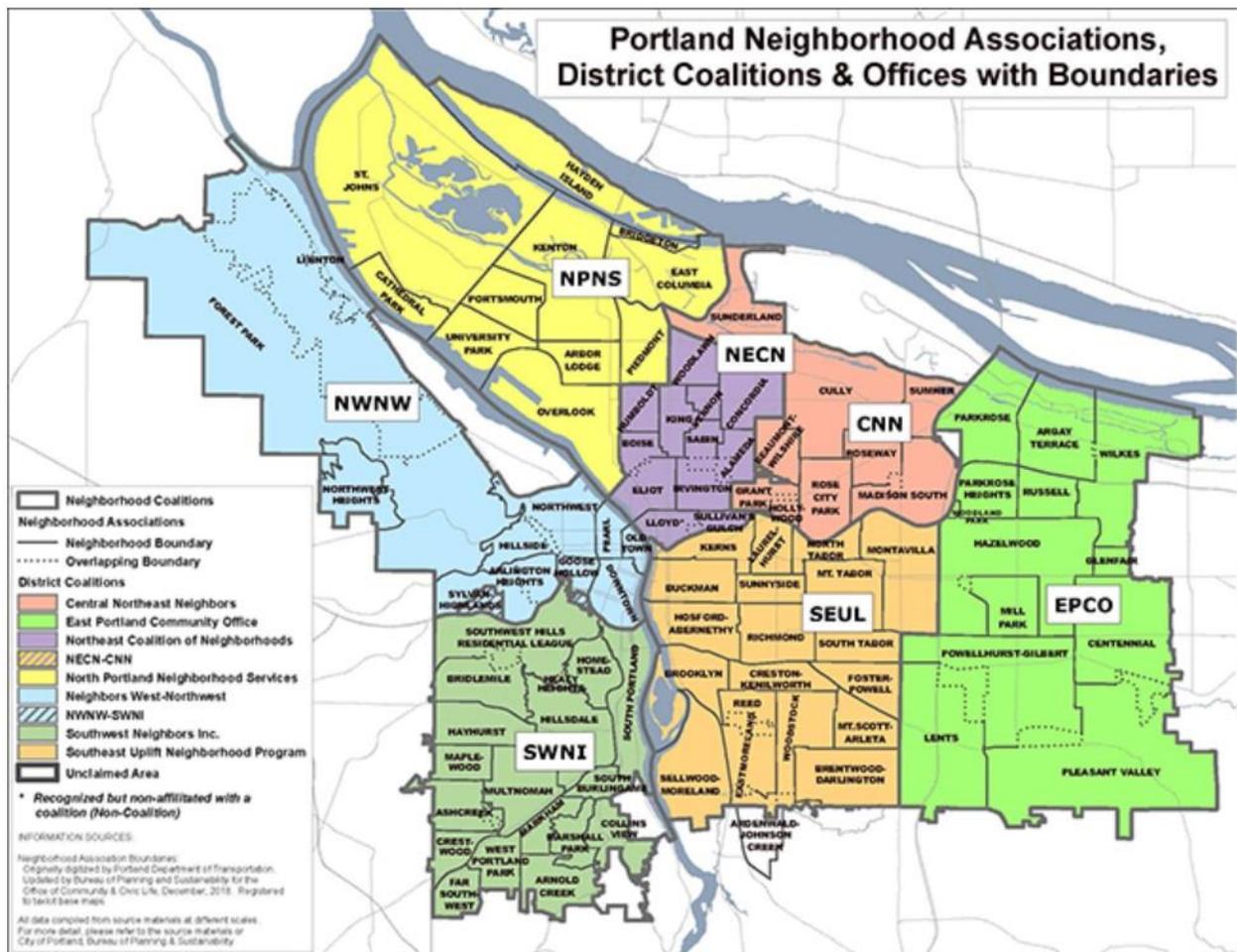
In fact, each of these districts has a distinct personality with an appropriate neighborhood scale. I live in District 12 for example, and you can look at the map and instantly understand how those neighborhoods (and/or “communities of interest”) could easily be well served by a single representative. And you can also see how District 12 might differ very significantly from Districts 6 and 8 which would be the most logical grouping with District 12 to create a multi-member district. (See the multi-member district example below.)

