

Amend Small Donor Elections Program Code to consolidate primary and general elections to align with the voter-approved Charter amendments in Portland Measure 26-228 (amend Code Chapter 2.16)

Ordinance

The City of Portland ordains:

Section 1. The Council finds:

1. Council adopted the Small Donor Elections program in December 2016.
2. The Small Donor Elections program provides candidates, who demonstrate broad community support by collecting many small qualifying contributions from Portland residents, with matching dollars from the City's Small Donor Elections Fund if the candidates agree to follow program rules.
3. The intention of the program is to reduce actual and perceived corruption by reducing reliance on large contributions by campaigns. This will also allow candidates to engage with individuals from a variety of backgrounds and neighborhoods, which will ensure that the priorities and concerns of all individuals have the opportunity to be heard and increase the participation of all Portlanders by increasing the value of small donations.
4. The program was launched for the 2020 elections and is currently available for candidates who plan to run in the 2024 elections.
5. The Small Donor Elections Code must be revised to align with the recent Charter amendments passed by voters in the 2022 General Election--which overhauled the City's elections process and consolidated the primary and general elections into one election.
6. The following amendments are based on recommendations from the Portland Elections Commission, which oversees the program and is tasked by Code to make recommendations to Council of amendments after each election cycle. To make these recommendations, the Portland Elections Commission engaged in a public process, received feedback from program users and community stakeholders, and analyzed campaign finance data in

Portland and other jurisdictions which have implemented election reforms similar to those of the recent Charter amendments.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Council directs:

A. Amend Code Chapter 2.16, Small Donor Elections Program, as shown in Exhibit A.

B. The Small Donor Elections Program Director, in coordination with the Portland Elections Commission, will solicit stakeholder feedback on ways to improve the Program's penalty and appeal process. The Program Director will report recommendations for code or administrative rule amendments to City Council by December 1, 2023.