

Enhanced Services District Audit Response

Survey Response Toolkit

Overview

In the wake of a [damning report from the Auditor](#) and under continued scrutiny and pressure from the public, the City of Portland's Office of Management and Finance (OMF) has released a survey soliciting "community input" on the future of Portland's Enhanced Services Districts (ESDs).

Shawn Campbell, the City's ESD coordinator, introduces [the survey](#) with an acknowledgment of the program's many failings, "including a lack of oversight and transparency, the need for guidelines to create and govern districts, and concerns about the use of private security to patrol public areas."

That's a lot to get wrong! Enough to justify halting the ESD program citywide, if not ending it once and for all!

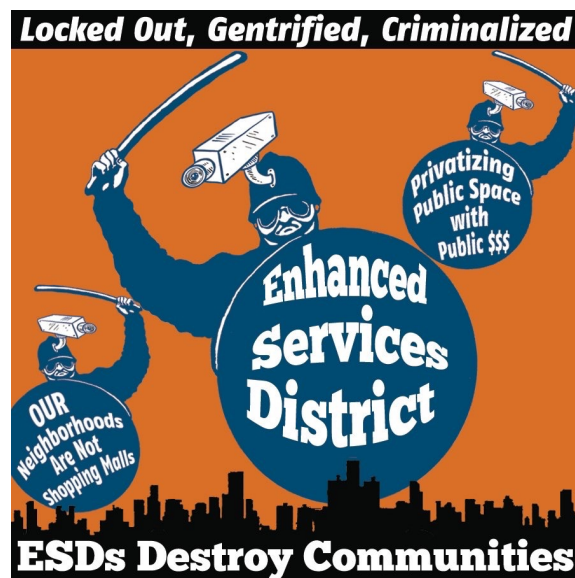
But the City says its ESDs are not on the chopping block. Instead, they're reconsidering the shape and governance of Portland's ESDs. For instance:

- Which "enhanced services" the program should support
- How hands-off the City should be
- Whether groups like renters, houseless residents, and advocates for the marginalized deserve a say in their management

Gesturing at the possibility of increased oversight *seems* like a promising step. As you move through the survey, however, you'll find that other, more fundamental questions arise. Questions like: Why can't the City provide these "enhanced services" itself? Which "community" are we talking about here?

These questions are pretty easy to answer, as it happens. [By the City's admission](#), the ESD program is driven by the concerns of "property and business owners." We've also learned that the Portland Business Alliance uses revenue collected through the Clean & Safe ESD to compensate its executives. In other words, Portland's ESDs exist to protect the interests of its wealthiest residents.

Which brings us back around to "community input." The community whose input this survey is looking for is the same set of investors, property developers, and landlords we see backing efforts to roll back tenant protections, criminalize houselessness, and give more power to the police. Spend an hour researching ESDs and you'll find that this program was designed to be convoluted and daunting to the rest of us. The survey gives the same impression: it's purpose-built to discourage our participation. **That being said, your participation is critical!** We created this sheet to help you navigate the process so more perspectives can be heard beyond that of Portland's wealthiest property owners.



Estimated survey completion time is about 1 - 1.5 hours.

What to Expect During the Survey

Most of the survey questions are on a scale of Strongly Agree → Strongly Disagree, and framed to lead you into “agreeing.” We go through each section with our recommendations. When in doubt, put neutral as your answer.

*The first questions ask you to rate your own expertise on each of the three ESDs and fess up to how much of the City’s ESD documentation you’ve actually read. A few months ago, we saw City Council filter public comments by political ideology, so it’s not unreasonable to suspect that the powers that be intend to downgrade responses from those of us who can’t say that we’ve read *everything* on the city’s ESD website.*

Second section discusses Governance. This will be especially tricky to fill out if you are opposed to the districts existing altogether. We recommend answering in a way that gives less decision-making power to the Portland Business Alliance and privileged parties, while also making it more difficult to hide what they are doing from the public. This may include strongly agreeing for unhoused/marginalized voices to be on the board, and making the board meetings public, etc.

Third section discusses Allowed Services. If you are opposed to ESDs existing altogether, we recommend answering Strongly Disagree to all of these questions, regardless of how they’re framed. If you want, answering Neutral is also helpful. In the final section you can explicitly state that these are services that should be provided by the city.

Fourth Section is about their Safety Programs. We recommend answering Strongly Disagree to any public safety services offered in the survey.

Fifth section discusses “Ratepayers”, people who are forced to pay into the ESD. If we are trying to reduce the power of ESDs, we recommend answering in a way that discourages anyone being forced to pay into it.

The last question is the only one where you can write in an answer. Use this space to add anything you want to address that isn’t addressed above or in the survey at all. This is also a good space to comment on why this survey is ineffective.

Additional Ways to Support

Tell the city about how inaccessible the surveys and listening sessions are!

→ Send an email to the program manager: *Shawn Campbell* shawn.campbell@portlandoregon.gov

→ Fill out this anonymous feedback survey: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/omf/81584>

→ Share social media posts from @stopsweepspdx on Instagram and Twitter

→ Join a [listening session](#)! They are all via Zoom, links below

- June 2nd - [Overview of the Audit Review Process](#)
- June 7th - [Governance](#)
- June 14th - [Allowable Programs](#)
- June 16th - [Focus Public Safety Programs](#)
- June 21st - [Focus Non-Public Safety Programs](#)
- June 28th - [Who Pays](#)

Check out our website for more information!

<https://www.endcleanandsafe.org>