

PROPOSED

D4C Newspaper Guidelines

October 4, 2025

Mission

The purpose of our *District 4 Visions!* newspaper is to:

- Further the purposes of City Code 3.96, *i.e.*, to create “a framework by which the people of the City may effectively participate in civic affairs and work to improve the livability and character of their neighborhoods and the City.”
- Support the City’s public engagement programs as a conduit of information and ideas by: (1) providing information that promotes an active and informed District 4 community and (2) giving the community an effective voice on public policy and government initiatives.
- Support the mission and purposes of the D4 Coalition consistent with the Coalition’s contract with the City of Portland and the organization’s work plan.

The D4C newspaper does this by:

- Encouraging and supporting public engagement through the Coalition, its neighborhood associations, business associations and affiliated community-based non-profit organizations.
- Providing timely and relevant information – including the activities, policies and initiatives of the City of Portland and other local public bodies – to cultivate an informed citizenry.
- Providing a platform for member organizations to share their activities, meeting schedules and agendas, and views on matters important to the community.
- Engaging people to volunteer on activities that improve the livability of the community for all residents and businesses.
- Reflecting the diverse voices of our neighborhood through our stories, spotlights on important issues, and promoting community connection.

Editorial Policy & Guidelines

Editorial decisions are governed by a set of editorial policies and governance approved by the Coalition Board and overseen by the Board-level Communications committee. It is the responsibility of an Editorial Board to faithfully follow the approved Editorial Policy & Guidelines. (See also Operations & Governance section.)

Current editorial policies are as follows:

- Priority is given to neighborhood association reports, Coalition news, City government news, quarterly reports from D4 City Councilors, and articles on important community issues and events.
 - All submitted articles, with exceptions noted herein, are subject to standard copy-editing and compliance with these approved Editorial Policies & Guidelines.
 - Neighborhood association reports constitute a significant percentage – typically about half – of the monthly content.
 - Neighborhood association, business association and Coalition committee reports are limited to one page. Submitted items that exceed that size are subject to editing for length.
 - Coverage of our community partners, feature stories, events and other items are included on the basis of space available and importance to the community.
- Opinion pieces and letters to the editor are not allowed with the exception of positions taken by: (1) recognized neighborhood or business associations that are members or affiliated partners of the D4 Coalition, (2) the Coalition’s Board of Directors, (3) the Coalition president, (4) Board-level topical committees, and (5) District 4 elected officials, notwithstanding opinions of individuals or organizations as quoted in a news or information article.

- Each District 4 Councilor is allowed a column on a monthly rotating basis. Such items are copy-edited and proofed to journalistic standards, but otherwise the content will not be altered.
- Scheduled or routine columns or articles from outside individuals or organizations, including public agencies, other nonprofit organizations, special interest groups or individuals, will not be published without specific Editorial Board or governing committee approval. Such articles are subject to editing at the Editor's discretion.
- Standard published articles include the Coalition President's column, reports from the Executive Director, and news from the Westside Watershed Resource Center and Multnomah County Soil & Water Conservation District. These items are published in the Coalition News section of the newspaper.
- Articles promoting outside organizations and causes, particularly those primarily focused on appeals for membership or donations, will not be published. However, articles that provide information and links to organizations whose mission is supported by the Coalition will be considered for coverage.
- The newspaper will apply sound journalistic principles, including the values of accuracy, fairness, balance and relevance to the community, in its editorial content and decisions.
 - No plagiarism, hate speech or discriminatory content
 - No undisclosed sponsored content or promotions
 - Respect for privacy—seek consent before publishing personal stories or identifiable images
 - Be responsive to corrections and update stories transparently
 - Highlight diverse voices, especially underrepresented groups in the community
- Content that is accusatory, derogatory, demonstrably inaccurate, or contains personal attacks, vulgar or profane content, or defames any individual, organization or social class or identity will not be published.
 - The publication will avoid political agendas (or the appearance thereof). In keeping with ONI Standards, *D4C Voices!* will not publish endorsements for any candidate for public office or give special treatment or coverage to any individual who has registered as a candidate for public office. This includes 3rd-party endorsements. The same applies for ballot measures.
 - District 4 Councilors who file to run for re-election or for other elected public positions will continue to be allowed to have a quarterly column in the newspaper, but the content must be limited to their City Council functions and public issues. They may not solicit donations or ask for support for their candidacies.
- Paid advertising and sponsorships will be allowed based on an approved advertising policy and published rate schedule.
 - Such advertising or sponsorships shall not promote specific products or services but be on the organizational or corporate level.
- A average page limit of about 30 pages will be maintained unless an exception is authorized by the governing Coalition committee.

