

ORDINANCE NO. 2025 – 070

AN ORDINANCE PROVIDING AN AMENDMENT TO THE CHARTER OF THE CITY OF KENT, OHIO TO BE SUBMITTED AT THE GENERAL ELECTION ON NOVEMBER 4, 2025, WHICH WILL AMEND ARTICLE VIII, SECTION 8.07 TITLED “CHARTER REVIEW” AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED by the Council of the City of Kent, Portage County, Ohio, two-thirds (2/3) of all members elected thereto concurring:

SECTION 1. That the question of the proposed amendment to the Charter of the City of Kent, Ohio, shall be submitted to the vote of the qualified electors of the City of Kent at the General Election to be held on November 4, 2025, at the regular places of voting in this City, during hours provided for by law. Such amendment being to amend Article VIII, Section 8.07, in the form set for in the ballot text appearing in Section 3 of this ordinance.

SECTION 2. That the ballots for said election shall, be entitled, with appropriate language for balloting to be determined by the Board of Elections.

SECTION 3. That the question be submitted on said ballot shall be as follows: Shall the Charter of the City of Kent, Ohio Article VIII, Section 8.07 titled “Charter Review” be amended by detailing the process for meetings of the Commission, as well as lowering the number of members from 15 to nine, and amending the review process to occur every five years instead of ten, and the proposed Section shall provide as follows:

8.07 CHARTER REVIEW:

Beginning in 2030 and every five (5) years thereafter, the Council shall appoint a Charter Review Commission to review the provisions of this Charter and make such recommendations to the Council for its amendment as the Commission may deem appropriate. The Commission shall consist of nine (9) residents of the Municipality—not holding any other elected or appointed office in the Municipality. Additionally, two (2) residents shall be selected as alternates. Council shall endeavor to select a Commission that is a diverse cross section of the City keeping in mind characteristics such as age, race, gender, ethnicity, sexual identity, and ward representation. The term of the Commission shall end immediately following Council’s final vote on the Commission’s recommended amendments.

The President Pro-Tem of Council shall be responsible for launching the Charter Review process in the October preceding the year in which the review is to occur. The President Pro-Tem shall direct the Clerk of Council to create and publish an application for prospective Commission members by September 1st of the year preceding the review year with a submission deadline of October 31st; the Clerk of Council shall collect all completed applications and make them available to every member of Council for their review. All nine members of the Commission shall be formally appointed by Council no later than November 30th preceding the review year.

At its initial organizational meeting, the Commission shall elect from among its members a Chair and Vice-Chair, who shall preside over its meetings. Following

the Commission's organizational meeting, the President Pro-Tem of Council shall work with the Chair and Vice-Chair to host an Introductory Meeting by February 1st of the review year that is open to the public and to which members of Council, city employees, and Charter Review Commissioners are invited. This meeting shall minimally provide information about the Charter, its role in governing the City, the Charter Review process, the roles of Commissioners, Council members, city employees, and members of the public throughout the process, and an established timeline. The Introductory Meeting shall be recorded and made publicly available no later than one week following its occurrence.

The Commission shall publicly meet at least once a month and shall provide an interim report of its progress to Council by April of the review year. During the Charter Review process, the Commission shall host at least one Town Hall meeting in addition to the Introductory Meeting to present proposed amendments and collect public feedback. All meetings shall be recorded and made publicly available no later than one week following its occurrence.

Following the second Town Hall meeting and no later than June 15th, the Commission shall report its final findings and recommendations to the Council. Upon receiving the Commission's report, Council shall publish it and consider its recommendations. Council may submit any proposed amendments to the electors in accordance with the Constitution and laws of the State of Ohio; should it submit proposed amendments to the electors, Council will appropriate the requisite funds for associated ballot expenses. The Council shall appropriate sufficient funds to the Commission for staff help, costs related to copying, meeting space, or other related administrative expenses.

SECTION 4. That the Clerk of this Council shall submit forthwith a certified copy of this ordinance to the Portage County Board of Elections.

SECTION 5. That the Board of Elections of Portage County shall cause an appropriate notice to be given of the election to be held on November 4, 2025, on the foregoing amendment to the Charter of this City and otherwise to provide for such election the manner provided by the general laws of the State of Ohio.

SECTION 6. That the Clerk of this Council shall cause the full text of this proposed Charter amendment to be published once a week for two (2) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in this City, with the first publication to be made at least fifteen (15) days prior to the General Election to be held November 4, 2025.

SECTION 7. That there is hereby appropriated from the general fund a sufficient sum of money to pay the cost of compliance with Section 6 above.

SECTION 8. That it is found and determined that all formal actions of this Council concerning and relating to the adoption of this Ordinance were adopted in an open meeting of this Council pursuant to ORC Section 121.22, and that all deliberations of this Council, and of any of its committees that resulted in such formal action, were in meetings open to the public in compliance with all legal requirements including Chapter 107 of the Codified Ordinances of the City of Kent.

SECTION 9. That this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, safety, and welfare of the residents of this City, for which reason and other reasons manifest to this Council this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force immediately after passage.

PASSED: 7/16/25
Date

Jerry T. Fiala
Jerry T. Fiala
Mayor and President of Council

EFFECTIVE: 7/14/25
Date

ATTEST: Kathleen Coleman
Kathleen Coleman
Clerk of Council

I, KATHLEEN COLEMAN, CLERK OF COUNCIL FOR THE CITY OF KENT, COUNTY OF PORTAGE, AND STATE OF OHIO, AND IN WHOSE CUSTODY THE ORIGINAL FILES AND RECORDS OF SAID COUNCIL ARE REQUIRED TO BE KEPT BY THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF OHIO, HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FOREGOING IS A TRUE AND EXACT COPY OF *ORDINANCE No. 2025-070*, ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF KENT ON July 16, 2025.

(SEAL)

Kathleen Coleman
KATHLEEN COLEMAN
CLERK OF COUNCIL