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City of Portland, Oregon

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Date: June 30, 2023

To: Independent Salary Commission

From: Tate White, City of Portland Strategic Project Manager

Following the November 2022 voter-approved charter reforms, the Portland City Council will be expanded to 12-members and focus on setting policy with a mayor and city administrator overseeing daily administration of that policy. Portland City Charter amendments establish a Council President that will be elected by their peers at the first regular meeting each calendar year. Section 2-110 of the charter reads that the President shall preside at all meetings of the Council.

Peer cities with mayor-council systems often assign additional duties to the Council President. The transition team has researched best practices and is working with the City Attorney's Office and other subject matter experts to determine duties to recommend for the Council President to provide accountability and a clear decision maker for core operational needs, starting in January 2025.

The transition team questioned whether the salary of the Council President should be higher to compensate for these additional duties. Peer city research revealed that council president salaries rarely differ from that of other councilors. Instead, it is more common for council presidents to have additional staff support.

Based on this research, the transition team is recommending that the Council President's salary be determined through the same methods as other councilors.

Future Portland City Councils have the authority to make different decisions about how they operate and what duties are assigned to the Council President. Similarly, future Salary Commissions may adjust council salaries to reflect those changes.

Thank you for the work you are doing to ensure a successful transition.