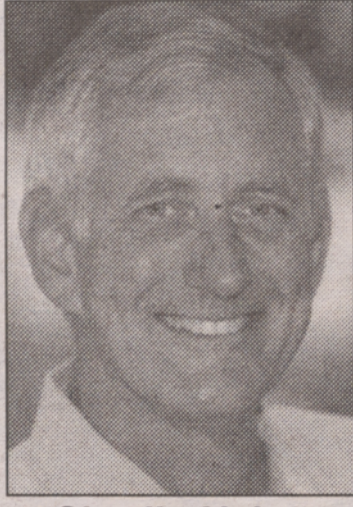


Candidates talk on housing and human services

1. In your first term, what will your top priority be with respect to housing and how will you accomplish this?



Charlie Hales

I will continue the Council's affirmation of the 30% housing set-aside from urban renewal districts. Since 2006, this mechanism has generated more than \$152 million in direct investment to affordable housing, and it's led to funding for successes like the Bud Clark Commons, Block 49 veterans housing and others.

Additionally, I will oversee implementation of Commissioner Fish's budget note from this past year's budget, converting one-time housing general fund dollars into ongoing dollars over the next two years. Our residents should feel confident in having choices in housing, and I will work to provide funding to allow for those choices.



Amanda Fritz

My top priority in my second term will be providing more coordination of services for vulnerable people, particularly Portlanders struggling with mental illnesses, drug and alcohol addictions, and homelessness. Advocates for affordable housing know what to expect from me after one term on the City Council.

I will continue to support Commissioner Fish and Commissioner Deborah Kafoury at Multnomah County as they lead crucial work on the full range of housing needs.

My areas of special expertise are planning and zoning, and mental health care service coordination. I helped update the tax abatement program and the maps of eligible areas where affordable housing incentives are needed. I worked in psychiatry at OHSU for 22 years, and I have been improving the 9-1-1 dispatch system in my first term.

The system has significant gaps, which the city is now responsible for fixing due to the Department of Justice mandate regarding unconstitutional actions by Portland police officers against people experiencing mental illness. If re-elected, I will continue pushing to create a seamless system of services between the City, County, Home Forward, non-profits, and agencies including Portland Police, Portland Fire & Rescue and mental health care providers.



Jefferson Smith

Far too many people in our city struggle to find a decent place to live. Safe, decent and stable housing is a cornerstone of a healthy society, yet close to 5,000 people experience homelessness in Portland, while many more are displaced from their neighborhoods. We can do something about that.

My top priority will be to work to establish a significant permanent source of funding for housing, like a housing bond. We can provide thousands of construction jobs, and make safe, decent housing available for seniors, people on disability and other low-income people. It won't be easy, and we'll have to make a case to the voters, but I think it's a campaign we can win.



Mary Nolan

My top priority is access to safe, appropriate and affordable housing at all income levels with an emphasis on preserving existing housing. This includes efforts to prevent any further foreclosures and give homeowners an opportunity to protect their housing and the investment they have made in their homes.

The recession has been hard on Portland families, but the city can assure that civil rights of homeowners are protected.

Individually as a city commissioner I will use my relationships with the lending community to make sure they respect the human needs for housing and the authentic efforts of homeowners to meet their obligations and make sure families are not forced out onto the street. This also includes supporting the Portland Housing Bureau in participating with non-profits, lenders and the state.

Street Roots, Oregon Opportunity Network, JOIN, Community Alliance of Tenants and 211info in partnership with the Portland Community College recently held a candidates forum. More than 150 people attended.

The candidates were asked the following questions ahead of the forum.

2. What are the revenue and policy priorities that you will work for at the state and federal levels to increase access to affordable housing and human services?

Charlie Hales: At the state level the city will work to support and advocate for Representative Kotek's Housing Choice Act of 2013. Ending Section 8 voucher discrimination would work to create more housing choices for Portland residents. But that's only part of the battle, without funding, affordable housing remains mythical. I will direct the city government relations team to advocate for more funding from the legislature so that we can provide more choices for more Portlanders. I will also work with our congressional delegation to provide tax abatements to those whose houses have been overvalued on their tax bills, but undervalued by the downturn in the housing market.

Jefferson Smith: I'll start with a holistic approach. Take inventory of the resources going to homelessness and housing, from all major sources. Get a good sense of where services and housing are provided. Envision the ideal set of services and structures with an eye to those resources. Then work with the housing community to focus the resources toward that vision, working for ever better alignment with the county, and not taking Federal limitations on dedicated funding as concrete givens (we can work with our Congressional delegation on waivers)

I'll push to overturn the ban on inclusionary zoning, a practice that allows cities to require developers to include affordable units. The developers pushed for a statewide ban, and Oregon is one of only two states that prohibit local governments from creating inclusionary zoning practices. We need better ways to allow for affordable housing improvements without being limited to tax credits or statewide subsidies that we can't afford.

We should also look regionally. Metro developed a regional housing strategy a decade ago, but Portland carries much of the weight. With leadership we will bring in partners for regional solutions.

Amanda Fritz: We need more money from the federal and state governments. I am open to considering all viable options. In my first term, I established a regular annual process where community members participate in setting the City's federal and state legislative priorities. Affordable housing advocates attended the two community input sessions this summer, and gave many great suggestions for improvements. I will continue to coordinate joint lobbying on shared priorities when re-elected.

Mary Nolan: In the legislature, both as co-chair of the Budget Committee and as House majority leader, I prioritized both direct services from Oregon Housing and Community Services and funding for preserving and expanding affordable housing options.

My working relationships with key state leaders have been built up and deepened over the last 12 years. I have strong working relationships with six of our seven congressional delegates, including having worked directly on affordable housing and social services with three of them as colleagues in the legislature. I will use those relationships to help provide ongoing funding.

To address human services, I was a lead negotiator for expanding funding for the Healthy Kids program, expanded funding to provide assisted living and foster care services for senior and disabled Oregonians, and for measures that preserved human services during the deepest part of the recession.

I am also opposing Measure 79 that would embed in the constitution the prohibition of real estate transfer taxes because I feel local communities should be able to access that revenue source and others to protect their local affordable housing program.

See Candidate, page 5

Many thanks to all of our volunteers who contribute your time and energy towards Street Roots!