

2024 GENERAL ELECTION

Gresham City Charter Amendment

Measure 26-255: Majority Approval of Charter Amendments

OFFICIAL TITLE: Amends Charter; charter amendments require approval by majority of votes.

QUESTION: Shall the Gresham City Charter be amended such that changes require the approval of a majority of electors voting on the measure?

REFERRAL: This measure is a Charter amendment referred to the Gresham City Council by the Gresham Charter Review Committee in April 2023 and referred to voters by the City Council.

FINANCIAL IMPACT: This measure has no known fiscal impact.

PROBABLE RESULT OF A “YES” VOTE: If this measure passes, the city charter can be amended, repealed, or replaced if such a change is approved by a simple majority of voters casting votes for such a measure.

PROBABLE RESULT OF A “NO” VOTE: If this measure fails, the city charter can be amended, repealed, or replaced only if such a change is approved by 60 percent of voters casting votes for such a measure.

BACKGROUND: A ballot measure passed at the 1986 general election imposed the 60% vote threshold to amend the Gresham City Charter. Since the imposition of that requirement, at least two Charter amendment measures have passed with over 50%, but less than 60%, of the required vote. Cities of a similar size to Gresham codify in their city or municipal code, not within their charters, the requirements for a Charter Amendment to pass. The "how to amend the Charter" language currently in the Charter itself is distinct to Gresham. The Oregon Constitution and other cities of similar size to Gresham allow Charter amendments to be approved by a majority of electors voting on the measure. The Gresham Charter Review Committee determined the City Charter denies the will of the majority of voters approving a Charter change. (NOTE: Because the current Charter still governs this 2024 election, Measure 26-255 would only take effect if it is approved by at least sixty percent (60%) of the votes cast for or against this measure.)

PROPOSAL: This Charter Amendment would permit a change in the Gresham City Charter by approval of a majority of electors voting on the measure.

SUPPORTERS SAY:

- The 60% requirement to amend the City Charter is undemocratic by not letting a majority of voters decide to change their Charter.
- The 60%-approval requirement for changes to the City Charter is unique to Gresham among Oregon cities of comparable size.

OPPONENTS SAY:

As of September 14, 2024, there is no known opposition to this measure.