

An illustration of a woman with voluminous orange hair, wearing a blue bikini top, holding a pink and blue megaphone. She is positioned in the upper right corner of the frame.

◆ POWER ◆

An illustration of a woman with short teal hair, wearing a brown top and a red dress with a white cherry pattern. She is positioned on the left side of the frame.

**OF THE PEOPLE  
RECOMMENDATIONS**

A stylized illustration of a diverse group of people in the background. On the left, a person with dark skin and orange hair is shown in profile, wearing a purple jacket. On the right, a person with light skin and orange hair is shown in profile, wearing a red top and a blue jacket. The background is filled with soft, abstract shapes in shades of orange, pink, and purple, suggesting a celebratory or community atmosphere. The central text is presented on a dark, rounded rectangular background that looks like a sign or a piece of paper pinned to the wall with two red pushpins.

# ◆ SPECIAL THANKS ◆

- Polly Grow- SEEC Campaign Finance Law, Education, and Compliance Advisor
- Rene LeBeau- SEEC Democracy Voucher Program Manager
- All the Neighborhood Councils- including The South End Coalition (SEnCo Committee)
- Beverly Allen- The Law Offices of Beverly Allen
- Estevan Munoz-Howard, People Powered Elections WA
- Cindy Black, Executive Director, Fix Democracy First
- Jazmine Smith, Political Manager at The Washington Bus
- and countless other community members

# OUR APPROACH



**DEMOCRACY  
ENSURES  
TRANSPARENCY  
&  
ACCOUNTABILITY**



**TACOMA  
ADAPTS  
&  
LEADS**



**TACOMA'S  
CHARTER SHOULD  
REFLECT  
TACOMA'S  
GOALS & VALUES**

# DEMOCRACY VOUCHERS

**EMPOWERS  
RESIDENTS TO  
SUPPORT  
CAMPAIGNS  
AND/OR RUN FOR  
OFFICE**



**EMPOWERS THE  
CITY COUNCIL  
THROUGH AN  
EXPANDED  
DIVERSE  
CANDIDATE  
POOL**



# DEMOCRACY VOUCHERS

## WHAT ARE THEY?



# DEMOCRACY VOUCHERS

## TANGIBLE BENEFITS IN SEATTLE

### Successful Campaigns

- Most city council seats were up at the same time, all used Democracy Vouchers
- Only one sitting council member has not yet used the vouchers

### Benefits in quality of donations

- The donation percentage went from 1.5% to 8-10%
- Higher than any jurisdiction
- Significant diversification of donor class
- Donations went from 30-35% outside city donations down to 5%
- Canvassing gets donations vs. dialing for dollars
- Pushes candidates to talk to voters
- Residents are 4-11x more likely to vote

### Benefits to candidates

- More candidates have been running due to the vouchers
- "Makes for a better city council"
  - Had 5-6 viable mayoral candidates in the last race
- Many candidates have expressed that they would not have been able to run without the vouchers
- Designed to challenge, not oust incumbents
- Makes for more competitive campaigns
- More affordable campaign

**"WE CAN'T THINK OF ANY DOWNSIDES" - SEEC**

**"  A YEAR"**





# CAMPAIGN FINANCE

## CURRENT RULES AND LIMITS

- **Fair Campaign Practices Act**
- **Public Disclosure Commission**

### Commission Leadership

Learn more about the [PDC's Leadership](#) and the role of the commissioners and executive director, and keep up to date about what's happening at Commission meetings.

