



Portland Transition

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Monthly Community Engagement Status Update: October 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	October 2023	Total to-date (since Nov. 2022)	Transition projections to March 2025
Community survey responses	0	625*	600
Transition newsletter signups	175	3,221	3,665
Community listening sessions & workshops	1	6	7
Participants at listening sessions	120	459	250
Public comments received	594	2,577*	2,000
Hours of verbal public comment	0.25	18	36
Public meetings and hearings	9	85	100
Briefings and presentations	9	35	107
Policy discussions with community organizations	0	38	60
Employee townhalls	0	6	18
Employee attendance per townhall	n/a	1,624	550
Media coverage	31	189	200
GTAC engagements – community groups	9	24	126

**Figures have been adjusted due to certain survey responses being recategorized as public comment to reflect their inclusion in the public comment thematic analysis*



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Public comment

The public is invited to comment through our online comment form, email, and verbal public comment. From October 1 to 31, 2023, the Portland Transition Team received **594** public comments.

This month's public comments were driven by engagement opportunities for the month including employee townhalls and a community information session on the draft city organization structure.

Topic	October 2023 (% of comments received)	Total to-date (since Nov 2022)
Service delivery & bureau management (including city organization chart)	98%	33%
Community education & engagement	5%	7%
Transition management	2%	4%
City budgeting, resource allocation, participatory budgeting	1%	6%
Other	1%	2%
Rank-choice voting	1%	2%
Form of government (including roles and responsibilities of elected officials)	1%	20%
Geographic districts	1%	42%
Salaries of city leaders	0%	37%
Number of comments	594	2,577

Big questions raised and themes

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

Community listening sessions. Neighborhood associations were invited to join the Office of Civic Life and Mayor's office for a conversation about Portland Solutions and the future of Civic Life in the new form of government. Discussion included how neighborhood associations might operate within the proposed city organization structure and the process for moving to four district coalition offices.



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Public comment. Public comment was primarily focused on the draft city organization structure. Themes included a request for a Climate Officer, how Civic Life programs including neighborhood associations and the disability program should function and be placed within the structure, district offices, benefits and challenges of establishing a natural resource unit, placement of arts within the structure, and the fiscal impact of the proposed structure. Other topics included improving public engagement with timely opportunities for public comment, transparency in decision making, City Hall renovations, and recruitment of the city administrator in 2025.

Public meetings. Public meetings were split evenly between City Council and the Government Transition Advisory Committee. City Council held four work sessions – (1) city budget process and facilities; (2) facilities; (3) facilities; and (4) city organizational chart and the fiscal impacts of organizational structure change. Government Transition Advisory Committee meeting topics included election methods, voter education, committee workplan, and the city administrator position and recruitment.

Community briefings and presentations. There were six community briefings and presentations with neighborhood associations. Themes raised included offices and constituent relations for districts, the role of Portland Solutions and Civic Life in the city organizational structure, voter education especially around ranked choice voting, qualifications for the new mayor, the salary of the city administrator, and the role of the Government Transition Advisory Committee.

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 445 comments (or 75%) included zip codes in October.



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Table 3: Public comments received by geography

Location	October Public Comment	Total Public Comment (Since April 2023)	Portland Population
North/Northeast Portland	22%	23%	28%
Southeast Portland	29%	43%	25%
East Portland	8%	6%	24%
West Portland	21%	18%	23%
Portland-Metropolitan area	15%	7%	N/A
Other Oregon cities outside metropolitan area	5%	2%	N/A
Outside of Oregon	1%	0%	N/A
Number of commenters with zip code data	445	1,158	
% of comments sharing zip code data	75%	45%	



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Table 4: Public comments received by district

Location	October Public Comment	Total Public Comment (Since April 2023)	Portland Population
District 1 – most eastern	3%	4%	25%
District 2 – most northern	16%	15%	25%
District 3 – inner-southeast	20%	27%	25%
District 4 – most west	21%	15%	25%
Zip codes within District 1 & 2	3%	5%	--
Zip codes within District 1 & 3	5%	4%	--
Zip codes within District 2 & 3	2%	3%	--
Zip codes within District 3 & 4	9%	17%	--
Portland-Metropolitan area	15%	6%	
Other Oregon cities outside metropolitan area	5%	2%	--
Outside of Oregon	1%	0%	--
Number of commenters with zip code data	445	1,158	
% of comments sharing zip code data	75%	45%	

*Zip codes located across more than one district: 97202, 97211, 97213, 97216, 97218, 97220, 97232

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 October 2023:

- Buckman Community Association
- Creston-Kenilworth Neighborhood Association
- Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association



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- Hayhurst Neighborhood Association
- Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association
- Multnomah County Democratic Party's Central Committee
- Neighbors West-Northwest
- Northwest District Association
- Portland For All Community Conversation
- SE Uplift Board of Directors
- Individuals
 - Carol Turner, former Portland School Board member
 - Ron Buell, concerned citizen
 - Margaret Strachan, former City Commissioner with spouse, Sumner Sharpe
 - Democratic House District leaders and Assistant District Leaders in Multnomah County

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
 - More education and outreach on ranked choice voting
 - Consider additional communication channels such as YouTube
 - Build public trust in new form of government and ranked choice voting
- Future presentations
 - Buckman Community Association in 2024
 - Creston-Kenilworth Neighborhood Association closer to November 2024 election
 - Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association – longer presentation at speaker bureau
 - Multnomah County Democratic Party's Central Committee – monthly segments on specialized topics – next up ranked choice voting
 - NW Place
- Barriers
 - Small attendance at some neighborhood association meetings

Big Themes or Questions

- Districts + council operations
 - Constituent relations and in-district offices
 - District coordination
 - Staffing and facilities for new councilors
- Voter education – ranked choice voting



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- Provide information to neighborhood association
- Success measures of ranked choice voting
- City organizational structure
 - Updated chart
 - The role of district coalitions and Code 3.96 – Office of Community & Civic Life revisions
 - Portland Solutions
- Mayor / City Administrator
 - Salary of city administrator
 - Qualities and qualifications for the new mayor
- Role of Government Transition Advisory Committee

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.

- November 1, 2023 – Ensure an effective, efficient transition to Portland’s new form of government by establishing a coordinated high-level reporting structure for city bureaus, offices and key functions (city council resolution)
- First quarter of 2024 – Update City Code: Title 5 - Revenue and Finance, Title 6 – Special Taxes, Title 7 - Business Licenses, and Title 15 - Emergency Code are anticipated for first reading