

Mayor Sam Adams

BY ISRAEL BAYER
STAFF WRITER

Mayor Sam Adams reflects on his time at City Hall and Portland's future

Mayor Sam Adams has spent the majority of his life serving the City of Portland. Love him or not, Adams has helped build a foundation for Portland that will last well into the future. Street Roots recently sat down with Mayor Sam Adams for an in-depth, hour-long discussion about his leadership style, technology, poverty, cycling, the police and the future of the city we love.

Israel Bayer: *What more are you working on through the end of your term?*

Sam Adams: There is a lot. What probably is less known to most folks is that a lot of the projects that my team and I work on take years to come to fruition. Between now and the end of the year there is a lot on the docket because there has been a lot in the hopper for the past three or four years. This includes everything from coming up with a good, solid, meaningful plan to improve the Portland Police Bureau with the Department of Justice Civil Rights Division findings, to getting council approval to make it exponentially cheaper

for folks who live on gravel or dirt roads in the city to be able to pave their streets. Those are two bookends, but they are big issues, and there is a lot in between.

I.B.: *Portland continues to reinvent itself. Where do you see Portland in the next 50-years?*

S.A.: We've had a chance to put our fingerprints on the next 25 years with the Portland Plan. Portland has to become more prosperous. The strength of our economy does not match, for example, our quality of life. We have to become a more successful and stronger economy.

In the four years that I've been mayor, we went from losing 25,000 jobs a month in the region to being declared by Forbes Magazine, two weeks ago, as one of the top 10 hottest places for job creation. We still have a long way to go.

In the next 50 years we have to be one of the best-educated cities on the planet. For the same reason we need to be scrappier and economically viable, we need to be the inventors of products and services that people want to buy around the globe. You don't have to go to college, but you do have to have a skill that people find valuable enough to pay you for.

We have to be healthier. This is a city, if you look at the numbers, that has the top-strata of Portlanders who are healthier than the nation as a whole. The bottom half is sicker than the average ill person in the United States. We have two cities when we talk about health.

We have to become a global city concerning equal opportunity. For several reasons, not only is it the moral and ethical thing to do, it matches our stated values to be a city that is equitable.

Right now, compared to Seattleites of color and San Franciscans of color, Portlanders of color are in a worse place today than they were 10 years ago, economically. We have made improvements in education, but economically, things have gotten worse.

If the issue of equity doesn't move people on a moral basis, it should move you on an economic basis. We have to be one of the smallest, scrappiest cities in the nation to be successful. We are the 29th largest city in the United States. We have to fight above our weight class. We doubled our exports in the last 10 years. We are going to double our international exports in the next five years. No one is going to think of us an international city if

See Adams, page 10

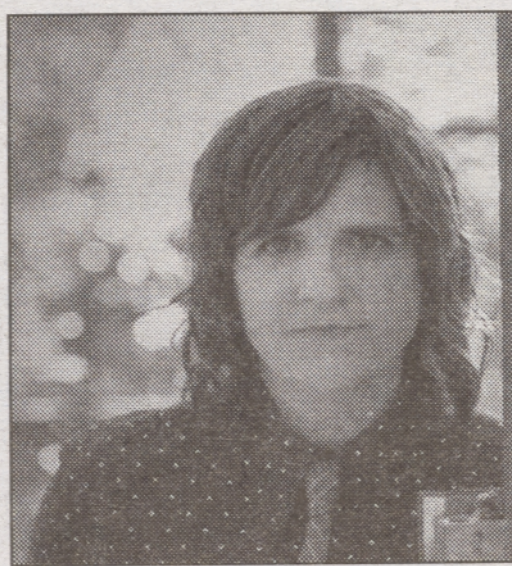
Inside



Vote!

Street Roots asks local candidates housing questions

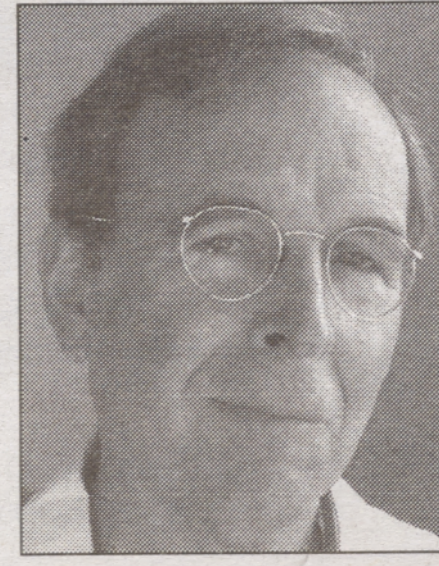
Page 4



Indigo Girl

Amy Ray talks about her career and advocacy

Page 8



Health care

Dr. Samuel Metz continues a series on health care reform

Page 14