[About the Commission](#)



[Nancy L. Isserlis](#)



[Allen Hayward](#)



[Fred Jarrett](#)



[J. Robert Leach](#)



[Douglass North](#)



[Peter Frey Lavalley](#)

Recipient of Contribution	Contribution Limit
Bona Fide Party Committee (Exempt)*	No limit
Bona Fide Party Committee (Non-Exempt)*	No limit
Caucus Political Committee	No limit
Judicial Candidate	\$2,400 per Election
King Co Hosp Dist 1 & 2, Snohomish Hosp Dist 2	\$1,200 per Election
Legislative Candidate	\$1,200 per Election
Local (County, City, School Board) Office	\$1,200 per Election
PAC	No limit
Port Commissioners	\$2,400 per Election
State Executive Candidate	\$2,400 per Election



# PUBLIC FINANCING AND THE CHARTER

## RECOMMENDED IN THE NATIONAL CIVIC LEAGUE'S MODEL CITY CHARTER

### **Section 8.03. Campaign Finance.**

**(a) Disclosure.** *The city council shall enact ordinances to protect the ability of city residents to be informed of the financing used in support of, or against, campaigns for locally elected office. The terms of such ordinances shall include, but not be limited to, requirements upon candidates and candidate committees to report in a timely manner to the appropriate city office: contributions received, including the name, address, employer, and occupation of each contributor who has contributed or more; expenditures made; and obligations entered into by such candidate or candidate committee. In so far as is permissible under state law, such regulations shall also provide for fines and imprisonment for violations. The ordinance shall provide for convenient public disclosure of such information by the most appropriate means available to the city.*

**(b) Contribution and Spending Limitations.** In order to combat the potential for, and appearance of, corruption, and to preserve the ability of all qualified community members to run for public office, the city shall, in so far as is permitted by state and federal law, have the authority to enact ordinances designed to limit contributions and expenditures by, or on behalf of, candidates for locally elected office. Ordinances pursuant to this section may include but are not limited to: limitations on candidate and candidate committees that affect the amount, time, place, and source of financial and in-kind contributions; and, voluntary limitations on candidate and candidate committee expenditures tied to financial or non-financial incentives.





# PUBLIC FINANCING AND THE CHARTER

## RECOMMENDED IN THE NATIONAL CIVIC LEAGUE'S MODEL CITY CHARTER

### Commentary

This section was added to the eighth edition in recognition of the substantial number of cities that have enacted campaign finance laws since the seventh edition. This trend indicates that increasingly large amounts of private money have permeated local elections and reflects public perception that such money has had a distorting influence on the democratic process.

**Section 8.03(a)** provides for disclosure of candidate contributions and expenditures. A strong majority of cities in the United States have some form of campaign contribution and expenditure disclosure requirements. This section of the charter requires the city to provide for timely disclosure of such funds. It further requires that disclosure of contributions above a certain threshold include the donor's employer and occupation. Such information allows the public to identify the sources of funding that influence local elections. The requirement that the city provide for "convenient public disclosure" is meant to encourage electronic disclosure over city web sites when such technology and resources are available.

**Section 8.03(b)** provides the city with express authority, but not a mandate, to enact any of the several innovative campaign finance laws that cities have enacted over the last three decades. This includes options such as contribution limitations, time limits on fund raising, and **public financing** as an incentive for candidates to adhere to voluntary spending limits.



# PUBLIC FINANCING AND THE CHARTER

## MANY CITY EXAMPLES

### BALTIMORE CITY, MD

§ 15. Special fund for fair elections.

(a) Authorization.

(1) By Ordinance, the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore may establish a continuing, nonlapsing fund for purposes of encouraging fair elections by administering a public financing option for political campaigns for Baltimore City elected offices.

(2) These purposes include:

- (i) providing direct funding to candidates for public office who meet certain qualifications;
- (ii) providing technical assistance and training to individuals seeking to make public campaign funding;
- (iii) publicizing the availability of public campaign funding; and
- (iv) administering a public campaign funding program.

(b) Baltimore City Fair Election Fund Commission.


(1) The fund is administered by the Baltimore City Fair Election Fund Commission. The fund may be dispersed from the fund without authorization by that Commission.

(2) The Baltimore City Fair Election Fund Commission consists of 11 members:

- (i) 2 members appointed by the Mayor;
- (ii) 3 members appointed by the City Council;
- (iii) 6 members appointed by the City Council.

