

Charter Commission Feedback Session – Comment Form

Like It?			Charter Component (use space below to comment/suggest improvements)
Yes	No	Not Sure	
✓			Mayor – elected at-large (4-year term)
✓			Chief Administrative Officer reporting to mayor, to provide professional management support
	✓		60 member Town Council – combination of precinct representatives and at-large members
✓			Precinct Meetings with Councilors , at least quarterly, open to all residents
✓			Civic Engagement Officer (helps residents learn about opportunities to participate, and government to communicate better to residents)
✓			Annual Public Forums on budget, master plan, and schools
✓			Annual State-of-the-Town Address by mayor
✓			Monthly Update from Mayor to Residents (via email, web post, news column, etc.)
✓			Master Plan Adoption by Town Council , with citizen participation
		✓	“Participatory Budgeting” (residents suggest and vote on projects to fund through the capital budget, as in Cambridge)
		✓	Citizen Petition to Town Council – Council action discretionary

Like It?			Charter Component (use space below to comment/suggest improvements)
Yes	No	Not Sure	
		✓	Group Petition to Town Council – Council action required, with 50 signatures
	✓		Citizen Initiative – force town-wide vote on citizen proposal, with signatures from 5% of registered voters
	✓		Citizen Veto – force town-wide vote on whether to overturn Town Council vote, with signatures from 5% of registered voters
		✓	Citizen Recall of Elected Officials – with 15% of registered voters; no sooner than 9 months after elected
	✓		Term Limits on Elected Officials (tell us what limits you prefer, if any)
	✓		Public Campaign Supports – provide resources (webpage, newspaper space, etc.) to make it easier for candidates to get noticed without big money; publicize donors
✓			Runoff Elections or “Ranked-Choice Voting” to ensure majority vote for elected officials
✓			Early Voting offered for all local elections
✓			Voting by Mail offered for all local elections
			<i>[Your idea here]</i>
			<i>[Your idea here]</i>

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X			Mayor – elected at-large (4-year term)
X			Chief Administrative Officer reporting to mayor, to provide professional management support
	X		60 member Town Council – combination of precinct representatives and at-large members <i>60 members is far too large for a Council, and would reduce representation and effectiveness.</i>
		X	Precinct Meetings with Councilors , at least quarterly, open to all residents
		X	Civic Engagement Officer (helps residents learn about opportunities to participate, and government to communicate better to residents)
		X	Annual Public Forums on budget, master plan, and schools
		X	Annual State-of-the-Town Address by mayor
		X	Monthly Update from Mayor to Residents (via email, web post, news column, etc.)
X			Master Plan Adoption by Town Council , with citizen participation
	X		“Participatory Budgeting” (residents suggest and vote on projects to fund through the capital budget, as in Cambridge)
X			Citizen Petition to Town Council – Council action discretionary

Like It?			Charter Component (use space below to comment/suggest improvements)
Yes	No	Not Sure	
	X		Group Petition to Town Council – Council action required, with <u>50 signatures</u>
	X		Citizen Initiative – force town-wide vote on citizen proposal, with signatures from 5% of registered voters
	X		Citizen Veto – force town-wide vote on whether to overturn Town Council vote, with signatures from 5% of registered voters
		X	Citizen Recall of Elected Officials – with 15% of registered voters; no sooner than 9 months after elected
	X		Term Limits on Elected Officials (tell us what limits you prefer, if any) <i>The idea of term limits sounds good, but with actual competitive elections they would not be necessary.</i>
X			Public Campaign Supports – provide resources (webpage, newspaper space, etc.) to make it easier for candidates to get noticed without big money; publicize donors
X			Runoff Elections or “Ranked-Choice Voting” to ensure majority vote for elected officials
	X		Early Voting offered for all local elections
X			Voting by Mail offered for all local elections
			[Your idea here]
			[Your idea here]

