

ONWARD OREGON QUESTIONNAIRE; REX BURKHOLDER FOR CITY COUNCIL

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?

There is great challenge and opportunity in the new Council structure. We will have 12 passionate people to work on issues from service delivery to addressing economic and environmental justice. They will be freed from day-to-day management of bureaus and able to focus on policy and how to allocate resources to implement those policies. The question is whether it will create the structure and working agreements necessary to act effectively. My many years of experience in building collaborative partnerships and guiding organizations, including the very similarly structured Metro Council, toward creating effective policy and decision making systems will be essential to the early success of this new model.

What is needed: Building trust among members; defining shared values and goals; creating systems that take advantage of the interests and expertise of the new Council; effective delegation of duties; and developing clear, transparent decision making pathways.

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?

I believe this is a false choice. The small cost of these regulations is dwarfed by the other costs of housing development – inflated land prices, cost of construction, financing costs, delays from poorly designed and implemented permitting.

Top natural resource and environmental priorities: reexamine water filtration plant; relocation of tank farms out of floodplain in N Portland; expanding tree cover; continuation of climate resilience investments and planning.

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?

First, we should revise planning and investment to create significant new housing in the downtown area in response to changing work patterns. Downtown is no longer the commuter destination it was. Even before this change, many downtown streets were mostly empty of traffic most hours of the day. This unused right of way is a great opportunity for redesign. Great cities have sidewalks triple the size of Portland's that could be used for outside dining, kiosks, plaza, etc.

A bigger issue we need to address is the amount of through traffic on the interstates including highly polluting trucks. We need to insist that legally mandated congestion pricing be instituted.

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?

I have to say that I can't address the cost difference between public and private development but it should provide learning opportunities for the public to improve its performance.

Other things the city can do re: housing is to redo zoning and permitting to remove unnecessary restrictions as well as to adopt form-based zoning, where projects are permitted by right if they conform to established guidelines. In addition, utilizing undeveloped publicly owned land (schools, water bureau, etc) would reduce costs by approximately one third,

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

Possibly. The video was very short on the mechanics of forming and running such an assembly. I participated in some similar work on transportation in the early 90s here in Portland.

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

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

There are many great ideas, both in the NW as well as around the country. Just a few examples:

Houston: individual focused support to homeless individuals. Cut homeless population by 60%

Columbus: office conversion to housing in downtown combined with investment in plazas and affordable housing transformed moribund city center into dynamic neighborhood.

Minneapolis, NY City and others: extensive bike infrastructure and traffic calming

Kansas City and Corvallis: Free transit