

David Linn

1-The next Portland City Council will be unlike any that we've ever experienced in the past. How should Council operate and what will Council need to accomplish in the next two years to make the new form of government as effective and respected as it can be?

People out in East Portland want to see tangible results from the homeless plans. There needs to be steady progress, with the council working as a team, instead of the constant finger pointing and blame game we have seen from the current council. As a school board member I know that if you want to pass a vote on an important issue, you need to do the work beforehand to educate your fellows and the community and be open to their input.

2-Current City Council members have suggested that we need to relax environmental and natural resource regulations in order to address the housing crisis. What is your perspective on this issue? What is your top natural resource and environmental priority?

The City Council needs to have a long term vision for the city and overcome obstacles to achieve. Many of the regulations may cost a little more upfront but save the city and its citizens in the long term. Toothless regulations and spineless vacillations just create uncertainty and a chaotic atmosphere which is far more detrimental to building affordable housing than some energy efficiency rules. We need to modernize City Government to be fully digital, increasing speed and availability, while at the same time reducing the cost of government.

3-Vehicles are Portland's largest source of emissions and continue to climb. For example, a number of cities have restricted downtown vehicle use. How should Council address this issue?

We can do far more to make public transit safe and desirable for Portlanders and especially to benefit the downtown core. Instead of thinking up disincentives to punish working class people, we need to do more to make people want to use alternative modes of transportation. That means making them easier and cheaper than driving. We are also living in a new world since Covid with up to 1 in 5 people working from home. We need to re-imagine the downtown core as well as our outer neighborhoods to be more walkable and economically diverse.

4-There are a number of new and recently built market rate apartment buildings listed for sale for under \$250,000 per unit. The Portland Housing Bureau is financing a number of affordable housing projects that are costing more than \$500,000 per unit. There are some extra costs associated with affordable housing financing and with building more 2BR and 3BR units, but not nearly enough to explain the difference.

What specifically would you do to more effectively use our limited resources for affordable housing?

Recent reports on Oregon's public housing system points to the complexity of the financing, managing multiple partners, and lost cost efficiencies, as the main cost drivers in affordable housing projects. We need to centralize authority in the housing bureau and give them the staff and expertise to streamline the financing and requirements from multiple government sources. Cut down on the number of city decision makers in the development team yet ensure coordination between city projects. We need someone involved at the highest level that is tasked with using all the leverage of a major city government to drive costs down, find efficiencies in scale, and hold everyone accountable to their contractual obligations.

5-Ireland used Citizen Assemblies to deal with difficult issues such as abortion.

Please watch this two minute video and let us know if you think Citizen Assemblies could help Portland come together

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dKSgPtnN0s0>

Whether you call them "Assemblies" or "Associations", we need to reinvigorate a system of neighborhood involvement that brings people together, informs them about their local government, and empowers them to make real changes in the plans that affect them and their families. My family has three generations of experience with Portland's "system" of neighborhood involvement, and I have spent the last 20 years serving the community and I can confirm it is broken. As the video shows, it is not just about giving people a say in their local government, it is about bringing citizens together to learn about each other and grow together.

We have let the differences between rich and poor neighborhoods turn us against the one city institution where every single person in the city can have a voice and join together with their neighbors to make positive changes. Neighborhood associations were never given the support, or the access to the city council, to attract a representative cross section of the community. The most support they received were in crafting "community visions" that were abandoned as soon as they were passed. Associations are only conveniently paraded out when a politician wants to exploit community fears to prevent a project. We can change that by finally taking a systemic approach.

The city should ensure that the neighborhood association is functioning in every single neighborhood and providing assistance to those that need it. Administer them with trained organizers to ensure they are welcoming and open to all Portlanders. Task them with a two-way communication between the city government and its people, and give them real things to vote on. It is also crucial that this must not be put in competition with the services provided by our many cultural community based organizations or the partnerships that make our hundreds of community events possible.

6-What is another City doing that Portland should replicate?

Estonia (the country) has made revolutionary changes in embracing technology to deliver government services, more efficiently and more cost-effectively. Their E-government system is leading Europe in innovation. Cities such as Los Angeles and San Diego are following that example and have been recognized as leaders for using technology to track homeless services and deliver government services with the qualities that people demand in the 21st century, such as transparency, accountability, efficiency, and equity.