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Yes	No	Not Sure	
X			Mayor – elected at-large (4-year term) An absolutely essential idea —
X			Chief Administrative Officer reporting to mayor, to provide professional management support a good idea.
	X		60 member Town Council – combination of precinct representatives and at-large members This is a TERRIBLE idea that will have every disadvantage of town meetings; no advantage of Council
	X		Precinct Meetings with Councilors, at least quarterly, open to all residents Electoral incentives should take care of this – no need to require.
	X		Civic Engagement Officer (helps residents learn about opportunities to participate, and government to communicate better to residents) Seems like a good idea, but why write it into law?
		X	Annual Public Forums on budget, master plan, and schools
	X		Annual State-of-the-Town Address by mayor Good idea, not necessary to make required.
	X		Monthly Update from Mayor to Residents (via email, web post, news column, etc.) Electoral incentives should take care of this; also, only the old use email (really).
		X	Master Plan Adoption by Town Council, with citizen participation
		X	“Participatory Budgeting” (residents suggest and vote on projects to fund through the capital budget, as in Cambridge)
			Citizen Petition to Town Council – Council action discretionary Fine

Like It?			Charter Component (use space below to comment/suggest improvements)
Yes	No	Not Sure	
	X		Group Petition to Town Council – Council action required, with 50 signatures
	X		Citizen Initiative – force town-wide vote on citizen proposal, with signatures from 5% of registered voters <i>No – too small a threshold, needs Council</i>
	X		Citizen Veto – force town-wide vote on whether to overturn Town Council vote, with signatures from 5% of registered voters
	X		Citizen Recall of Elected Officials – with 15% of registered voters; no sooner than 9 months after elected <i>No – too much instability</i>
	X		Term Limits on Elected Officials (tell us what limits you prefer, if any) <i>No – term limits reduce democratic accountability</i>
X			Public Campaign Supports – provide resources (webpage, newspaper space, etc.) to make it easier for candidates to get noticed without big money; publicize donors
X			Runoff Elections or “Ranked-Choice Voting” to ensure majority vote for elected officials <i>Yes to either – RCV is best</i>
X			Early Voting offered for all local elections
X			Voting by Mail offered for all local elections
X			[Your idea here] <i>7 – 13 member Town Council w/ 4 year terms</i>
X			[Your idea here] <i>Move town elections to November</i>

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		✓	Mayor – elected at-large (4-year term) <i>not sure about this without a check/ balance on a Mayor.</i>
✓			Chief Administrative Officer reporting to mayor, to provide professional management support <i>Definitely!!</i>
✓			60 member Town Council – combination of precinct representatives and at-large members <i>Good idea</i>
			Precinct Meetings with Councilors, at least quarterly, open to all residents <i>Good idea</i>
			Civic Engagement Officer (helps residents learn about opportunities to participate, and government to communicate better to residents) <i>?</i>
			Annual Public Forums on budget, master plan, and schools <i>yes</i>
✓			Annual State-of-the-Town Address by mayor
✓			Monthly Update from Mayor to Residents (via email, web post, news column, etc.)
✓			Master Plan Adoption by Town Council, with citizen participation
✓			“Participatory Budgeting” (residents suggest and vote on projects to fund through the capital budget, as in Cambridge)
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		✓	Term Limits on Elected Officials (tell us what limits you prefer, if any)
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✓			Early Voting offered for all local elections
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			[Your idea here]
			[Your idea here]

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I am not sure what we have is not working + therefore do we really need change?

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<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Mayor – elected at-large (4-year term) something like this
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Chief Administrative Officer reporting to mayor, to provide professional management support town manager
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		60 member Town Council – combination of precinct representatives and at-large members No!!!
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Precinct Meetings with Councilors , at least quarterly, open to all residents
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Civic Engagement Officer (helps residents learn about opportunities to participate, and government to communicate better to residents)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Annual Public Forums on budget, master plan, and schools
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Annual State-of-the-Town Address by mayor
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Monthly Update from Mayor to Residents (via email, web post, news column, etc.)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Master Plan Adoption by Town Council , with citizen participation ?
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		"Participatory Budgeting" (residents suggest and vote on projects to fund through the capital budget, as in Cambridge)
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Citizen Petition to Town Council – Council action discretionary ?

