



Portland Transition

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Monthly Community Engagement Status Update: December 2023

Purpose

This monthly status update gives an overview of community engagement activities related to the government transition, highlighting progress toward engagement goals, themes from public comment, activities by the Government Transition Advisory Committee (GTAC), and upcoming milestones.

Summary of engagement activities

Table 1: Engagement activities to-date

Engagements	December 2023	Total to-date (since Nov. 2022)	Transition projections to March 2025
Community survey responses	0	625	600
Transition newsletter signups	78	3,261	3,665
Community listening sessions & workshops	0	6	7
Participants at listening sessions	n/a	459	250
Public comments received	10	2,621	2,000
Hours of verbal public comment	0.25	19.25	37
Public meetings and hearings	7	100	100
Briefings and presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those done by GTAC 	5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5/5 	55 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 42/55 	126 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 126
Policy discussions with community organizations	0	38	60
Employee townhalls	0	6	18
Employee attendance per townhall	n/a	1,624	1,100
Media coverage	11	239	200

Public comment

The public is invited to comment through our online comment form, email, and verbal public comment. From December 1 to 31, 2023, the Portland Transition Team received **10** public comments.



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This month's public comments were driven by engagement opportunities including the GTAC meeting and City Council's recent vote on the on the city organizational chart.

Topic	December 2023 (% of comments received)	Total to-date (since Nov 2022)
Service delivery & bureau management (including city organization chart)	18%	34%
Community education & engagement	15%	7%
Form of government (including roles and responsibilities of elected officials)	3%	20%
Geographic districts	21%	42%
Salaries of city leaders	0%	37%
City budgeting, resource allocation, participatory budgeting	15%	6%
Transition management	15%	4%
Other	0%	2%
Rank-choice voting	21%	2%
Number of comments	10	2,621

Big questions raised and themes

The following themes emerged from public comment, public meetings, and community briefings and presentations in December 2023. Note that all public comment is available in the [December 2023 public comment report](#).

Public comment. The limited comments received in the month of December reflected concerns about transparent decision-making process, community engagement, and equity considerations for district offices. Some testimonies called for greater transparency in decision-making. A testimony raised questions about the selection and approval process of contracts with outreach organizations, particularly those with potentially perverse incentives. Other testimonies called for greater transparent decision-making regarding the Chief Sustainability Officer position to ensure the process stay accountable to public support. Several comments were requesting information not readily available on



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the City of Portland website. Information requests included decisions on the city organization plan, geographic district maps, and ranked-choice voting.

Some public comments expressed frustration about perceived lack of community engagement in decisions, citing the creation of a new "Citywide Operational Natural Area and Tree Management" bureau without sufficient public input. A comment reflected concern for the impact on neighborhood stakeholders and the need for open conversations. Finally, a few comments were voiced about City Hall facilities including investing in an east side City Hall, district offices, offices for all district representatives in City Hall, and co-locating deputy city administrators with district representatives in City Hall.

Public meetings. Public meetings were split between City Council (four) and the Government Transition Advisory Committee (three). City Council amended the elections code to align with the amended City Charter and created five non-represented classifications to support the transition to the government structure supported by City Charter and established compensation ranges for these classifications. Government Transition Advisory Committee meeting topics included City code alignment, transition expenses and fiscal year 2024-25 budget, subcommittee reports, and a special meeting on the next fiscal year's transition budget development. The Committee's Districts + Council Operations Subcommittee also held its second meeting which focused on sharing research about future council and district operations, future council districts and offices, and onboarding of new council members.

Community briefings and presentations. The Government Transition Advisory Committee held four community briefings and presentations – two with neighborhood associations, one with a non-profit and one with a City community body. Themes raised included ranked-choice voting, the roles of the mayor and city administrator, district-based offices, and the role of the equity officer in the new city organization structure.

Demographics

Collecting demographic data allows us to understand the representation of historically underrepresented communities in City Hall and decision-making processes. We gather this data with a commitment to collecting only necessary information, ensuring its value to the City and the communities we serve.

The City collects zip codes from public commenters, but this information is optional and **0** commenters provided this information.



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Government Transition Advisory Committee (GTAC) engagement

GTAC is the primary public engagement body for the transition, advising on the Transition Plan's development and implementation. Committed to augmenting the City's engagement strategy, members actively engage with the community by providing at least two education or engagement opportunities each quarter outside of City-hosted events from June 2023 to February 2025.

Individuals and groups engaged

GTAC members reported engagement with the following individuals and groups in December 2023:

- Wilkes Neighborhood Association
- Street Books
- Community Involvement Committee for the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability
- Centennial Community Association
- Individuals:
 - Oregon Yacht Club members at Christmas Ship Parade
 - Jim Kahan, Reed Alumni

New opportunities for engagement or barriers to engagement

GTAC reported the following reflections as new opportunities for engagement or barriers to engagement identified as part of their outreach efforts this month:

- Opportunities
 - Improve in-person presentations with posters to use as visuals – specifically the district map, ranked-choice voting ballot, and organization chart.
- Future presentations
 - Neighborhood policy discussion with residents of the Oregon Yacht club
 - Ranked-choice voting presentation for Centennial Community Association

Big Themes or Questions

- Voter education – ranked-choice voting
 - How it works, the number of candidates that can be on the ballot and the number that can be ranked
 - Ranked choice voting explanation and benefits
- Mayor / City Administrator
 - Role of the mayor and how responsibilities are divided between the mayor and city administrator
- Facilities



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- Interest in district offices
- City organization
 - Equity officer within the structure and relationship to equity managers

Upcoming transition decisions

The following milestones serve as a reference to promote early engagement. Please note there will be a series of transition work sessions with topics including facilities planning, roles of council during the transition, organization chart and staffing of future elected officials, and proposed budget and funding plan.

- February 2024 - Title 15 – Emergency Code
- March 2024 – Title 5 – Revenue & Finance; Title 6 – Special Taxes; Title 7 – Business Licenses; Title 12 – Civil Rights (tentative)