



Portland Transition

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Monthly Community Engagement Status Update: September 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	September 2023	Total to-date (since Nov. 2022)	Transition projections to March 2025
Community survey responses	0	744	600
Transition newsletter recipients	121	3,046	3,665
Community listening sessions & workshops*	1	5	7
Participants at listening sessions	202	339	250
Public comments received	241	2,464	2,000
Hours of verbal public comment	0.25	17.75	36
Public meetings and hearings	8	76	100
Briefings and presentations	8	26	107
Policy discussions with community organizations	1	38	60
Employee townhalls	2	6	18
Employee attendance per townhall	817	810	550
Media coverage	18	158	200
GTAC engagements – community groups	9	15	126

**Number has been corrected from previous version*



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Public comment

The public is invited to comment through our online comment form, email, and verbal public comment. From September 1 to 30, 2023, the Portland Transition Team received **241** 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.

Table 2: Public comments received by topic

Topic	September 2023 (% of comments received)	Total to-date (since Nov 2022)
Service Delivery & Bureau Management (including city organization chart)	92%	11%
City budgeting, resource allocation, participatory budgeting	20%	6%
Community Education & engagement	12%	6%
Transition Management	4%	3%
Form of government (including roles and responsibilities of elected officials)	3%	20%
Other	3%	2%
Geographic Districts	2%	44%
Salaries of city leaders	1%	39%
Number of comments	241	2,464

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 September 2023. Note that all public comment is available in the [September 2023 public comment report](#).

Community listening sessions. There were two community listening sessions: one on the draft city organization structure and one specific to Portland Solutions and the future of Civic Life in the new structure. Questions in the first session focused on the following: timing – why this is happening now;



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funding the new structure; deputy city administrators and their authority; city administrator's authority; city council's role and staffing; Portland Solutions and neighborhood needs; next steps; and how Portlanders have been engaged. Questions in the second session focused on the following: how district coalition offices and neighborhood associations will fit within the Portland Solutions program; funding for future programs; and how the district coalition offices will continue to be supported by the City.

Public comment. Public comment focused on the draft city organization structure with about 40% related to the proposed new natural resources group (funding and how it will work). In addition, there are themes around budget and management; Portland Solutions; the equity officer; public works; asset management; and neighborhood association requesting an extension of the public comment period.

Public meetings. Most public meetings were meetings of the Government Transition Advisory Committee with topics focused on facilities improvements; employee engagement + change management; and voter education. City Council also passed the new Code 3.02 on Council Organization & Procedure.

Community briefings and presentations. There were nine community briefings and presentations – five of which were with neighborhood groups. Themes included the draft city organization structure including Portland Solutions + concern about the role of district coalitions + insufficient time for engagement; voter and candidate education; city administrator recruitment; and the role of business.

Employee townhalls. There were two identical townhalls on the draft city organization structure. Questions focused on the following: funding the new structure; deputy city administrators and bureau directors; new roles and the city administrator's oversight; specific bureaus and programs (permitting, Portland Solutions, and Portland Street Response); implementation; council staffing; and reporting structures.

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 ten comments (or 1.4%) included zip codes in September.



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Table 3: Public comments received by geography

Location	September Public Comment	Total Public Comment (Since April 2023)	Portland Population
North/Northeast Portland	25%	24%	28%
Southeast Portland	25%	52%	25%
East Portland	13%	6%	24%
West Portland	25%	16%	23%
Portland-Metropolitan area	13%	2%	N/A
Other Oregon cities outside metropolitan area	0%	>0%	N/A
Outside of Oregon	0%	>0%	N/A
Number of commenters with zip code data	10	703	



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Table 4: Public comments received by district

Location	September Public Comment	Total Public Comment (Since April 2023)	Portland Population
District 1 – most eastern	0%	5%	25%
District 2 – most northern	10%	14%	25%
District 3 – inner-southeast	30%	32%	25%
District 4 – most west	10%	12%	25%
Zip codes within District 1 & 2	10%	7%	--
Zip codes within District 1 & 3	10%	4%	--
Zip codes within District 2 & 3	0%	4%	--
Zip codes within District 3 & 4	20%	22%	--
Other Oregon cities outside metropolitan area	10%	1%	--
Outside of Oregon	0%	0%	--
Number of commenters with zip code data	10	703	

*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 September 2023:

- Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood District
- League of Women Voters of Portland (2x)
- Multnomah County Democrats Elections Integrity Workgroup
- Neighbors Northwest
- Northwest District Association Board of Directors
- Northwest Industrial Business Association



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- Old Town Chinatown Community Association
- Rose City Park Neighborhood Association
- Nanci Champlin, Southeast Uplift Executive Director
- Samantha Gladu, Portland United for Change
- Marcia Schneider, League of Women Voters' GTAC Subcommittee
- Alison Stoll, Central Northeast Neighbors Executive Director

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:

- Connecting with the League of Women Voters on voter education
- Improving GTAC's community presentation
- Organizing presentations to community-based organizations
- Participating in district coalition-organized information sessions
- Organizing presentations to district coalitions and neighborhood associations

Big Themes or Questions

- City organization: Portland Solutions + concern about the role of district coalitions + insufficient time for engagement
- Voter and candidate education particularly on ranked-choice voting
- City Administrator recruitment
- How business can advocate for candidates and benefit from the new form of government

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.

- October 12, 2023 – Charter transition work session
- October 20, 2023 – Charter transition work session
- October 23, 2023 – Charter transition work session
- October 31, 2023 – City Organization + Financial Plan work session
- November 1, 2023 – City organization 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