12/08/22

### KING COUNTY CRC

  
King County

**Metropolitan King County Council  
Charter Review Commission**

**STAFF REPORT**

<b>Agenda Item:</b>		<b>Name:</b>	Brandi Vena
<b>Proposed No.:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	Updated February 6, 2019

**SUBJECT**

Public Financing of Campaigns.

**Sec. 471. Public Matching Funds and Campaign Expenditures**

(a) Findings and Purposes.

(1) Monetary contributions to political campaigns are a leading cause of corruption. Individuals or organizations should not permit them to exercise a disproportionate or controlling influence on the election of candidates.

(2) Therefore, this section is enacted to accomplish the following purposes:

- (A) To assist serious candidates in raising enough money to communicate their views and positions adequately to the public without excessive expenditures or contributions, thereby promoting public discussion of the important issues involved in political campaigns.
- (B) To limit overall expenditures in campaigns, thereby reducing the pressure on candidates to raise large campaign funds for defensive purposes, beyond the amount necessary to communicate reasonably with voters.
- (C) To provide a source of campaign financing in the form of limited public matching funds.
- (D) To substantially restrict fund-raising in non-election years.
- (E) To increase the value to candidates of smaller contributions.
- (F) To reduce the excessive fund-raising advantage of incumbents and thus encourage competition for elective office.
- (G) To help restore public trust in governmental and electoral institutions.

### LOS ANGELES, CA

### BERKELEY, CA

Section 6.2. Fair Elections Fund.

(1) Establishment of Fair Elections Fund. A special, dedicated, non-lapsing Fair Elections Fund shall be established by the City Council for the purpose of:

(a) financing for the election campaigns of certified participating candidates; and

(b) covering the administrative and enforcement costs of the Berkeley Fair Campaign Practices Recommendation No. 1: Democracy Dollars

The CRC recommends amending the Charter to establish a Democracy Dollars Program to provide eligible Austin residents up to four (4) \$25 Democracy Dollar Vouchers ("Democracy Dollars") per election cycle. The Democracy Dollars may be donated to a resident's district city council or mayoral candidate.

The purpose of the Democracy Dollars program is to ensure that all people of Austin have equal opportunity to participate in political campaigns and are heard by candidates, to strengthen the city, to fulfill the purposes of single-member districts, to enhance candidate participation, and prevent corruption.

**Recommendation passed by a vote of [ ]**

**Background and Policy Reasons for the Recommendation**

The CRC was directed to consider and make recommendations regarding "Campaign finance, including consideration of contribution and expenditure limits." Resolution No. 20170622-040 at 10.a.

The Campaign Finance and Ethics Working Group was formed on November 27, 2017 and presented its preliminary findings to the CRC on January 8, 2018.

At the January 8, 2018 meeting, the Working Group unanimously recommended that: (1) Austin add a public voucher component to the City's current campaign finance system and that (2) Austin adopt an independent ethics commission with the autonomy, resources, and expertise to effectively enforce and implement campaign finance and ethics laws.<sup>1</sup> In making its recommendation, the Working Group considered six major goals of a model campaign finance system for Austin:

