

# Framingham Charter Review Committee



**Final Report**  
**June 2024**

Dear Council,

We would like to express our gratitude to you, the Mayor, and the School Committee for entrusting to us this important role. We would also like to thank you all, as well as members of the public for your valuable support and input. Our journey to this final report would be incomplete without everyone's involvement. In the following pages we will lay out what we are suggesting the council approve and why.

### **Part 1: Big Picture Summary/Themes of Our Recommendations**

- **A more inclusive operating budget process:** Our suggested changes allow the community more chances to give feedback during the development and discussion of the budget. It also includes changes to make the final budget and supporting materials more transparent.
- **A more efficient capital budget process:** We suggest approving the capital budget plan by February 1 rather than having the capital budget included with the operating. This may allow work on projects to start sooner, something both school and municipal departments saw as an advantage.
- **Added access to information/transparency measures:** We suggest new rules that require that all meetings to be recorded by audio/video, that meeting information be placed in one centralized location that is easier to find, and there be more focus on reducing language and accessibility issues so that meetings and materials are truly open to all.
- **More clarity in the strategic planning process:** The original charter required a strategic planning process that goes beyond State requirements. The committee is recommending more specific language in terms of timing and process to help make this important work flow better and provide a clear vision for Framingham.
- **A new position to coordinate Framingham's climate resilience efforts:** This would be a position that can work across departments to make sure that Framingham is planning for climate impacts doing work in a coordinated manner.
- **Small tweaks to elections rules and process for vacancies** We are recommending a new rule that bars someone from holding two elected positions at once to open more opportunities to others; we are also recommending that vacancies for school committee and district council be filled by special elections rather than our existing processes to make sure that district residents have more voice in these decisions.
- **Moves the next Charter Review to 2030 instead of 2033:** We suggest a small change to Charter review timing so that the next one is a few years earlier. Framingham is still a

young city, and the committee wanted a future committee to get a chance to revisit issues that come up just a bit sooner.

## **Part Two: Content of Our Work**

You are receiving two distinct outputs from our work. The first output is a set of recommendations for changes to the Charter. These will be **organized by article and section and will contain the language and rationale for each change**. During our process, we've referred to that document as the **"What, Where, Why"** list. You will also receive a red-lined copy of the Charter with recommended language for the changes.

The second is a list of **non-binding** recommendations that could occur outside of the Charter. As part of our process, we delved into possible changes to our government that ultimately did not rise to the level of a change to the Charter. However, we felt it our duty to offer you and other groups in our government these recommendations to consider. These are listed within Article X of the charter, with further discussion of the rationale in this report.

We have also included an Appendix that collects a variety of feedback from different stakeholders both inside and outside of government as part of our process.

It is our understanding based on feedback from the City Solicitor that once the Council has the report, it can discuss and **accept or reject** each of the individual suggestions we've made. However, the City Solicitor's read of the Charter and related law suggests that you may not amend our suggestions.

Whatever you approve will have to go to the Attorney General's office to make sure the provisions comply with state law. Once they give feedback, you'll have to decide when to schedule a special election, and how to describe the changes to the voters on a ballot question.

### **Our Process:**

Our charter review work has lasted ten months and as part of the process, we have held twenty-two formal meetings including a public hearing, five community meetings around the city, and two surveys. We received suggestions from several departments and committees as well as organizations outside of Framingham's government. We received feedback at our open meetings and through email from the public and various agencies. We created a Communications Subcommittee that held three meetings to recommend a strategy to gather feedback from the public. Finally, we had the advantage of assistance from the Collins Center to help us understand what other communities have done, and to offer external and experienced viewpoints.