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			Runoff Elections or “Ranked-Choice Voting” to ensure majority vote for elected officials
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			<i>[Your idea here]</i>
			<i>[Your idea here]</i>

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	X		Mayor – elected at-large (4-year term)
X			Chief Administrative Officer reporting to mayor, to provide professional management support <i>instead of</i>
	X		60 member Town Council – combination of precinct representatives and at-large members
	X		Precinct Meetings with Councilors , at least quarterly, open to all residents
	X		Civic Engagement Officer (helps residents learn about opportunities to participate, and government to communicate better to residents) <i>waste of \$\$\$</i>
		X	Annual Public Forums on budget, master plan, and schools
		X	Annual State-of-the-Town Address by mayor
			Monthly Update from Mayor to Residents (via email, web post, news column, etc.)
	X		Master Plan Adoption by Town Council , with citizen participation
	X		“Participatory Budgeting” (residents suggest and vote on projects to fund through the capital budget, as in Cambridge)
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	X		Term Limits on Elected Officials (tell us what limits you prefer, if any)
	X		Public Campaign Supports – provide resources (webpage, newspaper space, etc.) to make it easier for candidates to get noticed without big money; publicize donors
	X		Runoff Elections or “Ranked-Choice Voting” to ensure majority vote for elected officials
X			Early Voting offered for all local elections
X			Voting by Mail offered for all local elections
			[Your idea here] <i>9-13 member Council; professional manager</i>
			[Your idea here]

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			<i>[Your idea here]</i>
			<i>[Your idea here]</i>

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✓			Chief Administrative Officer reporting to mayor, to provide professional management support
	X		60 member Town Council – combination of precinct representatives and at-large members <i>60 member is nothing but a truncated Town Meeting! Each precinct should elect no more than 2 council members!</i>
✓			Precinct Meetings with Councilors , at least quarterly, open to all residents
✓			Civic Engagement Officer (helps residents learn about opportunities to participate, and government to communicate better to residents)
✓			Annual Public Forums on budget, master plan, and schools
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			Runoff Elections or “ Ranked-Choice Voting ” to ensure majority vote for elected officials
✓			Early Voting offered for all local elections
			Voting by Mail offered for all local elections
			[Your idea here] <i>There should be a few at large Council seats</i>
			[Your idea here]

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X			Precinct Meetings with Councilors , at least quarterly, open to all residents
		X	Civic Engagement Officer (helps residents learn about opportunities to participate, and government to communicate better to residents)
X			Annual Public Forums on budget, master plan, and schools
		X	Annual State-of-the-Town Address by mayor
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		X	Public Campaign Supports – provide resources (webpage, newspaper space, etc.) to make it easier for candidates to get noticed without big money; publicize donors
*			Runoff Elections or “Ranked-Choice Voting” to ensure majority vote for elected officials
	X		Early Voting offered for all local elections
X			Voting by Mail offered for all local elections
			<i>[Your idea here]</i>
			<i>[Your idea here]</i>

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X			Chief Administrative Officer reporting to mayor, to provide professional management support
	X		60 member Town Council – combination of precinct representatives and at-large members <i>Too large to be functional. That will end up not be truly representative. Bring money in to process – 60 people spending money. I like 13 members.</i>
X			Precinct Meetings with Councilors, at least quarterly, open to all residents
X			Civic Engagement Officer (helps residents learn about opportunities to participate, and government to communicate better to residents)
X			Annual Public Forums on budget, master plan, and schools
X			Annual State-of-the-Town Address by mayor
X			Monthly Update from Mayor to Residents (via email, web post, news column, etc.)
X			Master Plan Adoption by Town Council, with citizen participation
		X	“Participatory Budgeting” (residents suggest and vote on projects to fund through the capital budget, as in Cambridge)
X			Citizen Petition to Town Council – Council action discretionary

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X			Citizen Veto – force town-wide vote on whether to overturn Town Council vote, with signatures from 5% of registered voters
X			Citizen Recall of Elected Officials – with 15% of registered voters; no sooner than 9 months after elected
		X	Term Limits on Elected Officials (tell us what limits you prefer, if any)
		X	Public Campaign Supports – provide resources (webpage, newspaper space, etc.) to make it easier for candidates to get noticed without big money; publicize donors
		X	Runoff Elections or “Ranked-Choice Voting” to ensure majority vote for elected officials
X			Early Voting offered for all local elections
X			Voting by Mail offered for all local elections
			[Your idea here] Mayor – chief admin officer – 13 member council
			[Your idea here]