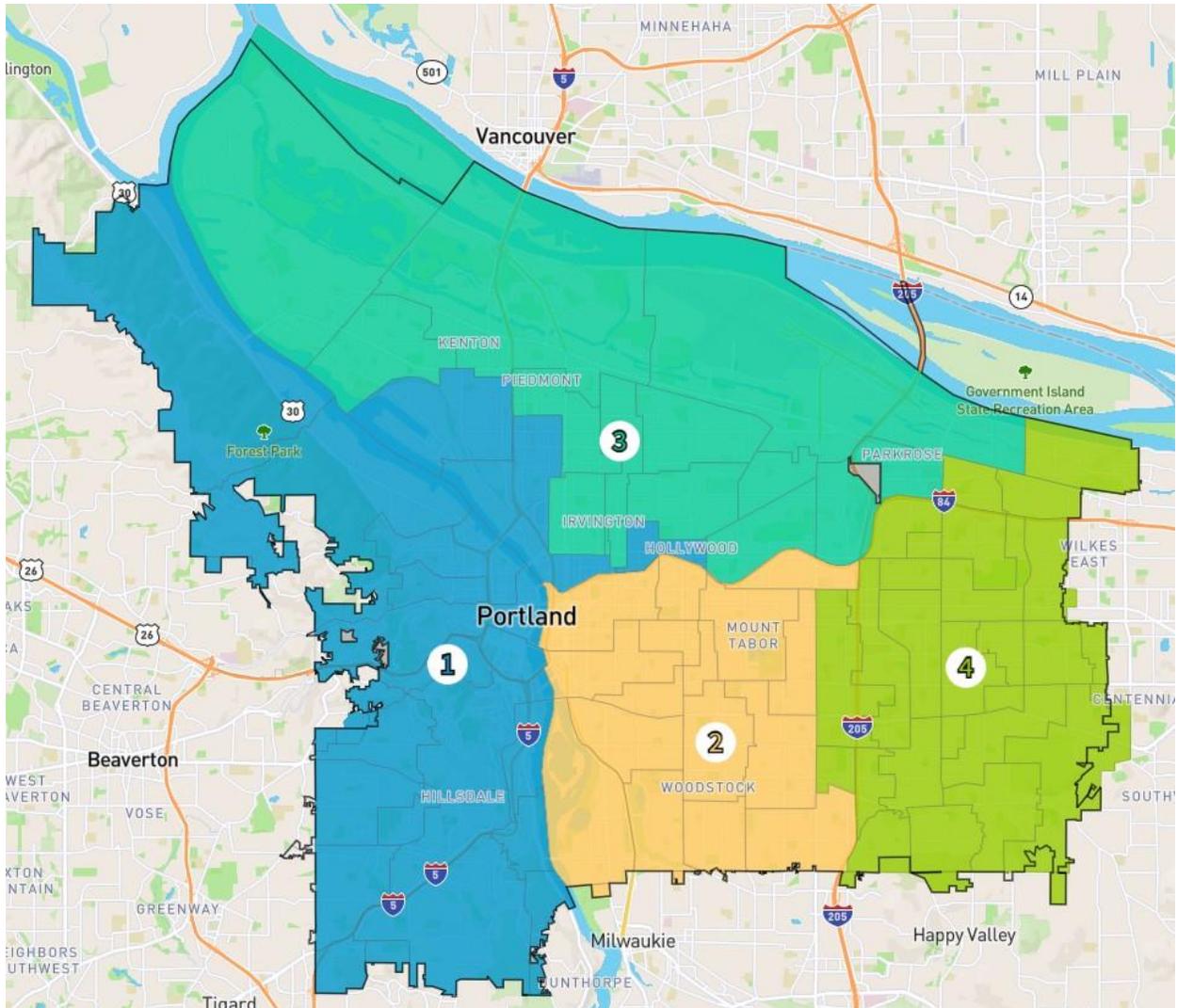
Also, primarily for illustration, I drew District 1 as a more heavily industrialized district. In Baltimore, when the single-member districts were drawn, one district (and a good part of a second) were “smokestack” districts with very heavy industry, toxic pollution, brownfields, truck traffic, noise, along with the sewage plants and solid waste facilities. These districts were also home to some very unhappy and frequently forgotten frontline neighborhoods. With the new districts, the neighborhoods held sufficient political power to elect councilmembers more responsive to their needs, and the environmental injustices finally got attention in city hall that had never existed in the past.

