



2024 Portland City Elections Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to fill out United for Portland's candidate questionnaire. Any candidate seeking our endorsement or support must fill out this questionnaire.

The endorsement process and all responses will be made public on our website.

Please return this questionnaire via email to doug@moorestrategicconsulting.com. Please return it as a Microsoft Word document or as a PDF file by 8/30/24.

All questions are open-ended, and an opportunity to tell us about your thoughts on key issues facing our city, as well as discuss your leadership style. This will be shared on our website, and we ask that you take the time to tell us what you really think and what voters should know about you. There are no right answers to these questions, and we don't want you simply telling us what you think we want to hear.

If you need further information about any of the items covered in the questionnaire, please give United for Portland Executive Director Doug Moore a call at 503-729-5175 or email doug@moorestrategicconsulting.com.

Candidate Name: Rex Burkholder

Campaign Contact: Rex Burkholder

Phone #: 5033179037

Email: rex@rexforpdx.com

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rex Burkholder".

Candidate Signature:

(can be electronic or signed).

1. Do you want United for Portland's endorsement and support?
Yes

2. What's your approach to ending unsheltered homelessness in Portland?

Establish sufficient, simple, safe and secure night shelter beds for all. Those that refuse shelter should be asked to leave and cited if they refuse shelter. Create "resource centers" with coordinated assistance with housing, healthcare, training, and other services tracked to the individual.



3. How do we create housing sufficient to meet future needs, not just current needs? What mix of housing does that look like to you?

We have an incredible opportunity to create affordable housing opportunities throughout Portland with a few regulatory changes and creative use of public assets. More residents will boost our economy, send their children to the schools we've invested in upgrading, enjoy our parks, support local business, and bring vitality to our community.

- **Re-legalize a larger variety of homes, including apartments, throughout the city**
 - a. **Support efforts like the Inner Eastside for All campaign to re-legalize mid-size multi-dwelling buildings**
 - b. **Protect Historic Buildings instead of whole districts or neighborhoods**
- **Reduce building costs and streamline permitting**
 - a. **Reduce permit timelines and streamline process**
 - b. **Re-evaluate infrastructure charges**
- **Dedicate City / publicly-owned land for new housing**
 - a. **Consider using assets like Water Bureau land or city golf courses for housing**
 - b. **Partner with schools, churches, private landowners to turn parking lots into housing**
- **Improve zoning, building code, and infrastructure plans to utilize scarce space**

Portland also has four large areas in the Central City primed for redevelopment with eager partners that could house thousands of people: Lloyd Center, OMSI, Lower Albina, and the old downtown Post Office site. The City needs to be creative and flexible to take advantage of these opportunities.

4. When you think of public safety, what does that mean to you? What will you do to ensure public safety for all Portlanders as a member of the city council?

One of the most basic needs we have is to feel safe and secure in our community. Whether walking down the street, watching TV in your home, traveling on the bus or on the road in your car or on your bike – being able to live life without looking over your shoulder or holding your breath is one of the most important measures of a good life. We also want our children to be safe – at school, in the park, and on the street.

Safety and security is the interplay of many things: neighborliness, urban and street design, the consideration of other people, and, when this breaks down, having support available and appropriate to help repair what broke. If we have a medical emergency, does the ambulance arrive on time? If we have a crash or a fire, can we rely on the fire department? If we are threatened or offended against, will the police get there?

We have created complex systems to ensure we can live peacefully with others, to encourage and support good behavior and to hold accountable those who hurt others or themselves through their actions.



I've met with advocates for police accountability, police officers and their union, firefighters and their union, and supporters of the Portland Street Response project. They all support the vision of Portland as a safe and secure place to live and raise a family. Each also struggles with competing priorities and tight resources. And they all hope to have the trust of the community that they serve.

We also live with a history of discrimination, actions that we regret, and failed attempts to create a shared vision of community safety for everyone.

What Portland needs:

- A functional response to public camping, street crime, and drug use with measurable outcomes and accountability. We are finally moving in the right direction but more is needed. Individual-focused interventions to direct people living on the street to the services they need – housing, rehabilitation, mental health treatment, health care – is proven to work. Making sure diversion is meaningful and people are held accountable is an obvious first step.
- A holistic approach to safe communities. Currently, we treat the many components of community safety in a scattershot approach spread among many City bureaus and area governments. (See second paragraph above: we need Planning, Parks, and Transportation sitting down with Fire, Police, and Emergency Services)
- Resurrection and support of Neighborhood Associations. There will be three Councilors representing each Neighborhood Coalition's area, with District offices and staff, that could provide a jumpstart to creating real community engagement. Councilors could work with and support neighbors in building stronger connections, thereby bolstering our resilience, multiplying the benefits from our shared resources (eg, Parks and Schools), and building a sense of a shared future.
- Reward innovation and collaboration. We should be learning from other communities about what they are doing to build safe and secure communities. We should encourage those working to keep our communities safe to bring good ideas forward rather than engage in zero-sum politics that create resistance to new ideas. We need to be thinking "yes, and" rather than "no, we never did it that way."

5. What do you see as Portland's economic engine, and what do you believe it should be for the future?

I believe our economy is fueled by our ability to retain and attract talented people. Some of this is luck – our location in one of the most naturally rich and beautiful places in the world in a stable and rules-based nation. We also have plentiful fresh water, clean air, and are relatively well positioned in regard to climate change impacts. Along with our strong cultural, culinary, and civic offerings, we consistently attract more than our fair share of college educated younger people. We are challenged in keeping talent as our schools and higher education institutions struggle to offer the high level of education they need to prosper. Upping state levels of investment in our state universities and community colleges as well as preK-12 schools is critical.



6. Tell us about your leadership style. How will you work with constituents and interest groups? How are you going to address the inevitable disagreements in a brand new council of 12?

I am running specifically to offer my long and successful experience in bringing people together to take on tough problems and work together to craft and implement effective solutions. Whether on the numerous nonprofit boards I serve (and often chair) or on the Metro Council, I work with my colleagues to identify shared values and develop goals and outcomes that are then used to measure progress and to hold ourselves and staff accountable. Most conflicts arise around methods to address a problem and I find that we can reduce these if we begin by defining shared values and outcomes and then integrate various ideas on how best to solve a problem.

I am always open to dialogue with just about anyone. This is how I learn and I truly value the variety of perspectives one learns especially from those who are more versed or engaged in a particular issue area.

7. What would you do to align Portland's taxing and spending with our city's needs and values?

We have an incredible opportunity with the government reorganization to take a holistic overview of all City functions and responsibilities free of bureaus' singular and often myopic focus. We can look at needs and align resources to meet those needs rather than limit our response to artificially siloed resources streams. Eg, if we prioritizing fixing streets, we can redirect funds to this purpose rather than limit our investment to gas tax revenues alone.

8. Is there an issue, topic, or policy we didn't ask about, but is very important to you? If so, feel free to ask and answer your own question(s).

Portland has a pivotal role in leading the metro region and the state in addressing our challenges and improving the lives of our residents. Many decisions are made at other tables – Metro, the Legislature, Multnomah County, – where the City needs to be present and vocal about the needs and dreams of our residents.. School funding, university funding, mental health treatment gaps, tax reform, regional transportation and land use decisions – are often made without input from Portland, despite our outsized importance to the State and Region. We can't afford to be as inward focused nor as self-important as we have been. We need to be collaborative and supportive of others if we want them to be supportive of our goals.