

Amherst Charter Commission Members:

Andrew Churchill*, Chair

Tom Fricke

Meg Gage*

Nick Grabbe, Clerk

Mandi Jo Hanneke*, Vice Chair

Irv Rhodes*

Julia Rueschemeyer*

Diana Stein*

Gerry Weiss*

***Town Meeting members**

What is a Charter?

Foundational document of a city or town government

Some consider it the Constitution of a municipality

Municipalities also have bylaws or ordinances, which are subordinate to the charter

Timeline

March 29, 2016: Charter Commission elected

October, 2016: Collins Center began working with us

July 31, 2016: Preliminary report to state and community

September 29, 2016: Final report to state and community

March 27, 2018: Voters decide whether to adopt new form or stay with current form

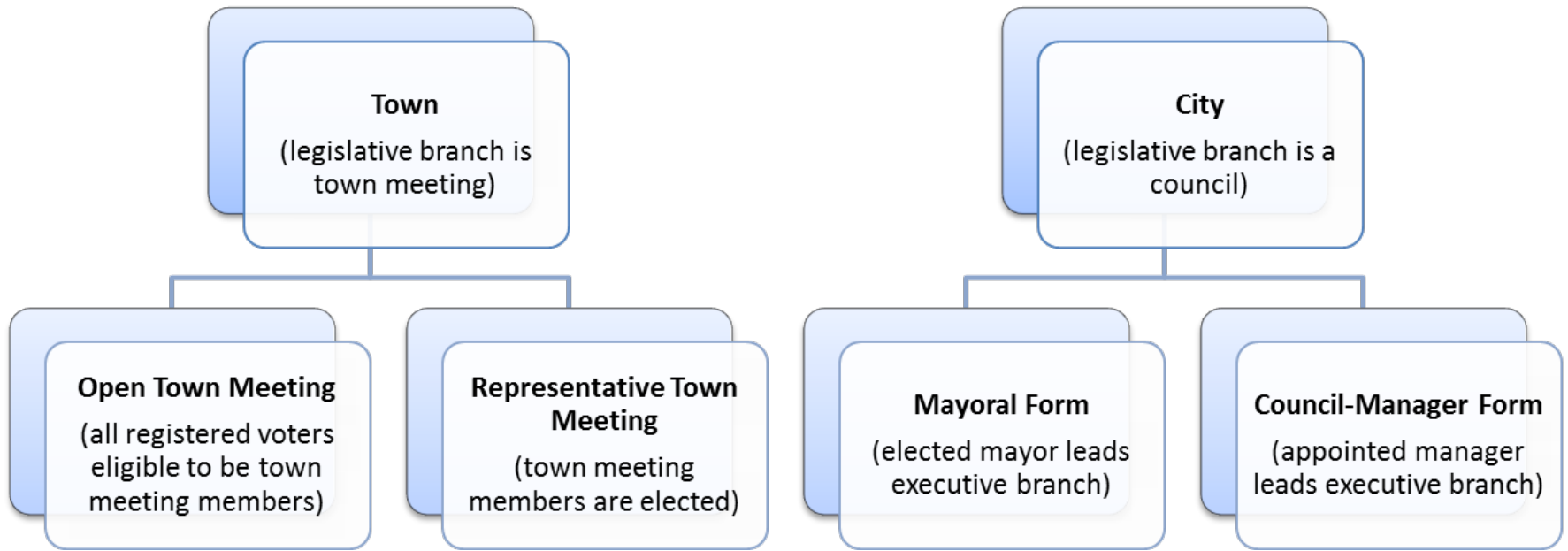
Public Input

- **37 Commission meetings to date**
- **11 other hearings, workshops, feedback sessions**
- **150+ in-person comments**
- **340+ written comments**
- **Website: amherstma.gov (click on Boards & Committees)**
- **Email: charter@amherstma.gov**

Values Gathered from Public Input

- **Citizen participation**
- **A clear voice for Amherst**
- **Representativeness (demographics and interests)**
- **Effective, deliberative, and efficient structures**
- **Accountability and transparency**
- **A culture of tolerance and respect**
- **Strategic and long-term planning**
- **Avoid big-money politics**

Major Decisions: Legislative and Executive



		Executive	
		Appointed Manager	Elected Mayor
Legislative	Open Town Meeting	Town form	
	Representative Town Meeting	Town form	
	Council	City* form	City* form

**Note that a town may continue to call itself a town, despite taking a city form. Approximately 20 Massachusetts cities are still called towns.*

Votes to Date

December 19th

- **5-4 vote for council form of government**
- **6-3 vote for mayor vs. manager as executive**

April 6th

- **5-4 vote for mayor, administrator reporting to mayor, and 60-person council**

April 24th

- **5-4 vote for mayor, administrator reporting to mayor, and 13-member council**

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Residents

Full-time

MAYOR

Council (13 members)

hires + fires
↓

Budget

Town Spokeswoman

Bylaws Approve budget

Committees

Manager / Town Administrator

Hire, fire supervise

Dept Heads

Key Elements

- **Mayor directly elected by voters**
- **Chief Administrative Officer, reporting to Mayor**
- **Council with 10 district reps and 3 at-large reps**
- **Neighborhood meetings with councilors, open to all**
- **Annual public forums on budget, master plan, schools**
- **Annual state-of-the-town address**
- **Citizen petition, initiative, veto, recall of officials**
- **Resident engagement officer**
- **Public campaign supports, to reduce barriers to running**