

# Charter Review Commission 2021

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Presentation to the Ridgefield City Council

Chuck Green, Charter Review Commission Co-Chair, Councilor District 2  
Representative

September 23, 2021



# What We Will Cover

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- Introducing Ourselves and the Charter Review Commission
- Quick Background of the Clark County Home Rule Charter
- What is a Charter Review?
- Review of Proposed Amendments
  1. Nonpartisan County Executive Elected Offices
  2. Nonpartisan County Councilor Offices
  3. Five-District County Council
  4. Charter Review Frequency & Commissioner Terms
  5. Ethics Oversight
  6. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Oversight
  7. Technical Edits and Minor Corrections in the Charter
  8. Clarifying Initiative, Mini-Initiative and Referendum filing procedures (County Council)
  9. Filing, Signing Petitions and Voting on Measures Applying only to Unincorporated Areas (County Council)
- Questions



# What is the County Charter?

**A Home Rule Charter  
by and for the People  
of  
Clark County, Washington**



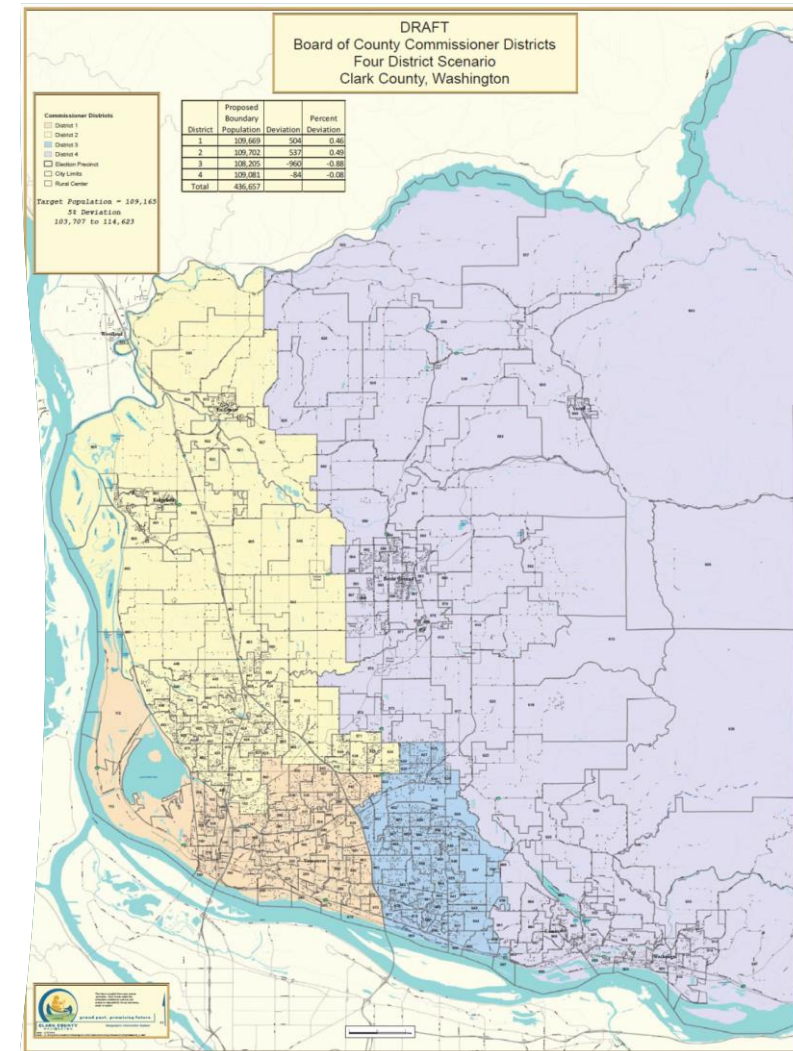
Adopted by the Clark County Board of Freeholders  
May 27, 2014

- “Constitution and structure” of county government
- Spells out the powers, duties and relationships of government
- Strengthens the rights of citizens
- Defines representation and elections
- Provides for direct role of citizens in county government



# County Charter Key Items

- **Separation of Powers:** Executive vs. Legislative Branches
  - Section 2.6A, Non-interference clause
  - Section 7.5, Recall
- **Power to the People:** Initiative, Referendum, Mini-Initiative
- **Direct Representation:** Four districts nominated & elected by district, plus at-large Chair (countywide), all partisan
- Chair serves on any board with 2 or more council members (RTC, C-TRAN, others)



# What is a Charter Review?



- **Charter Review Commission:** 15 members, 3 for each Council position, 1-year terms
- **Review:** first review after 5 years (this one), then every 10 years
- **Vote:** Charter Review Commission refers amendment proposals to voters, November ballot
- **Note:** the Charter also allows for amendment proposals from the public (a form of initiative) and county council (minimum of four yes votes).