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✓			Mayor – elected at-large (4-year term)
✓			Chief Administrative Officer reporting to mayor, to provide professional management support <i>Need for managing town employees + to see policy</i> → (Town Manager)
			60 member Town Council – combination of precinct representatives and at-large members <i>- Needs to meet regularly, 1/month not enough</i> <i>→ every other week minimal</i> <i>- Agenda is huge most of year</i>
✓			Precinct Meetings with Councilors , at least quarterly, open to all residents <i>Think there should be Council of 7 people</i> <i>Could be 1 from 10 precincts have now</i>
			Civic Engagement Officer (helps residents learn about opportunities to participate, and government to communicate better to residents) <i>Done by Select Bd now w/ Town Manager →</i>
✓			Annual Public Forums on budget, master plan, and schools
		✓	Annual State-of-the-Town Address by mayor <i>Might be</i>
✓			Monthly Update from Mayor to Residents (via email, web post, news column, etc.)
	✓		Master Plan Adoption by Town Council , with citizen participation <i>No. Too small group. Need broad participation or subcommittee</i>
	✓		"Participatory Budgeting" (residents suggest and vote on projects to fund through the capital budget, as in Cambridge) <i>Really terrible idea. "Residents" can be lobbied + create factions to block initiatives don't like to be determined by the long term benefit of the town</i>
✓			Citizen Petition to Town Council – Council action discretionary

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✓			Group Petition to Town Council – Council action required, with 50 signatures
		✓	Citizen Initiative – force town-wide vote on citizen proposal, with signatures from 5% of registered voters <i>TOO LOW BAR. 10-15% reg voters</i>
	✓		Citizen Veto – force town-wide vote on whether to overturn Town Council vote, with signatures from 5% of registered voters
		✓	Citizen Recall of Elected Officials – with 15% of registered voters; no sooner than 9 months after elected
✓	<i>not</i>		Term Limits on Elected Officials (tell us what limits you prefer, if any) <i>2, 3 year terms</i> <i>mayors 2, 4 year terms</i>
✓			Public Campaign Supports – provide resources (webpage, newspaper space, etc.) to make it easier for candidates to get noticed without big money; publicize donors
✓			Runoff Elections or “ Ranked-Choice Voting ” to ensure majority vote for elected officials
✓			Early Voting offered for all local elections
✓			Voting by Mail offered for all local elections
			[Your idea here] <i>Q. What would happen w/ committees -- Planning, Finance, Zoning?</i> <i>Q. " " " " other town committees -- who appoints? who votes?</i> <i>who supervises? etc.</i>
			[Your idea here]

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		X	Mayor – elected at-large (4-year term) <i>prefer strong prof. Town Manager</i>
X			Chief Administrative Officer <i>reporting to mayor, provide professional management support</i>
	X		60 member Town Council – combination of precinct representatives and at-large members <i>ridiculous + have you learned nothing from Tm's zoning refusals, DPW planning, the schools, the library? A negative cabal can more easily take over. Get prudent.</i>
X			Precinct Meetings with Councilors, at least quarterly, open to all residents
X			Civic Engagement Officer (helps residents learn about opportunities to participate, and government to communicate better to residents)
X			Annual Public Forums on budget, master plan, and schools
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		X	"Participatory Budgeting" (residents suggest and vote on projects to fund through the capital budget, as in Cambridge)
X			Citizen Petition to Town Council – Council action discretionary <i>Considered 9 Councilors + TM</i>

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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Term Limits on Elected Officials (tell us what limits you prefer, if any)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Public Campaign Supports – provide resources (webpage, newspaper space, etc.) to make it easier for candidates to get noticed without big money; publicize donors
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Runoff Elections or “Ranked-Choice Voting” to ensure majority vote for elected officials
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Early Voting offered for all local elections
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			Voting by Mail offered for all local elections
			<i>[Your idea here]</i>
			<i>[Your idea here]</i>

Send additional ideas/comments to the Charter Commission at charter@amherstma.gov