



City of Portland

8/23/2023

GTAC Members:

Thank you for your letter. We appreciate the time and effort members of GTAC have committed to assisting the City of Portland in its transition to a new form of government. The Portland City Council has collectively developed this response to clarify our expectations of the GTAC from the time of appointment through March 2025.

Responses to Shared Understanding of GTAC's Role:

City Council created the GTAC as an advisory body for voter-approved Charter change. The GTAC was never intended to operate as an oversight body over the entire transition process. Materials regarding the GTAC, including application and onboarding materials, stated that the Committee is tasked with ensuring effective and efficient implementation of the November 2022 voter-approved charter amendments, advising on the Charter amendment transition plan, the community education and engagement plan, and communicating with stakeholders to ensure input is meaningfully integrated.

It is clear some members of the GTAC interpreted the task of ensuring effective and efficient implementation to mean the GTAC would have oversight and make recommendations on all work taking place during this transition window, not solely what was voted in on the November 2022 ballot. Council regrets the language in the application and onboarding materials were not clearer in defining the scope of the Committee, contributing to some confusion.

Council understands the GTAC's concerns about the Charter Reform proposals explored earlier this year by Commissioner Gonzalez and Commissioner Ryan. The GTAC was created to advise on the implementation of Charter reforms passed by voters in November 2022, not potential future reforms that might be put on a ballot. Commissioner Gonzalez and Commissioner Ryan were operating within their authority as elected officials to independently explore and pursue putting additional amendments on the upcoming fall ballot. Engaging the GTAC on such actions is solely at the discretion of the Commissioners or Council.

Requests for Clarification and Explanation:

- 1. Written clarification from the Mayor regarding which aspects of Charter implementation are not within GTAC's scope, along with an explanation of why this is the case.**

Over the last several months, various members of the Charter Transition staff, the Chief Administrative Officer, and staff from the Mayor's office have reiterated the GTAC would not be asked to assist in or advise on the development of the City reorganization process. Council Resolution 232-3023 does state

the GTAC will develop its own workplan, but it does not state the GTAC will determine its scope of work. The scope, as communicated, is specific to the implementation of the November 2022 voter-approved Charter amendments.

The amendments passed in November of 2022 did not mandate the City of Portland to undergo any of the work currently taking place to reassess the City's organizational structure—therefore, this work is outside of the scope of the Committee. While we understand the connected nature of the work and the Committee's interest in the internal reorganization process, the GTAC has not and will not be asked to assist in the development or provide oversight to an internal reorganization process that goes above and beyond what is required by the Charter changes. In the weeks to come, the Chief Administrative Officer will develop a proposal for how the City should reorganize its structure. Once that proposal has been made available to City staff, the Charter Transition team will share the proposal with many different community stakeholders and groups, including the GTAC, to solicit feedback prior to submitting a plan for review by Council in October 2023. Moving forward, Council may ask the GTAC to advise on aspects of Future Improvements work.

In addition to the workplan GTAC created and the work they have already been asked to advise on, Council has provided a clarified scope below detailing items within each of the Charter amendments the GTAC's workplan could include. Council acknowledges that members of the GTAC may feel this scope does not align with what they originally understood or wanted their role to be when applying to join this Committee.

Expansion of Council and Creation of 4 Districts

The GTAC should advise on and assist in educating the community about the process and outcomes of the districting process, advise on the role of future Council districts and offices, inclusive of exploring expectations around district/office outreach to the community and constituent relations work. This advice and feedback would help inform future budget choices for funding Council offices.

Ranked Choice Voting

The GTAC should serve as the lead to educate and engage the public on the transition to ranked choice voting. This includes updates to elections code, advising on the administration's plan for ranked choice voting, including how to conduct voter education, candidate training, and collecting feedback from stakeholders on ranked choice voting.

Mayor/City Administrator

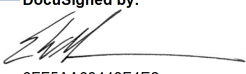
The GTAC should advise on the development of the position description for the future, permanent City Administrator role, as well as the search process, and related code changes to the Charter to prepare for a Mayor/City Administrator form of government.

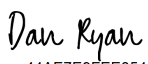
2. Written clarification from the Mayor regarding how City Council, the Mayor, and GTAC communicate with each other regarding activities related to Charter implementation moving forward.

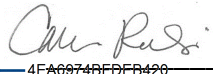
The City Charter Transition staff member assigned to support the GTAC should serve as the communication channel between the GTAC and City Council. The GTAC Co-Chairs should work with City Charter Transition staff support staff to identify the need and appropriate frequency of communication between the Committee and Council. Council receives regular updates from the City Charter Transition staff, but would welcome a communication plan from the GTAC to better connect with the Committee.

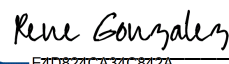
It is Council's sincere hope this response clarifies the GTAC's role and allows the Committee to move forward in accomplishing the important work before it.


Sincerely,

DocuSigned by:

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Ted Wheeler
Mayor, City of Portland

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