We organized our work into three phases: **collect data, decide recommendations, and create the reports.**

**The data collection phase** lasted about four months. During this phase, we held public outreach meetings, attended meetings of other agencies and organizations, and conducted surveys. We collected feedback from individuals and agencies in and outside of Framingham's government. Finally, we studied the Charter article by article and created a list of our recommended changes. At the end of this phase, we had a list of almost 300 possible recommendations. We also had memos from various agencies and organizations containing over an additional 100 possible recommendations. **The recommendation decision phase** lasted about five months. During this phase, we reviewed and discussed each possible recommendation. At the end of each discussion, we made a decision as to whether change should be included in the Charter, be made as a recommendation outside of the Charter, or not be acted on. During this phase, we also worked on what the language each recommendation would look like in the Charter. **The reporting phase** lasted about four weeks and overlapped with the second phase. In this phase, we created this report as well as the other outputs you are receiving from this committee.

As a result of our work, we have gained a number of important perspectives. We have, of course, a strong understanding of the contents of the Charter itself. Importantly, however, we have also gained a deep understanding of the kinds of changes that the public, the employees, and volunteers in our government want. The Charter changes we are recommending to you are based on these perspectives as well as hours of research and discussion. **We firmly believe that all of the recommendations we are making are vital steps to improving the efficiency, transparency, and responsiveness of Framingham's government.** Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Framingham Charter Review Committee

Adam Blumer (Chair)  
Susan Craighead (Vice Chair)  
David Miles (Clerk)  
Mary Zarrilli Connaughton  
David Magnani  
Antonio Gutierrez  
Steve Schneider  
Laura Grome  
Christopher Brown  
Jonna K. Rubin  
Andy Limeri

# 2024 Framingham Charter Review Committee Suggested Charter Changes: What, Where, Why?

**Process Note:** The chart below is the result of a number of months of work from the Charter Review Committee soliciting feedback from the community and closely studying the language of the current charter. Our final report with recommendations goes to the City Council by the end of June for their consideration. While we didn't rank or prioritize the recommendations for charter changes, when one looks at them as a whole, they generally reflect 5 themes:

- **Efficiency**– is there a quicker way to reach our goals as a government?
- **Transparency**- is there a more open way to reach our goals?
- **Democracy**- is there a more democratic process to use to reach our goals?
- **Clarity**- is there a more clear way to describe our processes in the charter language?
- **Community Priorities**- are there are priorities in the community that need to be better addressed?

This document is best used paired with a red lined copy of the specific language changes proposed in the Charter, which is also available online. Note that as one looks at the red-line version of the charter, there are several small grammar/word choice changes for clarity's sake that are not on this chart, but need approval.

Lastly, note that at the end of this document is a chart of “non-binding recommendations”. Like the original charter report, we plan to make some recommendations for the Mayor, City Council, and perhaps the next Charter Review Committee for topics to explore.

## Article I: Definitions

	What	Where in Article?	Why
A	Clarified that non binding resolutions don't need mayoral approval		Clarity–there was confusion noted by original City Solicitor

## Article II: Legislative Branch

	What	Where in Article?	Why
A	Changed starting day of term to second business day, not January 1	2.1.b	To match change elsewhere moving Inauguration Day. We chose 6 PM on the second business day out of recognition that had we chosen the first business day, many city workers would have had to do planning work on New Year's Day.
B	Named specific council subcommittees alluded to elsewhere in charter rather than refer to subcommittees more generally	2.2.c	To clarify that those are required standing committees per charter  Note: Also changed "special" committees to "temporary" for clarity
C	Prevents City Council members from holding any other elected position (local or beyond)	2.3.a	Create more opportunities for others, balance power
D	Added language to connect minutes requirements in the Charter to MGL/open meeting law	2.6.d.v	Suggestion from City Solicitor
E	Added language to note that the council has to give written notice if they want an employee to appear, but allows that communication to go by email if desired	2.7.d	Suggestion from City Solicitor- also this adds some efficiency of notification process
F	Created a process for employees hired by City Council to have a process to challenge suspensions/removals	2.8.e	Right now, a similar process of appeal exists for most people hired by the Mayor, but not for the small number of people hired by the Council.  Note: Modeled off of Beverly Charter with minimal tweaks
G	Add City Solicitor to list of positions needed Council approval  (Also changed the name of the body that appointments are referred to to be "appointments subcommittee" rather than the more vague language in the original charter.	2.10.a	This is an important position who works on behalf of the entire municipality, so deserves some Council role in the initial hiring process.  Note that if City Solicitor is now head of Legal division, this change might be moot, as all Division Heads have to do this.