Ultimately, based on my afternoon on Districtr, mapping smaller districts (and redistricting) for neighborhood scale political power is not that difficult in Portland.

A simplified multi-member district example

I'm new to Portland, so as an orientation, I started this whole mapping project from the city's map of neighborhood associations and district coalitions. I was (mildly) surprised to see that the district coalitions are unbalanced as to populations, but if they are grouped together appropriately, they can **VERY** roughly approximate the size of **four** multi-member districts that the Commission seems to be interested in. For the purposes of illustration, **VERY** rough population equivalence can be had by grouping NWNW and SWNI together into a single "west" district, and grouping NPNS, NECN, and CNN together into a single "north" district, EPCO as a single "east" district, and SEUL as a single "south" district.





Shown here are four districts approximately with 150,000 residents in each, roughly in line with the district coalitions map. (With the same caveats about the coarse precinct-level mapping. Still, note that any “west” district needs to cross the river to balance populations.)

These would be, frankly, enormous districts for a district-based council member to represent adequately.

Compared to the current at-large system, sure, some geographic focus is an improvement. For example, even in this simplified scenario, there’s a guarantee that three councilmembers would come from the “East” (EPCO) district. Still, they are more likely than not to all come from the higher-turnout neighborhoods. This only regionalizes the very same representation problem we have now with the at-large system. Smaller and needier neighborhoods are still left out.

Also keep in mind that in a multi-member district each councilmember represents the entire district – all the neighborhoods (and neighborhood association meetings), all the schools, all the roads and streets and sidewalks and trees needing attention, all the homeless encampments, all the crime and all the

drugs, all the illegal dumping sites, all the traffic and parking problems, and all the legislative priorities. But because in each multi-member district the councilmembers run against each other in the election, there is no incentive to cooperation. Moreover, there is no way to fairly “divide” the work among the multiple members. Meanwhile, constituents still don’t have a single point of contact. Every problem gets cc’d to multiple councilmembers. No councilmember, therefore, is singularly responsible.

Baltimore citizens fixed these representation problems by forcing the change from multi-member districts to single-member districts. It may be decades before Portland has another opportunity to make major Charter revisions again, so it is critically important to not make the multi-district mistake.

Again, in summary, I cannot emphasize enough that single-member districts are far more preferable than multi-member districts for the “north stars” set forth by the Commission. Single-member districts offer clean, direct, understandable lines of accountability, and compared to multi-member districts, there are clear advantages in governance when it comes to access, accountability, efficiency, responsiveness, clarity of function, and representation. Because so many benefits will flow from this simple and fundamental reform, and because it is a concept that will be easily understood by ballot-question voters, it is important to get this early decision right.

When the Charter Amendment reaches the ballot in Portland a year from now, a preliminary sample 12-district map like the one above would be easily understood and wildly popular. A multi-member district map, with enormous districts, with or without a new voting scheme, will be a disappointment, probably confusing, and a lost opportunity. In any event, I hope these maps help you to visualize the differences.

As always, thank you for this opportunity to provide comment,

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