### AUSTIN, TX CRC

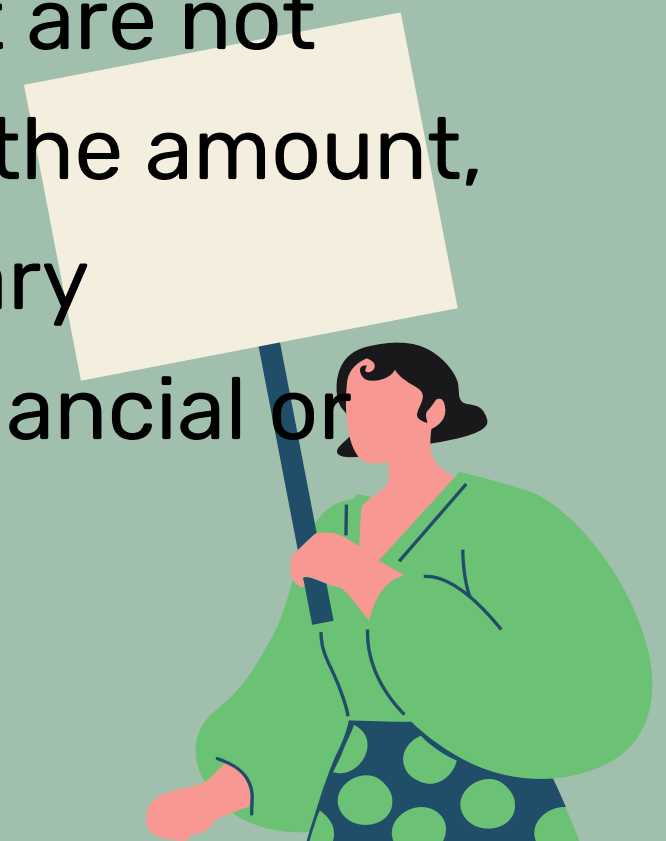


# CAMPAIGN FINANCE

## ADD SECTIONS 5.6, 5.7, AND 5.8

### **Section 5.6- Campaign Finance**

In order to combat the potential for, and appearance of, corruption, and to preserve the ability of all qualified community members to run for public office, the city shall, in so far as is permitted by state and federal law, have the authority to enact ordinances designed to limit contributions and expenditures by, or on behalf of, candidates for locally elected office. Ordinances pursuant to this section may include but are not limited to: limitations on candidate and candidate committees that affect the amount, time, place, and source of financial and in-kind contributions; and, voluntary limitations on candidate and candidate committee expenditures tied to financial or non-financial incentives.





# CAMPAIGN FINANCE

## ADD SECTIONS 5.6, 5.7, AND 5.8

### **Section 5.6–Elections Oversight**

The Mayor and Council shall appoint an Elections Commission **or delegate an existing body** to determine campaign contribution limits and lobbying regulations and oversee the creation and implementation of a democracy voucher program.

### **Section 5.7- Democracy Vouchers**

1. The Elections Commission will distribute Democracy Vouchers to eligible Tacoma residents.
2. Candidates who may receive vouchers are listed on a participating candidates' page.
3. Residents will assign vouchers by writing in the eligible candidates' name, the date the voucher was assigned, and the resident's signature on each voucher.
4. Democracy Vouchers may be returned directly to a candidate's campaign or mailed to the Elections Commission.
5. The Elections Commission will verify the signature on each voucher before releasing funds to the campaigns.
6. All contributions are public information. Your name and the candidate(s) you give your voucher(s) to will be published on a program data page.

This section should also detail - resident eligibility, the democracy voucher form, democracy voucher assignment, delivery, and receipt, candidate qualification, democracy voucher redemption, campaign valuations, releases, and use of proceeds, transparency, and administration.



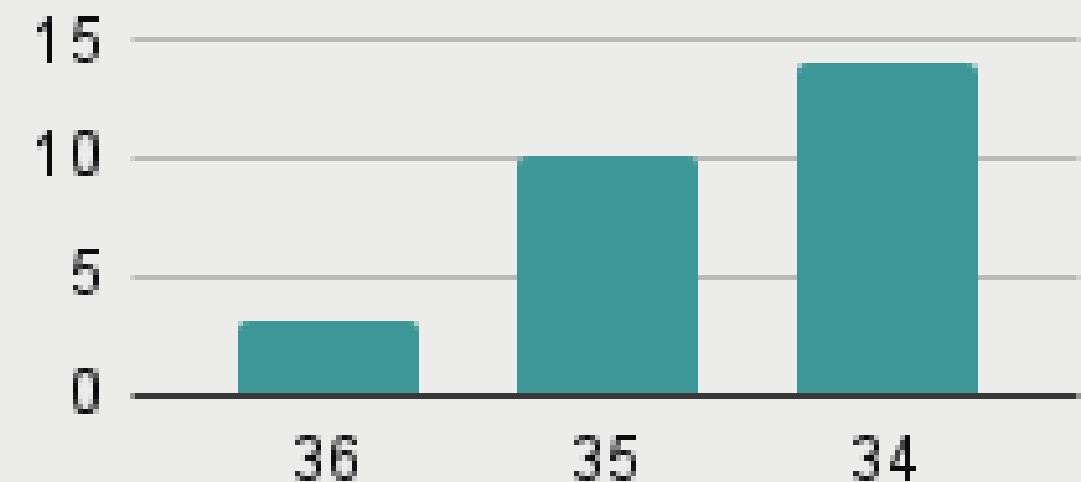
# SECTION 2.25 CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE



