



## 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](mailto: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](mailto:doug@moorestrategicconsulting.com).

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**Candidate Signature: (can be electronic or signed).**

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

Yes.

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

We need to get people off the street, and given the regional housing shortage, we cannot expect to get everyone into permanent homes in the near future. So that means there has to be major focus on shelters. I am encouraged by the success of the tiny house villages. We should encourage the county (which has all the money) to invest in those. You could buy 7,000 tiny houses for less than the regional homeless services tax brings in in a year. (I also like the fact the county is looking to buy hotels.)



Finding sites for the tiny house villages is challenging. But, as one city official pointed out to me, the city could treat it as more of a priority. So far that work has been done by political staff in City Hall. If it's priority, it should be professionalized; the city should hire a group of people with some qualifications to look for sites.

There are some large plots of city-owned land that should be evaluated as possible sites: golf courses. I have nothing against golf. But we do not have a golf crisis in Portland. We do have a homelessness crisis. And I spoke to a well-known and well-respected builder who said he could think of three publicly owned golf courses (I think it was two City-owned, one Metro-owned) worth looking at. (This was after a City Hall staffer had told me, "we looked at that, there's too many slopes." The builder said "I build on slopes all the time.")

Obviously tiny homes in golf courses will not be the entire solution to getting people off the street. But this is the kind of grunt work and analysis we need to be doing.

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?

It will be incredibly difficult. All I can do is identify some things we should be working on, but even if we do them all well, there is no guarantee we will get all the housing we need in anything remotely like a near-term time frame.

- Since housing investment dollars can go anywhere, we need to restore the perception (as well as the reality) of Portland as a good place to invest in. Having a national reputation as a city overrun with homeless camps and crime does not help. So cleaning up the city (and correcting some of the more extreme negative characterizations of the city) so we can attract investment is pretty important.
- I was the Council's first champion of allowing more "middle housing" in single-family zones, and I think we need to continue expanding the number of places multi-family housing (including apartments) are allowed.
- We need to smooth out the boom-and-bust funding cycle at BDS, which results in huge backlogs in the early stages of booms. I have heard that some developers would be willing to pay higher fees if some of the fees went into a kind of rainy day fund for BDS; that should be explored.
- Consolidating permitting will help. But I have heard from some developers that they have seen a disturbing culture change, over the years, in BDS. Where BDS officials used to say "there are a couple of reasons this doesn't work, but let's have a conversation about how it could work," now – I am told – they say "this doesn't work, come back when you've fixed it." I have not talked with BDS officials themselves about this, but if the picture is accurate, it is something we need to work on.



- We need to consider cutting and / or suspending some SDCs for quite some time. For example, parks SDCs alone add \$10,000 to the cost of a 750-square-foot unit. There are definitely places in Portland that could use more parks. But the City can't afford to maintain the parks we already have. And if housing is a priority, we need to think about whether taxing new housing is the best way to pay for new parks.
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?

I think of "public safety" as referring to at a minimum crime, the perception and fear of crime, traffic safety, and the work of the Fire Bureau – fighting fires, dealing with overdoses, etc. Among things I would do:

I am concerned about the drastic reduction in property crimes investigations. I realize patrol is a priority, but it sends a very bad signal to criminals, and is demoralizing to business owners and individual victims, to be burglarized three times in a few months (as a friend of mine's business was) and be told you can't expect any investigation. As we add back police officers, some of the positions should be for detectives specializing in property crime.

Dangerous driving has skyrocketed since the pandemic, and traffic deaths and injuries are at unacceptable levels. And that is not the only impact. Portland was a great bicycling city, which was good for the environment, for the health of the cyclists, and for other reasons – but many Portlanders have stopped cycling because too many automobile drivers seem to have gone insane.

Speeding is a major factor in dangerous driving, and there is a proven, cost-effective method of reducing speeding: speed cameras. Currently only about two dozen speed cameras are in operation in Portland. That is not enough. There are some state restrictions on where speed cameras should be installed, which should be removed, but I suspect we could reasonably have more cameras under existing law. I want Portland to be a city where, if you speed, you know that there is a very good chance that you will get caught. Because SPEED KILLS.

When it comes to gun violence, a Secretary of State survey turned up an odd fact: Multnomah County trails the rest of the state in using the "red flag law" to get guns out of the hands of people who are a danger to themselves or others. Deschutes County, by contrast, uses the tool A LOT. I have asked a few relevant officials why we trail the rest of the state, and have not gotten an answer. I suspect the answer is that there just never was the kind of effort put into educating and training police, and educating the general public, about the tool that there was in other jurisdictions. If that is true we should do something about it.