H	Clarifies that division heads need council approval for initial hires, <u>but not</u> for reappointments	2.10.a	Clarified a question for boards and employee that has come up  Note: Possible help with hiring and retention of employees in competitive market
I	Clarifies when appointments take effect.	2.10.b 2.10.c	Response to some confusion in the first administration as noted in Petrini memo about when appointments start.
J	Changes the Councilor at large vacancy process: if there are 9 months or less before a special election, seat is empty until next election. If it is more than 9 months, there is a special election	2.11.a	This language suggested by Collins center is much easier to understand than the current language.
K	Changes process for replacement of district councilor who resigns to require special election v.s having the second place winner take the post  Also changes trigger for action from 20 months to 15.	2.11.b	Felt that special election was more democratic and sensible than going back to the second place results that could be a year old  Note: This may incur special election costs, but we felt this would be rare and worth the small costs

### Article III: Executive Branch

	What	Where in article?	Why
A	Changed starting day of term to second business day, not January 1	3.1.b	To match change elsewhere moving Inauguration Day
B	Clarified term limits to note that mayor cannot be elected more than 3 times in a row	3.1.f	Felt the current term of “hold” was unclear in a case where a Mayor resigned or took a leave in term 3 and then wanted to run again for term 4.  Note: Unlikely scenario but felt proper to tweak.
C	Deleted list of boards, committees, etc from charter and required them	3.3.b	Charters can’t be changed automatically, so lists currently in charter are inaccurate

	to be listed in ordinance		since some things have been added.
D	Requires lists of ad-hoc committees or working groups (groups that would not be in the ordinance above) to be listed somewhere online.	3.3.b	Taken together, these are a transparency measure, so the public knows what different types of ad-hoc committees are in existence.
E	Add City Solicitor to list of positions needed Council approval	3.3e	This is an important position who works on behalf of the entire municipality, so deserves some Council role in initial hiring process  Note: Making consistent with Article 2.10.a
F	Added a new position required by Charter called "Chief Climate and Sustainability Officer"	3.3.f	Climate/sustainability planning will be more and important in next decade and deserves more focus at the policy level as well as project level  Note: Meant to be a position that can set policy across departments, look for cost savings opportunities etc
G	Clarified that suspension/removal info in this section applies to positions appointed by the mayor, not the council	3.4.b	As noted above, process for council is handled in our proposed 2.8.e
H	Changed timing making report due by November 15 rather than 12 weeks after the start of the fiscal year.  Added more details/requirement about content of the annual report about committee activity and charter compliance	3.6.a  3.6.a	Pushed deadline a bit later to account for bills needing to be paid for a few months into the fiscal year. This was based on feedback from the PIO  Clarified that boards and committees need reports for transparency  We added the piece about Charter compliance because of the number of questions about what happens/who is responsible if aspects of the Charter are not being followed, such as hiring of certain positions, posting of minutes, etc. We feel that providing a clear list of where we have room for improvement is a key aspect of transparency and may produce changes.
I	Noted that Mayor need not sign non-binding resolutions, what to do	3.7 3.8	These are all relatively minor changes: 3.7 is about resolutions, 3.8 is about mayoral

