

May 28, 2026

Mayor Steve Hogan

RE: Form of Government Committee and Future Process

Council:

The Workshop agenda for the Council meeting of June 1 includes presentation of the Form of Government Committee's report and findings. I wanted to share my thoughts on both the report and the process the Council should follow in deciding whether to place this issue before the public for a vote.

First, I want to thank the Committee for its hard work. Several members are individuals I have known and respected for many years, and we all appreciate their continued service to this community. Their steady guidance over the years has helped make Camas a great place to live, work, and play.

The initial process to explore this topic felt rushed. I was not approached regarding my thoughts on pursuing a potential change. Rather than addressing the matter as an added decision item at the March 2, 2026, Regular Council meeting, I proposed appointing a committee to review the issue and report back to Council, originally by June 1, though Council later revised that to May 4. To the Committee's credit, they requested additional time to complete their work and have done a good job presenting information to assist the Council. I view this report as a solid starting point in what should be a broader effort to engage the public before the Council makes an informed decision.

Following this workshop, I believe the Council should conduct a deeper review of the report and develop a list of questions and concerns. Future workshops could then focus on further discussion before taking any next steps related to public outreach, timing, and a formal public hearing process. I have advised Bryan Rachal that he may eventually be asked to help develop a public communications and input plan. This process must be comprehensive, open, and deliberative. In my opinion, and considering lessons learned from the pool bond measure, the City should avoid rushing this issue simply to place it on a ballot. I hope the Council agrees with that approach.

The Committee also suggested possible election dates should the Council decide to move forward. I would like the City Attorney to provide guidance on that topic as well. In my opinion, November 2026 is too soon, given the Council's workload on other significant matters. I would also ask Council to keep in mind that an affirmative vote would begin the process of transitioning away from the current structure, including the City Administrator's discharge and the Mayor's role being changed to a councilmember-only position. I would appreciate the opportunity to serve as much of my mayoral term as possible, honoring the trust placed in me by the citizens of Camas in the 2021 and 2023 elections.

There are clearly differing views on whether the City should consider changing its form of government. Camas has long operated under a structure that combines a strong mayor with a professional City Administrator approved by Council. I believe the City has been well served by this approach, and we can point with pride to many accomplishments over the years, including exceptional parks and open

spaces, strong EMS and police services, and a business environment that supports employment opportunities for residents. That legacy should not be overlooked as this discussion moves forward.

As Council considers whether to place this matter on a future ballot, I would ask members to reflect on the following questions:

1. Can you clearly identify the specific problems this change is intended to address?
2. Why is it important to begin considering this change now?
3. Is the Council committed to a comprehensive public outreach process before making any decision?
4. What are your impressions of what the public wants to see?

Again, I thank the Committee for completing its work and look forward to working with Council to ensure this process remains transparent, thoughtful, and informative.

  
Steve Hogan, Mayor