

Navalny Hopes to Run for City Duma With People's Alliance

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Opposition leader Alexei Navalny and his supporters plan to field candidates in Moscow's 2014 City Duma elections, bringing further political diversity to a contest that is set to see billionaire politician Mikhail Prokhorov's Civil Platform party make its own bid for influence in the capital.

It is unclear which party Navalny's candidates would run with, but Sunday he said the People's Alliance party was "perhaps the most dynamic existing party" and certainly the "closest to him."

"I will definitely join. If they choose me, I will lead People's Alliance," Navalny said on radio station Ekho Moskvyy.

People's Alliance was formed in December 2012 by members of Navalny's anti-corruption fund. The party was denied registration by the government this year in what the anti-

corruption campaigner said was a result of his personal connection to it.

Navalny was nominated by the Parnas party to run in the Sept. 8 mayoral elections, garnering 27 percent of the vote to take second place behind winner Sergei Sobyenin, who received 51 percent.

If the People's Alliance is not registered, Navalny indicated that he might continue working with his "allies" in Parnas, which is a joint effort of the Party of People's Freedom and the Republican Party of Russia.

In selecting City Duma candidates, Navalny said a good model would be that adopted by the opposition's Coordination Council in the fall of 2012, when it held an Internet vote to elect leaders in an attempt to unite and revitalize political minorities.

"The most important thing about the Coordination Council was the elections themselves ... I think this system should be used, for example, in the formation of rosters to the Moscow City Duma, through primaries. Not just through appointment of some people, but through open voting," Navalny said.

As for the opposition's chances in the City Duma elections, he believes that last week's mayoral election set a vital precedent that will lead to improved voter turnout.

"It will be much easier for us to bring people to the elections, because they have already seen victory. They have seen a significant result," Navalny said.

About 32 percent of Muscovites cast ballots in the mayoral vote.

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