

Submission Date	First Name	Last Name	Address	City	State	Zip Code	Comment for the Charter Review Commission
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
1/22/2019 10:49	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I own 2 rental houses in the Berwyn neighborhood of College Park, so while I am not a current resident of College Park (though I did live there from 2001-2015), I have a heavy interest in the representation of College Park citizens, including my 9 tenants.</p> <p>I support a 4-year, staggered council term. I agree with the arguments that 2 years is simply too short to be brought up-to-speed on a lot of the issues, and institutional memory is lost with changeover. For example, 10 years ago, when Rent Stabilization was a hot topic, it would have been beneficial to have a 4-year staggered system so that at least half the council at any particular time would know the ins-and-outs of the saga.</p> <p>Since such a change would apply after the results of the next elections, it is clear that the current councilmembers would not be able to use this to extend their terms in a negative, power-grabbing way.</p> <p>Thanks, [REDACTED]</p>
1/28/2019 18:28	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Extend council and mayoral terms to 4 years and stagger the elections for council members. It's stupid to have 2-year terms.
2/1/2019 13:10	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	<p>I support this proposed change.</p> <p>I especially support the staggered terms. It's ridiculous that voters are expected to cast 2 votes for the same office with the risk that one vote could cancel out the other. Some people are driven to "bullet vote," throwing away one of their two votes to avoid their second vote cancelling out their first. People who cast both of their votes have more impact, but don't always help the candidates they mean to help. This undermines voters' confidence that the results truly reflect the will of the people. There are different ways this problem could be solved (ranked choice voting, for example), but staggered terms would solve it while giving us the added benefit of a more stable City Council focused on serving the city rather than campaigning for re-election.</p>

2/5/2019 19:01

[REDACTED]

I agree that reviewing the charter is a good way to ensure that it is keeping up with the needs of the city.

When considering a change of length of term, I think there are a few targets to focus on (in order of priority):

1. Allow citizens to have the final say on any changes to term or benefits for city council members
2. Not mixing national and city elections dates
3. Ensuring all communities (including students) are heard and have the power to influence policy
4. Allow council members to gain experience and maintain contact with their district.
5. Eliminate duplicate representation
6. Allow for healthy turnover
7. Convenience of city council members to reduce election efforts and costs

On the face of it, increasing the length of term for city council reduces democracy. It reduces the power of the vote, the responsiveness to the constituents, and the ability for the citizen to impact civic decision making frequently. Movements to change these things should be citizen-led.

Now is not the time to be reducing democracy, as the world and even in our own country there are efforts to limit citizen involvement, Let us take a strong look at the entire makeup of the council, and continue determining how we can bring more power to the people and increase responsiveness.

2/7/2019 10:45

[REDACTED]

I want to write to state my support for both proposals of prolonging the term of elected officials. I don't feel as strongly about staggering the terms. I feel very strongly that 2 year terms are simply too short for representatives to legislate in both the short and long-term interests of the community as a whole. By serving in the capacity of a council member for 4 years, the candidate/representative shows a commitment to the community that they will remain in the area for the allotted time and make decisions based on policy rather than on concerns for the next campaign. I feel very strongly that the current 2 year terms are too short and fully support increasing them to 4 years. Thank you.

2/8/2019 9:27

[REDACTED]

I support increasing the term limits to four years. For me, it is important to have leadership representing us who are immersed and invested in our wonderful neighborhood. Also, four year terms allow for involvement in longer-term projects without interruption and transfer of power.

I do not support staggered elections, since it drains resources every two years as policies are paused while election campaigns run. Four year terms that begin at the same time allow for a longer stretch when policy decisions can be made.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my thoughts.

2/8/2019 18:05

[REDACTED]

Here is my point of view:

-- any desired Charter amendment to extend to four-year term should also include term limits. No official should be permitted to serve more than a single four-year term.

-- the term limit would apply to the Mayor and every member of City Council.

-- currently-serving incumbents would NOT benefit from the Charter amendment. In other words, the clock would not start over for them if the amendment is adopted. They would simply serve out the remainder of their current terms and leave.

-- likewise, at the end of their current (pre-amendment) terms, currently-serving Mayor/Councilmembers would NOT be eligible to run again for four years.