

#### CITY OF

## PORTLAND, OREGON

### OFFICE OF THE CITY AUDITOR

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# **MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** June 3, 2009

**To:** Mayor Sam Adams

Commissioner Nick Fish Commissioner Amanda Fritz Commissioner Randy Leonard Commissioner Dan Saltzman Linda Meng, City Attorney

**From:** Auditor LaVonne Griffin-Valade

**Re:** Verification of Street Renaming Petition

The purpose of this memo is to provide a summary of the street renaming petition verification process followed by the Auditor's Office during the current renaming initiative.

City Code Chapter 17.93 requires that street renaming applications include 2,500 signatures from legal residents of Portland. According to the City Attorney, a resident is someone who lives within the city of Portland and intends to make Portland their home.

The verification of street renaming petitions is not described in City Code or administrative rule, but in 2008, at the request of then Commissioner Adams, former City Auditor Gary Blackmer agreed to conduct the verification of street renaming petitions. City Council members accepted the process proposed by Auditor Blackmer and formalized in a 9/22/2008 memo. As agreed, the verification process would:

- verify residency, not signatures;
- verify no more than two batches of petition sheets;
- not include an appeal process; and
- use four data sources: PortlandMaps, DMV records, the voter roll, and public school records.
  - Note: As determined by the City Attorney, residents age 16 to 18 were eligible to sign street renaming petitions, prompting the use of public school records to verify residency.

The César E. Chávez Boulevard Committee submitted completed street renaming petition sheets to the City Auditor's Office in October 2008. After verification of the residency of a random sample of the first batch, the total number of valid records was 2,021. Additional petition sheets were submitted in January 2009. Auditor Blackmer determined that verifying this second batch using a random sample was consistent with the language of the 9/22/2008 memo to Council.

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Verification of the random sample from the second batch yielded 620 valid records. Adding the verification results of both batches together yielded a total valid number of 2,641. Public school records were not utilized for the second batch because the total number of valid records exceeded 2,641 after verifying to PortlandMaps, DMV records, and the voter roll. On June 2, 2009, Portland Public Schools reviewed the records from the second batch against their student database. This verification of residency resulted in an additional 30 valid petition records.

The updated calculations using City Auditor Blackmer's methodology are:

	Batch 1	Batch 2	<u>Total</u>
A. Total submitted petition lines	2,756	1,177	
B. Sample for validation	300	300	
C. Number deemed valid	220	188*	
D. Percent deemed valid (C / B)	73.3%	62.7%	
E. Estimated total valid (A x D)	2,021	738	2,759

<sup>\*</sup>Includes 30 verified residents from Portland Public Schools records

In addition, calculating an aggregate validity percentage with the additional records also results in a valid number of more than 2,500:

	Batch 1 & 2 Combined
A. Total submitted petition lines	3,933
B. Sample for validation	600
C. Number deemed valid	408*
D. Percent deemed valid (C / B)	68.0%
E. Estimated total valid (A x D)	2,674

### \*Includes 30 verified residents from Portland Public Schools records

If you have questions regarding the information presented in this memo, please feel free to contact the Auditor's Office. It is worth noting that this was the first time such a process has been undertaken by the City. It would be our goal to strengthen and standardize the petition verification procedures should they be needed in the future. The lessons learned from this initial effort provide us with opportunities to improve the process going forward.