# 2021 Charter Review Commission Amendment Measures

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*General Election: November 2, 2021*

Resolutions passed by the Charter Review Commission at the July 7, 2021 Meeting

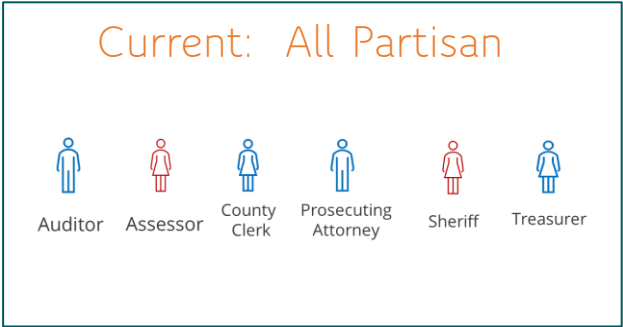
<https://clark.wa.gov/county-manager/2021-amendment-measures>



# 1. Nonpartisan Executive County Offices (Assessor, Auditor, Clerk, Prosecuting Attorney, Sheriff, Treasurer)

**Current:** Clark County Executive Elected positions are currently partisan (i.e. Republican, Democrat, “No party preference”, etc.).

**Proposed amendment:** Should County Executive Elected offices (Assessor, Auditor, Clerk, Prosecuting Attorney, Sheriff, Treasurer) become nonpartisan?

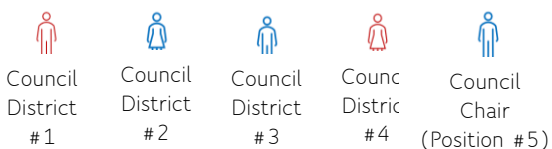


## 2. Nonpartisan County Councilor Offices

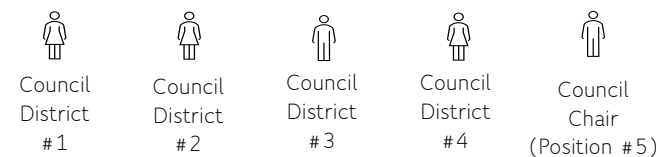
**Current:** Clark County Councilor positions are currently partisan (i.e. Republican, Democrat, “No party preference”, etc.).

**Proposed amendment:**  
Should County Councilor offices become nonpartisan?

### Current: All Partisan



### Proposed: Nonpartisan





### 3. Five-District County Council composition, Redefine Council Chair appointment and function

2021 Ballot

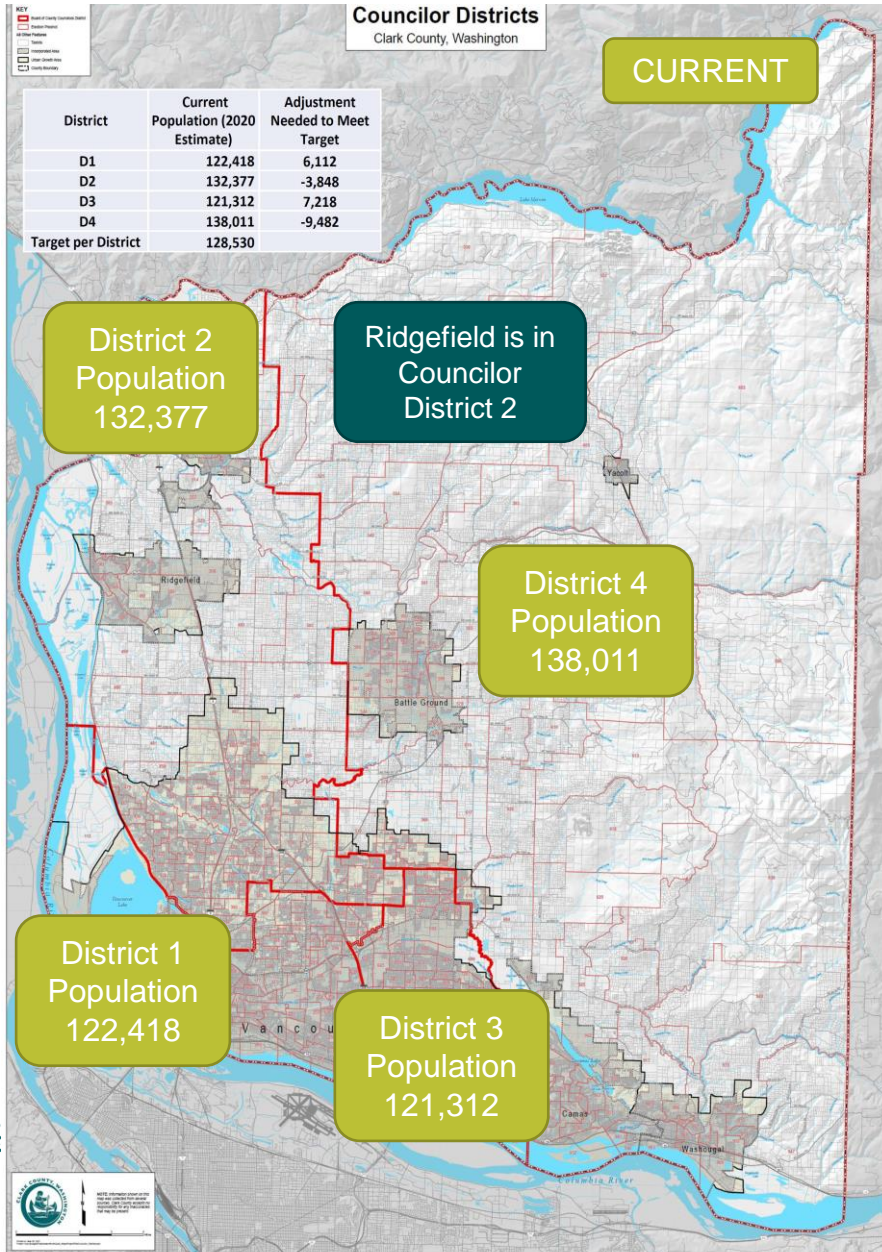
**Current:** the county council is comprised of four district representatives, each elected by voters in their districts, plus one at-large council charge, elected countywide.