## CHANGE THE INTERVAL OF TIME BETWEEN CHARTER REVIEWS

- Collective bargaining agreements should adhere to new charter amendments
- About 52% of CBAs currently renew in the next charter review year, which is too late for adherence
- Allow time for proper outreach, research, and the initiative process

Renewal Year





# CHARTER REVIEW COMMITTEE

## SECTION 2.25

The City Council shall commence a review of this charter no less frequently than once every ten years by appointing, **for no less than six months, citizens residents** to a charter review committee or by electing a board of **freeholders electors** in the manner provided in state law. Any **freeholders electors** shall be nominated and elected by position and by district. The charter review committee, ~~which~~ shall be provided with sufficient staff, ~~and~~ budget, **and time to perform a comprehensive review that includes public outreach and education, an anti-racist analysis, specialist interviews, an estimation of fiscal budgetary impact, and proposed amendment and ballot language.** The charter review committee shall report any recommended amendments to the City Council **and may publish its findings.** The City Council may accept, reject or modify the recommended amendments and may submit any recommended charter amendments to the voters in the manner provided in state law. The recommendations of a board of **freeholders electors** shall be placed before the voters in the manner provided in state law. Nothing in this section shall limit the right of citizens to initiate amendments to this charter in any other manner allowed by state law.

### Section 2.18

Amendments to this charter may be submitted to the voters by the City Council, by initiative petition of the voters, **or by a board of electors** in the manner provided by the state constitution and laws.



# INITIATIVES AND REFERENDUMS

## SECTIONS 2.20 AND 2.22

### Section 2.20

(i) Petitioners have ~~thirty (30)~~ **ninety (90)** days to collect signatures from registered voters.

### Section 2.22

The Council, by its own motion, may submit ~~any~~ **a** proposed ordinance to the qualified electors for their approval or rejection in the same manner as provided for its submission upon petition, **except that any proposed ordinance submitted by the Council may not contain provisions that would substantially conflict with any proposed ordinance that has been provided to the city clerk in the form of an initiative petition. The Council may seek a declaratory judgment as to whether a substantial conflict exists in regards to its own proposed ordinance, and if such conflict is in regards to the constitutionality of the proposed ordinance, no legal fees shall be awarded to any party upon rendering of a declaratory judgment. If the Council, any representative of the City, or the citizen or organization that provided the original citizen's petition to the clerk should file a petition with the court or seek relief beyond declaratory judgment, the Superior Court shall grant the citizen or organization an award of reasonable attorney fees upon rendering a final judgment if the citizen or organization prevails.**



# INITIATIVES AND REFERENDUMS

## SECTIONS 2.20 AND 2.22

### Section 2.22

The Council, by its own motion, may submit ~~any~~ **a** proposed ordinance to the qualified electors for their approval or rejection in the same manner as provided for its submission upon petition,

- The Council may submit a proposed alternative ordinance to the voters that will be voted upon at the same time as the ordinance submitted by the Initiative Petition (this is currently in Charter)



# INITIATIVES AND REFERENDUMS

## SECTIONS 2.20 AND 2.22

except that any proposed ordinance submitted by the Council may not contain provisions that would substantially conflict with any proposed ordinance that has been provided to the city clerk in the form of an initiative petition.

