

Prepared remarks for Mayor Ted Wheeler – November 9, 2022

Good morning. Last night Portland voters sent a strong message.

I am here to say:

"Message received!"

You have spoken with your strong support of City Ballot Measure 26-228 to overhaul how Portland is governed.

You have also spoken in recent public opinion surveys and the results are crystal clear:

"From top to bottom and side-to-side, Portland City government must do better, much, much, better."

It is a clear message to city government that we must become exponentially more accountable for providing excellent services in every area of our city, for all Portlanders, not just in some areas of Portland or for just some Portlanders.

With this mandate for improvement: our work starts today.

Today, for the next two years, I am announcing three drivers of improvement to city government:

Prepare for BETTER GOVERNANCE

Improve our system of BUREAU MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT, and

Stay focused on addressing Portlanders' TOUGHEST PROBLEMS of homelessness and crime.

First, let's talk about BETTER GOVERNANCE – we will enthusiastically make the changes required by the ballot measure which includes the implementation of ranked choice voting, expanding to a 12-member legislative council and the transition to a Mayor and City Administrator.

This work will take place on a relatively short timeline and will be primarily guided by language on the ballot measure. We on the City Council will have many decisions to make.

We are working to create a Charter Transition Advisory Committee that will work with Council to enact changes and the improvements required by the ballot measures.

Applications will soon be open to apply to serve on the Advisory Committee.

You can visit www.Portland.gov/transition for more information.

The second driver of improvement, after governance, is overhauling of how we on city council provide BUREAU MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT.

In January, I will start knocking down the dysfunctional bureaus siloes that are a plague of the current outdated commission form of city government. Siloes that trap our great workers from being effective and too often strangle our constituents in needless red tape.

In January, I will assign Bureaus by grouping bureaus with similar services together. This can immediately improve management and focus and ease the full transition to a City Manager and Deputy City Manager system over the course of two years.

These efforts will start with benchmarking ourselves and moving quickly down a path to improve every city bureau, every city program in each Portland neighborhood, and city business district.

Finally, the third driver of improvement, is for us to focused on addressing Portlanders' TOUGHEST PROBLEMS of homelessness and crime.

The change required is good and necessary, but it risks distracting us from addressing Portlanders' TOUGHEST PROBLEMS.

Over the course of next two years of transition, I will continue doing everything possible to address homelessness and crime through my upcoming budget proposals and bureau assignments.

In conclusion, with the three drivers of city government we will:

Prepare for BETTER GOVERNANCE

Improve our system of BUREAU MANAGEMENT OVERSIGHT, and

Stay focused on addressing Portlanders' TOUGHEST PROBLEMS of homelessness and public safety.

These drivers of improvement will help us all stay focused on better achieving the results Portland are asking for.

Portlanders voted to overhaul their city government. They expect that on January 1st, 2025, City Hall will open with that form of government in place. I will work faithfully, transparently, and collaboratively between now and then to ensure that that happens.

Thank you.