#### **Proposed amendment:**

- Replace the countywide chair position with a fifth district councilor
- Revise the four-district map to five districts (see maps, next two slides)
- Revise the Charter related to council composition and Council Chair accordingly
- Change the Council Chair to be appointed each year from and by the five councilors
- Change the composition of future Charter Review Commissions would be modified accordingly.

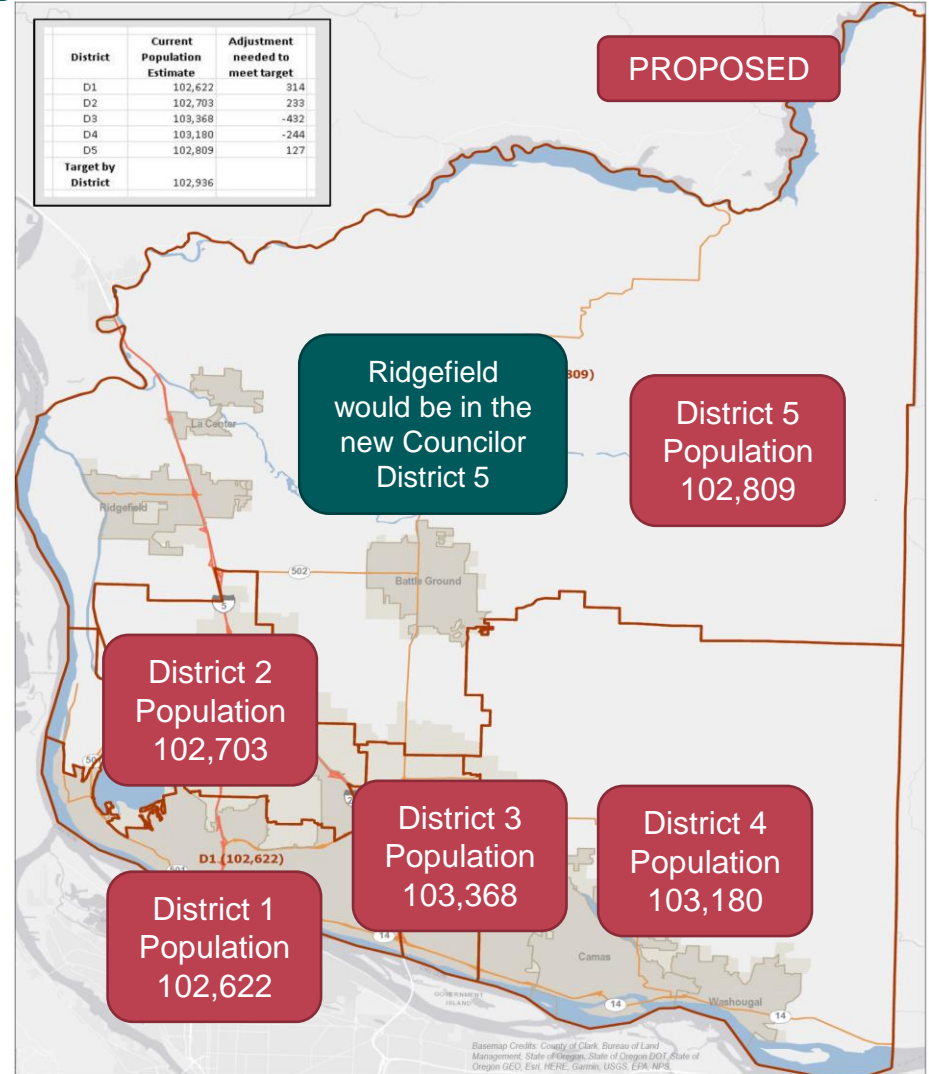


# Current and Proposed District Maps



Current District	Transitional District	Next Election
Council Chair	District 5	2022
District 1	District 1	2022
District 2	District 2	2022
District 3	District 3	2024
District 4	District 4	2024

District	Current Population	Adjustment to meet Target
District 1	102,622	314
District 2	102,703	233
District 3	103,368	-432
District 4	103,180	-244
District 5	102,809	127
<b>Target by District</b>	<b>102,936</b>	



Five District Map - May 27, 2021



NOTE: Information shown on this map was collected from several sources. Clark County accepts no responsibility for any inaccuracies that may be present.

Current Charter District	Transitional District	Next Election
<b>Council Chair</b>	District 5	2022
<b>District 1</b>	District 1	2022
<b>District 2</b>	District 2	2022
<b>District 3</b>	District 3	2024
<b>District 4</b>	District 4	2024

## 4. Charter Review Frequency & Commissioner Terms

**Current:** the Charter calls for future reviews to be at least every ten (10) years, and for the terms of the Charter Review Commissioners to be one year or until their work is completed, whichever occurs sooner.

**Proposed amendment:** Should the frequency of future Charter reviews be at least every five (5) years, and the terms of the Charter Review Commissioners be up to two years or until their work is completed, whichever occurs sooner?



## 5. Adopt Ethics Code by Ordinance and an Autonomous Ethics Review Process

2021 Ballot

**Current:** there is no formal Code of Ethics nor autonomous ethics review process in place. The county council's Rules of Procedure has an ethical practice provision which includes council appointing two sitting councilors to review ethics complaints against other councilor(s).

**Proposed amendment:** Should there be a formal Code of Ethics and an autonomous ethics review process and complaint hotline? This amendment would

- Require Code of Ethics to be adopted by County Council ordinance by July 31, 2022