	if Mayor is absent exactly 10 days, and that delegation of power needs to be in writing	3.9	absences, and 3.9 is about delegation of authority.
J	Added clarity on veto process and timeline	3.7	Suggestion from City Solicitor
K	Expanded goal/focus language in master plan to include climate and community equity	3.11.a	Important community goals: adding them here sends signal of what to keep in mind in terms  Note: Master plans mostly about land use and are created by planning board per MGL
L	Reduce Master plan timing from once every 20 years to 10, in years ending in 5.	3.11.a	Pace of change is fast and plans need to be connected to current situation
M	Changed name of strategic plan to “strategic blueprint” and added specific steps and outlines SIFOC role in blueprint process	3.11.b	Strategic blueprint process is new and needed fleshing out. The goal is to have a group of people working with the Mayor to consider longer-term financial issues.  Note: Most of this was based on suggestions from SIFOC with some adaptations from Collins Center.

#### Article IV: School Committee and other Elected Officials

	What	Where in article?	Why
A	Change term of office wording for school committee to match new inauguration day	4.1.b	Need all parts of charter to be consistent
B	Notes the new process for filling vacancy in school committee (See 4.1.i)	4.1.c	Create more opportunities for others, balance power
C	Prevents school committee members from also holding other elected office	4.1.d	Create more opportunities for others, balance power. Consistent with council in 2.3.a and Library/Cemetery Boards below.
D	Noted School Committee role to do performance reviews of Supt. of Schools and to adopt capital budget proposals for schools	4.1.h.ii 4.1.h.iv	Clarity, consistency with state law

E	<p>Changes special election process for School Committee seats that become vacant in first 15 months to have replacements come via a special election.</p> <p>Current process has School Committee and Council take applications and make the choice themselves. .</p>	4.1.i	<p>Felt that having school committee (and council) pick their new member was awkward and didn't give the people in that district enough voice.</p> <p>Note: This was a school committee priority</p>
F	Clarified that if person is elected to fill vacancy, the person elected can start immediately rather than wait until January	4.1.i	Efficiency- no need for that person to wait to serve and for the district to have representation
G	Change term of office wording for library trustees to match new inauguration day	4.2.a	.Need all parts of charter to be consistent
H	Prevents library trustees from also holding other elected office	4.2.d	Create more opportunities for others, balance power. Consistent with council and school committee language above, as well as Cemetery board below. We are treating all elected offices the same way.
I	Noted library trustee role to do periodic performance review of library director to be given to Mayor for consideration in Mayor's evaluation of Library director.	4.2.f.iv	Clarity for role of Library trustees in giving feedback to the mayor about the library director's performance for the performance review
J	Change term of office wording for cemetery trustees to match new inauguration day	4.3.a	Need all parts of charter to be consistent
K	Prevents cemetery trustees from also holding other elected office	4.3.d	Create more opportunities for others, balance power. Consistent with council, school committee, and library trustee language above, as well as Cemetery board below. We are treating all elected offices the same way.

## Article V: Administrative Organization

	What	Where in article?	Why
A	<p>Requires an up to date organization chart to be posted online and updated to maintain its accuracy</p> <p>Made several small changes to reorganization plan process:</p> <p>1) While council holds hearing, required mayor attend to explain rationale</p> <p>2) Notes that school committee also have power of approval for reorganizations that involve school departments/functions</p>	5.1	<p>Adding the Organization chart requirement adds transparency about city structure and helps the public understand city functions</p> <p>School Committee reference is for clarity and consistency with MGL</p>
B	Removed the language requiring technology services and media services to be in admin and finance division	5.3a	<p>In the original charter, this was a very specific placement for departments without a clear rationale why.</p> <p>Removing it gives the Mayor flexibility for organizing these staff without triggering formal, time-consuming reorg plan.</p>
C	Allows the License Commission to pick their own chair. Vice-chair, clerk rather than Mayor.	5.5	It is typical practice for multi-member bodies to pick their chairs. We also recommended this change for SIFOC, so this is consistent.
D	Adds one more at-large community member to Traffic Commission	5.6.a	Request of board with Mayor's support to create an odd numbered board (going from 8 to 9), having community voice slightly larger than staff voice (5-4 vs 4-4 now), and to have the added community member be at-large to allow for flexibility in choice.
E	Noted that traffic commission has purview in bike lanes and pedestrian ways, not just car-based traffic	5.6.b	Clarity-Important to note as we have more bike lanes/paths, etc.
F	Clarified "petition" process for traffic regulation by putting that in a new, different subsection.	5.6.c	No substantive change, just a clarity issue.