- Council's proposed alternative may not contain any provisions that "substantially" conflict with the proposed ordinance that has been submitted by the Initiative Petition.



# INITIATIVES AND REFERENDUMS

## SECTIONS 2.20 AND 2.22

The Council may seek a declaratory judgment as to whether a substantial conflict exists in regards to its own proposed ordinance, and if such conflict is in regards to the constitutionality of the proposed ordinance, no legal fees shall be awarded to any party upon rendering of a declaratory judgment.

- The Council may seek declaratory judgment from a Court as to whether their alternative ordinance does, in fact, “substantially” conflict with the provisions of the ordinance submitted by the Initiative Petition.
- If the court finds after a declaratory judgment hearing that the substantial conflict between the Council’s ordinance and the Initiative Petition exists but the conflict is “in regards to the constitutionality of the proposed ordinance” no legal fees are assessed to either party.





# INITIATIVES AND REFERENDUMS

## SECTIONS 2.20 AND 2.22

If the Council, any representative of the City, or the citizen or organization that provided the original citizen's petition to the clerk should file a petition with the court or seek relief beyond declaratory judgment, the Superior Court shall grant the citizen or organization an award of reasonable attorney fees upon rendering a final judgment if the citizen or organization prevails.

- If at the conclusion of the declaratory judgment proceeding either party "should file a petition with the court or seek relief beyond declaratory judgment" and the result is ultimately that the position of the proponents of the Initiative Petition is upheld, then the proponents of the Initiative Petition will be awarded reasonable attorney fees.



# NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

## ENSURE REPRESENTATION

- Some Tacoma residents feel they need more adequate representation than they currently have through their district city council members.
- Neighborhood Councils are established and capable of achieving desired levels of representation.
- Neighborhood Councils can easily form and adapt as the makeup and goals of the city change and diversify.
- Neighborhood Council's inclusion in the charter ensures the city support that is essential to fulfill the program's goals.
- Redistricting may also be necessary if the form of government changes, but empowering Neighborhood Councils is still required for adequate civil engagement and representation.



# NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCILS

## ADD SECTION 2.26

Section 2.26 – In order to foster communication and to promote resident-based neighborhood involvement, there shall be independent neighborhood councils and a Community Council. The neighborhood councils and Community Council shall act as advisory entities to the City Council, Mayor, and City Manager.

Subject to applicable law, the City Council may delegate its authority to neighborhood councils to hold public hearings prior to the City Council making a decision on a matter of local concern. The City Council shall also:

- determine the boundaries of the neighborhood councils with the intention of recognizing neighborhood groups,
- set those boundaries by resolution,
- monitor the delivery of City services in their respective areas and have periodic meetings with responsible officials of City departments, subject to their reasonable availability,
- Collectively make bylaws and rules for the conduct of their business.

Each neighborhood council may present to the Mayor and Council an annual list of priorities for the City budget. The Mayor shall inform certified neighborhood councils of the submission deadline so that the input may be considered in a timely fashion.

The Mayor and Council shall:

- Notify Neighborhood Councils on known projects, proposals, events, and services within their respective boundaries in a prompt manner,
- Solicit and utilize input from the respective Neighborhood Councils on known projects, proposals, events, and services as part of the approval process,
- appropriate funds for the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment and the startup and functioning of neighborhood councils,
- guarantee a cash match for neighborhood council fundraising,
- ensure adequate training in areas like grant writing, diversity, equity, and inclusion, civic engagement, board governance, community outreach, codes and policies
- ensure adequate technical, administrative, and legal support,
- Support and encourage Neighborhood Council's independent efforts to create grassroots, community-based change,
- Measure the fulfillment of the aforementioned duties on a regular basis.





◆ **THANK YOU** ◆  
**FOR LISTENING!**



# **TRANSITIONING TO A MAYOR-COUNCIL SYSTEM**

Advancing accountability and transparency in  
Tacoma by improving democracy





# OVERVIEW



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# INTRODUCTION

The FOG subcommittee's task was to move forward with the form of government conversation, based on the unanimous consent of the COW after discussion on what the public was asking for. We researched options for what would work best for Tacoma to advance democracy, transparency, accountability and equity, and how the transition would work.