Another thing we can do is show appreciation for the police when they do well. I think there is likely something to the idea that police – like any other workers! – are happier and better at their jobs when they feel appreciated. (Yes, I know, people should do their jobs regardless of whether they feel appreciated – but people are, well, human!) So sure, I believe in police accountability; there should be no



tolerance for the use of excessive force. But when the police break up dangerous planned “street takeovers,” as they did a couple of weeks ago, we should applaud and honor that. And we should celebrate the huge strides they have made in recovering stolen cars.

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

Well, we have some specific employers that are pretty key to the region’s economy; if Nike and Intel went under, it would be a huge blow. But I think that the primary reason for Portland’s economic success in the not too distant past – as a city that does not have a bunch of Fortune 500 headquarters, nor a major university – was our quality of life. Talented people wanted to live here; businesses thought that locating here helped them attract talented people.

We have lost that advantage. I still think the quality of life here is pretty good; most of our neighborhoods and their town centers are as lovely as ever. But that is not the impression the rest of the country has. Until we can convince the rest of the country that Portland is not a hellhole dominated by homeless camps and crime, that impression will stay. Getting people off the street and into shelters, continuing efforts to reduce crime (which has already been reduced from two years ago) and making sure people know about it, are key to restoring that quality-of-life advantage.

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 listen to everyone, am respectful of everyone, look for common ground, am honest about disagreements, and don’t overpromise. An example of my leadership style is the shuttle diplomacy I did between the business community – which was very focused on street repair – and community activists – who were focused on traffic safety projects – when I was designing the gas tax and preparing for the campaign in 2016. After many separate meetings, I brought representatives of both groups together in a room. They were able to appreciate each other’s perspectives and strongly supported the balanced package we put forward.

One way to weather the inevitable disagreements is to ensure they don’t become personal, and one way to do that is to forge some personal relationships. To give a silly example: I discovered that two other candidates share my love of goats. I suggested that we forge “goat caucus,” and put out a press release announcing it. We took pictures of the group of us with goats and we did send out that press release. Nobody used the press release, of course, but it was a nice bonding exercise.

One thing I plan to do is make chocolate chip cookies for the rest of the Council on a regular basis. I make excellent chocolate chip cookies.

I personally think that the disagreements in a council of 12 will be easier to deal with than disagreements in a council of 4. If there are only four or five of you, even if you like each other – and I liked all of the my fellow Commissioners and the Mayor – you tend to get on each other’s



nerves. And I think that will be less of a problem in a council of 12. For one thing, losing a 7-5 vote will inherently seem less personal than losing a 3-2 vote.

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

I don't mean to sound flip, but who is defining needs and whose values are we talking about? I don't think the city general fund is being spent on wasteful things that are out of line with the city's values. As you know, the general fund mostly goes to police, fire and parks; a lot of people agree that we need more police, the Fire Bureau remains underfunded, and the parks are falling apart. So does that mean we should raise taxes to address those needs? I don't think there's much appetite for that. As to PBOT, the streets are also falling apart, because of 30 years of complete neglect; my 10 cent gas tax, as I said at the time, slowed the bleeding a little, but didn't stop it. I would guess that having a functioning system of streets is a "value," but I do not at this point know what the path is to getting the \$4.4 billion needed to address the maintenance backlog.

I realize this might sound Pollyannish, and like Barbara Roberts' "conversation with Oregon," but I would like to make a real effort to educate Portlanders on the city budget and try to find out how Portlanders themselves feel about how to align values, needs, taxes and spending when they have a better idea of what the choices are.

Two fiscal policies we might explore are:

- (1) Trying to reduce the parks maintenance backlog by recruiting philanthropists to effectively take over the maintenance of iconic parks like Forest Park, as New York City has done with Central Park.
- (2) Lobbying the Legislature to send a measure to the voters amending Measure 50, which, by tying assessed value to 1996 values, provides a ridiculous subsidy to homeowners in parts of town – especially inner Northeast – that have drastically gentrified since then. I suspect that a rule that - for example - no property can be assessed at less than 35% of its real market value would mean significant revenue for Portland.

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).

You did not ask directly about the City-County relationship, which is obviously very important. I hope that as a City Councilor, I can be supportive of my Commissioner, Julia Brim-Edwards (who has endorsed me), and we can work together to advance a common vision on issues like homelessness, public safety and addiction.