	Also made passing rules based on the majority of members present, not the majority of the whole board		This is consistent with all other boards.
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## Article VI: Finance and Fiscal Procedures

	What	Where	Why
A	Added Preamble with process goals for budget information	Start of 6	Felt it was important to stress need for transparency, collaboration and timely information especially with fiscal matters
B	Created a new requirement for a “pre budget” meeting 180 days before end of the fiscal year (Early January) with mayor and other key boards specifically geared to public input	6.1	Wanted to make sure public had time to influence budget thinking before budget was created  Note: Language notes role of soliciting public input
C	Added emergency language into budget submission timing	6.2.b	There was a lack of clarity during covid about whether timelines could be changed.
D	Added requirement for Mayor to have a budget hearing prior to its formal submission to the council	6.3.a	Again, wanted a chance for the public to weigh in to the initial proposal and not have to wait until later in the process.
E	Moved date for Mayor to give Council the budget from 60 days before end of fiscal year to 120 days. (Roughly from May 1 to March 1)	6.3.b	Wanted to give Council more time to study budget and take action. If the budget is voted earlier, that would also benefit FPS hiring.  Note: We kept the requirement that SC pass their budget 21 days earlier than that.
F	Strengthen language in the budget message to require information about how this budget aligns with the strategic blueprint.	6.4.a	This helps ensure that an individual year’s budget aligns with a longer term plan for Framingham’s priorities.
G	Shifted the budget’s public hearing requirement from finance subcommittee to whole council	6.5.a	Budget decisions are one of the most important things Council does—important for whole Council to hear thoughts and for that to be at amore visible/expected time for the public.  We also recognize the important work the Finance Subcommittee has to do. We
	Gave the full council some flexibility to discuss budget before it is referred to finance subcommittee	6.5.b	
		6.5.b	

	Gave the Finance subcommittee an additional week to review materials (current charter gives them 21 days, we propose 28)		wanted to give them an extra week to delve into budget details and for the public to follow the process possibly in smaller chunks.
H	Requires the whole budget proposal to be placed online immediately and remain online in an easily accessible way.  Requires that the approved budget be posted online in an easily accessible way.  Requires classification and pay schedules to be posted online	6.5.e   6.5.f	More transparency and ability of public to find key fiscal information  Transparency- This is helpful information for the public to have access to as they examine the budget.
I	Noted that if there is a supplemental budget request the hearing required should be before the full council	6.6	For clarity in case there was a process question—the full council plays an important role in the regular budget process and should play a similar role in supplemental requests too.
J	Deleted section on Allotments process	6.7 (deleted)	Collins Center consultants and the city's former CFO both noted that this feature is rarely found in Charters and can be cumbersome without great benefit.
K	Note the school committee role/responsibility in capital budget process	6.8.a	Clarity
L	Changed Capital improvement program to be November 1	6.8.d	This is actually <b>not different</b> than current process of having it six months before submission of budget to the council , but needed to reword it since we changed the budget submission date.
M	Changed the Capital Budget process so that the capital improvement plan be approved by February 1 rather than within the operating budget in June	6.8.f	Both municipal and school dept suggest that this would help with locking in costs and starting work sooner, especially on school side with major work limited to summer
N	Noted the School Committee role in approval of contracts in their realm	6.10	Clarity
O	Added detail to SIFOC's role for capital projects, added their ability to name their own chair, and	6.11	Much of this related to their suggestions. We wanted to further develop their role in government based on their suggestions as a

	noted that they could be ad-hoc members of other committees		new entity in Charter.
P	Added a SIFOC meeting at least 1x per year with Mayor, Council, and SchoolCommittee	6.11	This allows SIFOC to report out on any work/analysis they've done, and also allows the mayor, council, or school committee to ask them to examine specific long term issues that need more investigation.