Mayor-Council Form of Government: Austinites for Prog...

# City Hall



Share



Watch on  YouTube



# WHAT WE'RE **NOT** PROPOSING

This is not a strong mayor system -it's mayor as executive, with the balance of power with city council. This is about improving democracy by having the city executive accountable to the voters.



# MAYOR AS EXECUTIVE

- the face of the city, with executive powers
- implement and enforce all ordinances and laws
- present annual state of the city report to council
- prepare and present city budget to council
- manages city jointly with CAO
- jointly appoints CAO and attorney with council and may only remove if council agrees
- appoints dept heads subject to council approval
- remove dept heads
- veto authority
- sign, or cause to assign, on behalf of the City, all claims, deeds, contracts and other instruments
- hire own staff, including chief of staff, scheduler, and assistants





# CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

- replaces city manager
- Under supervision of the Mayor, oversee the operations of the City and reports jointly to the Mayor and City Council
- appointed on the basis of their training, education, experience, community service, commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and other relevant qualifications for the office
- must reside in city while serving
- annually reviewed by council; council may vote to recommend removal of CAO to mayor



# CITY COUNCIL

## composition of city council

- be a 9 member council until 2027, then transition to a 7 member council, 5 from districts and 2 at large
- council elects its own chair
- chair steps in as mayor if mayoral office vacant

## updated powers of the legislative branch

- override mayoral veto
- approve appointment of department heads
- jointly selects Chief Administrative Officer and City Attorney with the mayor
- must approve removal of CAO or City Attorney



# REMOVAL OF MAYOR

- Council may remove Mayor from office
- removal process shall require a written Notice of Allegations and Removal to the Mayor, approved by majority vote of at least five (5) members of the City Council, to be personally served at least thirty (30) days before a removal hearing is scheduled.
- Mayor shall be entitled to due process
- If majority vote of at least five (5) members of the City Council, acting as a court of impeachment, the Mayor shall be removed and the office shall become vacant.



# THE TRANSITION

- start of transition
- mayor's seat on the council
- council transition
- city manager position



# THE TRANSITION

## START OF TRANSITION

- transition to mayor as executive starts with new mayor in 2026
- this allows for candidates to run who are interested in being the city executive, does not force someone who ran for current system to play a different role
- allows for preparation and budgeting for the transition





# THE TRANSITION

## MAYOR'S SEAT ON COUNCIL

- mayor would no longer be on city council starting in january 2026
- council would be true legislative branch; mayor would be true executive
- council would slowly transition to 7 members; first, mayor's seat would become another at-large position, and then at expiration of two at-large council members terms in 2027, those positions would cease to exist
- In January 2028, would be 7 member council



# THE TRANSITION

## COUNCIL TRANSITION

“Beginning with the 2025 general municipal election, on the date prescribed by state law, the mayoral position on the Council shall become a vacant 2-year at-large Position 9, with such vacancy to be filled as provided in the charter by the City Council sworn in January 2026. Beginning with the 2027 general municipal election, on the date prescribed by state law, at-large Positions 8 and 9 shall be eliminated. At-large Council Positions 6 and 7, and District Positions 1-5, shall continue through the electoral cycle on the date prescribed by state law for general municipal election.”



## THE TRANSITION

# MANAGER POSITION

- City Manager position ends at end of 2025, and becomes a Chief Administration Officer (CAO) starting in January 2026
- The CAO would be different than the Mayor's Chief of Staff
- City Council will detail how the selection process and reporting of the CAO works in Municipal Code

# CONCLUSION



remember: these are the transition issues that should be handled in charter language; there are more transition issues, but they should be handled by council via ordinance.



Mayor as executive will improve democracy in Tacoma, making our city more accountable and transparent, and we believe this will make our city more equitable and just.