Operations & Governance

- *D4C Voices!* is published on the authority of the Coalition Board and overseen by a Board-level committee (*i.e.*, the Communications Committee).
 - The governing Board-level committee has general oversight responsibility with respect to the Board-approved Editorial Policy & Guidelines, but not on individual content or editorial decisions.
- Production, collection of news and information for the publication, *i.e.*, the preparation of articles, proofing and editing of submitted articles, inclusion of advertisements and/or paid sponsorships, and the design, assembly and distribution of *D4C Voices!* is the responsibility of the Editor and Editorial Board based on the approved Editorial Policy & Guidelines.
 - Solicitation of articles, writing, editing, proofing, layout, layout format and production, including the design, layout and output technology used, is the responsibility of the Editor and Editorial Board.

- Publication format, display, distribution and reader experience shall be approved and overseen by the Editor and Editorial Board.
- The current newspaper-layout publication format shall be maintained, and readers shall have access to both a scrollable PDF format as well as a web-based presentation.
- Social media platforms will be leveraged to promote readership and engagement. This will be done through promoting the content within each addition of the paper, as well as highlighting the neighborhoods and activities in District 4.
- Final issuance and content of transmittal materials will be reviewed and approved by the Editor prior to distribution.
- In consultation with the Editorial Board, the Editor has the final authority to make editorial decisions consistent with Editorial Policy & Guidelines adopted by the Coalition Board of Directors.
- Readership and subscription data and analysis should be reviewed by the Editor and Editorial Board, as well as the oversight committee and Coalition Board.
 - Editorial decisions based on readership and subscription data is the responsibility of the Editor and Editorial Board.

Editorial Board

The Editorial Board is a non-Board level committee. The Editorial Board includes a paid Editor, contract layout person and volunteers selected from throughout the Coalition community. Members are not appointed by the Coalition Board but are willing to serve in this capacity. Recruitment of Editorial Board members is the responsibility of the Editor and Editorial Board, or as determined by the Communications Committee.

- Leadership: The Editorial Board meets monthly and is chaired by the Editor.
- Purpose: Provide support and editorial guidance for each monthly issue.
- Membership: In addition to the Editor and volunteers who serve on the Editorial Board, the Coalition president and chair of the Communications Committee are members. The Executive Director and Coalition staff member(s) are encouraged to participate in Editorial Board meetings.
- Roles: Help with issue planning, proof-reading, gathering in neighborhood and D4C committee articles, being “eyes and ears” on what is happening in the community, taking photos as needed, observing editorial policies, helping develop the monthly content plan, and providing critiques of prior editions.
- Expectations: Attend the monthly Editorial Board meeting and be available to perform supportive tasks during the month.

Appendix

Structure and Contents

The Coalition newspaper typically is organized in five sections:

1. Lead Stories
2. Coalition News
3. City News
4. Neighborhood News
5. Community News & Events

Typical Contents

- Lead stories of District-wide interest
- A D4 Councilor's report each quarter
- A "Connect to Your City Councilors" box with links to our elected representatives
- Coalition President's report (monthly)
- Reports on Coalition programs, events and trainings
- Executive Director report (as desired)
- News from City government and other local governments and public agencies
- D4C committee reports, e.g., Transportation & Livability Committee and Public Safety Committee
- Reports from member neighborhood associations
- A community events page(s) and/or a calendar of monthly events
- Feature stories that help tell the story and values of our Coalition community

Key Features:

- Hyperlinks on the first page to each neighborhood report
- Hyperlinks and a list of leading articles at the bottom of the first page
- Hyperlinks to supplemental information in most articles
- Access to the live District 4 calendar

Distribution:

- Hosted on D4C website
 - Posted in a prominent place on the landing page
 - Subscription form and donation form on the first page of the website
- Pushed to subscribers via MailChimp with embedded links to key stories
 - Available in both scrollable PDF form or "flip page" format
 - Supplemented by social media touts
- Previous issues of the newspaper will be located on Coalition website in a scrollable PDF format
- Goal of 10,000 subscribers by the end of FY 2025-2026¹

Supplemental Revenue Sources:

- Corporate sponsorship of specific editions
- Partnering associations, public entities and small businesses sponsoring of editions
- Partner with retired community members who are performing community service and can contribute community dollars
- Neighborhood sponsorship of an edition
- Advertising of specific City Bureau initiatives, e.g., eliminating noxious weeds
- Corporate-level advertising

¹Potential approaches: (1) permanent link to the newspaper on all neighborhood websites, (2) sign-up link in neighborhood, business association and affiliated organizations' newsletters, (3) social media, (4) a link on District 4 City Councilor websites, and (5) promotion at Coalition activities and events.