## Article VII: Elections and Election Related Matters

	What	Where in article?	Why
A	Changed word "general" to "regular" in terms of elections	7.1	According to Collins Center, this aligns with the wording of state law in terms of elections

## Article VIII: Citizenship Participation Measures

	What	Where in article?	Why
A	Increased timed allow for signature gathering of initiative measures from 60 to 90 days	8.2.c	This process is meant to be a last resort, so it should be difficult, but did want to make it somewhat more possible if residents feel their voice is not being heard any other way.
B	Changed process so that if the council or school committee does not act on initiative in 60 days, it is considered <u>accepted</u> , <u>not rejected</u> .	8.2.d	<p>Changing from "accepted" to "rejected" matches the process for appointments and it forces boards to react one way or the other to resident demands. Otherwise, a board to let an issue die simply by taking no action.</p> <p>However, we gave the council 60 days to take action rather than 30 per a request from the rules subcommittee of the Council for added time.</p>

## Article IX: General Provisions

	What	Where	Why
A	Notes that council can change Charter through defined MGL process	9.1	For clarity–this was a common confusion of the public and our committee during this process.
B	<p>Changed Charter Review Process.</p> <p>Clarifications to timing, who leads the first meeting, who can serve on it and more based on our experience.</p>	9.5	<p>Our hope is this allows the next Charter Review Committee to start their work and proceed from there smoothly</p> <p>We also broadened who could serve on this committee in order to encourage more voices to participate in the process.</p>
C	Added a list of transparency and accessibility language for Multi-Member bodies as well as Council and School Committee	9.7.e	Focus on public having an easier time finding info by having it one place, along with language accessibility
D	Made the oath of office second business day in January	9.11	Based on a wide range of feedback about the challenges of Inauguration day on January 1.
E	Noted the limit on holding 2 elected offices at once	9.13	Matches references in other parts of the Charter in Articles II and IV, with language from the City Solicitor that this doesn't immediately impact anyone, but would go into effect in the next election if passed.
F	Requires an analysis of parts of the charter that are not being followed	9.14	Matches reference in Article III
G	Clarifies SC role in naming school property, requires a public hearing before doing it.	9.19	This is current SC policy, but deserves enshrinement here.

## Article X: Transition Provisions

**Based on advice from our consultants, we made several changes:**

- Kept sections 1-6b in this section just in case they need to be easily referred to in the future
- Updated in Article X, section 6c which precincts are connected to each district based on our current 27 precinct map
- Deleted items beyond that we know already happened as part of the transition.
- Kept the 2017 list of **non-binding recommendations** in Article X, section 8 and added new **non-binding recommendations** of our own. A more full rationale for each of our proposal appears at the end of our report.

**Important Note:** Items now labeled as Article X, section 6d- 6g are not new. They come from the 2017 Charter. We kept these in this version because we were not 100% sure they are completed, and did not have time to fully confirm. Once someone confirms all these actions have been taken, these could likely be removed by a future Charter Review committee.

**We suggest you take these changes in Article X up all at once for efficiency's sake.**

**Grammar and Wording Edits:** The following chart lists small grammar and wording edit, many of which were suggested by previous consultants such as General Code during the ordinance recodification process. None change the meaning/content of the Charter and we recommend you consider approving them all at once if desired

Note that we did our best to list all of these types of changes here, but may have missed a few.