- Establish an autonomous Ethics Review Commission and Ethics Oversight office
- The Ethics Oversight Office would have a complaint hotline and process ethics complaints.



## 6. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Office & Commission

**Current:** Clark County government has neither a current Office of nor Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

**Proposed amendment:** Upon adoption by voters of this amendment, the county manager's office would begin the process to establishing a new Office or Department of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion as well as establish a new Commission on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion within a certain time frame.



## 7. Clarity/Consistency/Administrative Clean-up Provisions

2021 Ballot

### Proposed amendment:

- Provides for minor corrections and technical clarifications to the Charter.
- Directs the county's Redistricting Committee to avoid splitting of precincts by district boundaries in crafting the Redistricting Plan which occurs with each ten-year census.



# 2021 County Council Amendment Measures

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*General Election: November 2, 2021*

Resolutions passed by the County Council at their July 20, 2021 Meeting



## 8. Clarify language regarding procedures for processing initiative, mini-initiative and referendum petitions

2021 Ballot

If approved by the voters, the amendment would:

- Specify that the petition proposal must be filed with the Auditor;
- Clarify certain terms, such as “petition;”
- Specify when certain deadlines are triggered;
- Detail procedures for the Auditor to verify and canvass the names of the legal voters on the petition.





## 9. Change charter language regarding circumstances in which a proposed initiative or referendum applies exclusively to unincorporated Clark County

2021 Ballot

### Specifically:

- The individual filing the initiative or referendum must be a registered voter residing in unincorporated Clark County.
- Signatures gathered in support of the initiative or referendum must be from registered voters residing in Clark County.
- Only those registered voters residing in unincorporated Clark County would be eligible to vote on the initiative or referendum.



# Thank you!

## Comments and questions

Clark County Charter Review Commission

<https://clark.wa.gov/county-manager/charter-review-commission-overview>

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