

Questions for the Transition Team and the Office of Community and Civic Life re: the Civic Life written response to Independent District Commission on 8.2.23 and the T.J. McHugh email on 8.3.23

The Civic Life documents says, “Beginning FY 2023-24, Civic Life will reduce the number of district offices it funds from seven to four to align with the new district boundaries being developed by the IDC.”

- a. When was this decided? By whom? Does implementation require further formal action by the City Council or any other entity?

The decision was made in February between Commissioner Ryan, then Director Michael Montoya. No further action will be needed from Council to realign the Office. Council will approve budget reflecting the changes.

- b. Other than this info request, was the IDC ever informed that their decision would be binding on the new Civic Life district office boundaries? If so, when.

There have been multiple meetings, newspaper coverage, statements from Commissioner and Mayor from the dias that Civic Life would align to the 4 districts.

- c. The document says “Ideally, Civic Life would like a map that keeps neighborhood boundaries intact.” Was this ever communicated to the IDC? If so, how and when did this communication occur?

Portland is a city made of neighborhoods, and to serve those neighborhoods more effectively to have 3 Councilors representing than the possibility of having 6 if the neighborhood is split.

- d. Is there a more detailed project schedule for this reduction of district offices available for review?

Timeline is to align Civic Life to 4 coalitions by 7.1.24.

- e. Is there an expectation as to how the seven offices will convert to four? For example, is the January 2024 RFP essentially a “start-from-scratch” model, or a “merger” model, or a “closure” model? How will assets, liabilities and governance of the current offices be transitioned? (Is there a draft RFP at this point?)

A RFP has not been detailed to date, and is work in progress. The 4 coalitions will align to the finalized maps adopted by IDC and Council.

- f. Is this decision part of the City Organization Project within the Transition Team? Why or why not?

It is not, as the City Organization Project scope is bureau alignment, not programming decisions made within bureau.

- g. Although the McHugh email says, “this only makes sense – and the neighbors agree,” what is the rationale for organizing into the voting districts? The IDC, for example, has specific criteria that might not necessarily align with ideal neighborhood organization criteria.

A significant portion of the new Council will be community engagement and outreach. Civic Life is the connecting point between government and Portlanders to encourage civic engagement. Aligning our district offices to support will ensure there is an aligned organization to the councilors structure.

- h. What is the expected relationship between these district offices and district council representatives?

The district offices will be a convener for the councilors. Ultimately the district coalition offices would be a resource for space to host the councilors in district.

The Civic Life document says, “If the chosen map’s voting districts divide neighborhoods, Civic Life will work with impacted neighborhoods to help them decide how they will want to proceed. Given that Civic Life will be aligning the District Coalition Office boundaries with the voting district boundaries, some impacted neighborhoods may choose to reorganize their neighborhood associations—options may include forming a new neighborhood association or joining an existing neighboring association in their new voting district.”

- a. Will a **divided** neighborhood association be allowed to participate (pro rata or otherwise) in District Coalitions in multiple districts? Why or why not?

Neighborhoods have the option to choose if they would prefer to stay as a unified neighborhood under 1 coalition or have representation in multiple coalitions.

- b. Each of the three proposed IDC maps show **undivided** east-side neighborhoods will be placed in a district containing the entire west side. Do these neighborhoods have options on “how they will want to proceed”? If so, what are they?

Under ONI standards, neighborhoods can choose how they coalesce as they choose. However, they would not align to their elected officials.

The email from McHugh describes Commissioner conversations “with his fellow Commissioners, the Mayor and his office, the transition team, and bureau directors” and “numerous conversations over the last 4 months with the neighborhoods, coalitions, and neighbors.”

- a. Is there a list of these conversations? Are there agendas and meeting materials that can be shared?

Commissioner Ryan has met with the 6 of the 7 coalitions, non-profits, and neighbors, with the final coalition meeting happening on Aug 22nd. He will begin his second round of coalition meetings starting in September.

- b. What advisory boards, if any, were included?

Yes. The Bureau Advisory group for the Office of Community and Civic Life was included in the discussion and direction.

The email from McHugh says, "Our Coalition Offices have been part of this conversation over the last 4 months, and they are preparing for the new district lines, and waiting on the final map for next steps." Specifically, what are those preparations? And what are those next steps?

The Coalition offices are preparing to submit their RFP's to be the acting coalition non-profit and what the future state/org. structure they will need to support the larger collations.

Additional comments/questions from Government Transition Advisory Committee related to Civic Life decision:

- Should the language state "This is the proposal we are recommending, and we will ask for community feedback before making the final recommendation to council?"

Organizational structure of an Office or Bureau does not need Council approval.

- What's the hurry with this decision?

To ensure Civic Life is properly budgeting for fiscal year 23/34, organizational decisions need to be made to align.

- When TJ notes that neighbors agree, what neighbors? My neighborhood association hasn't heard about this. What constitutes agreement?

Throughout our listening sessions across the multiple neighborhoods, there has been support and agreement. Neighborhood Association delegates to the coalition would be responsible for communicating to the neighborhood associations directly. Additionally, Commissioner Ryan's staff and Civic Life have met with numerous neighborhood association leaders and have discussed.

- When I attended the Independent District Commission meeting at the Sellwood-Moreland neighborhood association, people were universally unhappy with the possibility that they might be detached from SE Uplift coalition if they were included in the westside district. This was true even of people who supported the proposed map.

The Office understands that Sellwood-Moreland would be the most affected by the majority of the maps the IDC have proposed.