Article II, sections 2c, 2d, 8b Article III, sections 3a, 3b,4b, 7 Article IV, sections 1c, 1g ii, 2f ii, 2f iii, 3c Article V, section 6b Article VIII, sections 2a, 2d,e Article IX, sections 7 and 19
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## Non Binding Recommendations:

The following is a chart of non-binding recommendation topics for inclusion in our final report. The exact wording of the recommendations will change, but we wanted the public to have an easy way to see and comment on these before the public hearing if they desired.

	Recommendation	Aimed towards	Notes
A	Reexamine the non-binding recommendations of the original charter review committee and report on which have been accomplished and which might still make sense to explore currently	City Council	
B	Examine election results to ensure that each region of the city has equitable representation and consider changes to the City Council structure if needed	Next Charter Review Committee	This relates to the City Council representation poll we had about different council set ups, with ideas for how it might be structured to make sure it is geographically representative and that there aren't huge barriers to running for office. See information in the appendix for our specific poll question, results, and comments from the public.
C	Analyze election participation and look for possible ways to increase turnout, number of candidates , and information about candidates easily available to the public. <b>Specific focus should be paid to participation and representation in areas of the community with lower historical participation rates.</b>	Mayor/Administration and Council	This might include structures like preliminary elections thresholds and signature requirements, but could also look at things like Ranked Choice voting.
D	Consider the feasibility as well as possible advantages and challenges of creating of a separate Traffic department	Mayor/Administration	This was a request from the Police Chief that we didn't feel expert enough to strongly recommend but may be worth exploring more closely.
E	Write a simplified "Charter for Dummies" to explain different parts and rules for the government to the	Mayor/Administration	Part of the feedback from the public was that it is hard for an average person to know how the

	public.		government works. This is one way to help address this. There could also be brief “video explainers” in different languages.
F	<p>Investigate the possibility and potential advantage of creating a “participatory budgeting process” for a set of funds.</p> <p>Participatory Budgeting is defined as, “a democratic process that empowers community members to decide how to spend part of a public budget”</p>	Mayor/Administration City Council	<p>This is an idea that has gained some traction in bigger cities recently to give residents much more direct power in choosing projects of importance to fund.</p> <p>Cambridge has the most experience with this. One can see information about their most recent version of the <a href="#">process here</a>.</p>
G	<p>The city should push aggressively to ensure that a much fiscal information is online and in as easy a manner for the public to access as possible</p> <p>This could happen several ways, including but not limited to:</p> <p>Creating an <b>online transparency portal</b> maintained on the city’s website that has s information updated at least quarterly such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● payroll by employee including annual salary, regular and overtime payments year to date</li> <li>● vendor payments, and vendor contracts awarded</li> <li>● Tax credits awarded by recipient</li> <li>● retirement payments by retiree</li> </ul> <p>And these items updated at least yearly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● the balance of unfunded liabilities, including pensions, and other post employment benefits</li> <li>● Collective bargaining and host community agreements</li> </ul> <p>City Council could revisit and</p>	Mayor/Administration	<p>This is an area the city is already working towards with their efforts to use “open checkbook” or similar software to get information online. Nevertheless, we wish to stress its importance formally</p> <p>This is all important information for the community to have about how tax dollars are being spent as well as future issues facing Framingham that need attention/planning.</p>

	<p>strengthen any existing ordinances that deal with fiscal reporting online.</p> <p>The committee does note that while this work is complementary to the work of the Finance Subcommittee, we believe that they already have a great deal of work to do, and that any such committee should have representatives appointed by the municipal and school sides of Framinghm.</p>		
H	<p>Establish a standing transparency committee that is responsible to make recommendations to the mayor and the council to advance government transparency.</p>	Mayor/Administration	<p>Again, the issue of transparency and access to information came up multiple times in our work. A committee dedicated to examining how other communities do this with the power to make recommendations would help make progress in this realm.</p>

# Appendix: Collection of Feedback on Framingham Charter

Updated as of 6/15/2024

Background: As part of our work, the Charter Review Committee used a variety of approaches to get feedback. These included the following:

- Collaborating with the Framingham Public Schools to host 3 focus group sessions
- Requesting feedback from Framingham elected and appointed boards/committees as well as municipal departments
- Creating a survey instrument as well as a suggestion form available in a variety of languages via the Charter Review Committee homepage

The following links are our attempt to collect a variety of ideas/comments in one place that is accessible to the public.

## Comments from Municipal Departments:\*

- Email from Park and Rec about [hiring process](#)
- [Letter from Police Department](#)
- [DPW suggestions](#)
- [CFO suggestions](#)
- [City Clerk Suggestions](#)
- City Solicitor comments of [role of the Council in Charter](#) 5/31/24

## Comments from Committees and/or Elected officials:\*

- [Memo](#) from Marion Kelley, Secretary for the City Council
- [Framingham School Committee](#) suggested edits along with FPS [administration suggestions](#)
- [Traffic Commission](#) suggestions w/further [explanation](#)
- [Testimony](#) from Councilor and Charter Commission member Stefanini
- [Email](#) from SC member Freudberg about Article III and [the use of attorneys](#)
- [Email](#) from SC member Freudberg with [other charter suggestions](#) and [his testimony](#) to the Charter Review Committee
- [Email from Historical District Commission](#) with comments on staggering elections
- [Budget and Planning Suggestions](#) from SIFOC
- [Ideas from Energize Framingham](#) and follow up [letter from 3/2/24](#) with more details
- [Feedback from the Rules Subcommittee](#) on earlier version of the What, where, why” list of proposed Charter changes and [Collins center clarifications](#) 5/2024

\*There were a number of committees and departments that responded that they did not have suggestions at this time.

## Comments from General Public via Focus Groups and email

- Comments from [Focus Group #1: Brophy School](#)
- Comments from [Focus Group #2: Stapleton School](#)
- Comments from [Focus Group # 3: Harmony Grove School](#)
- Comments from [Focus Group #4: McAuliffe Library](#)
- [Online Survey](#) Comments
- Letter from resident Joel Winett suggesting [changes](#) and [edits](#) to the Charter in general
- Letter from Joel Winett suggesting edits to [Articles II and IV](#) specifically, and email from Joel Winett on Contents of [Annual Report](#)
- Email from former City Counselor about [Counselor indemnification](#)
- Email/editorial from Geoff Epstein about [Submission of Budget Process](#) 6/10/24
- Email/Editorial from Geoff Epstein about [Council Size/Composition](#) 6/2024

## Materials from the Collins Center

- 1/25/24 [Memo on Library Board powers](#), special elections dates, etc.
- 1/25/24 Memo on [allotments and budget process](#)
- 2/13/24 [Memo from Collins Center](#) on Budget Process, Capital plan, SIFOC language, etc.
- 2/29/24 [Memo from Collins Center](#) on Legal Counsel, Auditor language, etc.
- 3/12/24 [Memo from the Collins Center](#) on Charter Review Process
- 3/12/24 [Memo from the Collins Center](#) on Preliminary Elections
- 3/24/24 Memo from Collins Center on [variety of Article III topics](#)
- 3/24/24 [Research study on impact](#) of Term limits on Municipal Finance
- 5/5/24 [Suggested Tweaks to Capital Improvement Language](#) and side notes
- 5/20/24 Memo on simplified language for [special election timing/process](#), sending appointments directly to appointments subcommittee, school committee role/power in reorganization plans.
- 6/12/24 Memo on [final suggested wording changes](#)

## Discussion of Council Size and Shape, January 2024

Summary of City Council Size poll and comments:

- [Poll results](#) and [Demographics](#) of participants by District
- [Open response comments](#) sorted by response (Excel file)

## Other Misc. Documents with Grammar Edits

- Memo from [General Code](#) about suggested Charter changes as part of the Ordinance Review Committee Work Spring 2023
- [Memo](#) from Petrini and Associates, 12/2021



