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time it takes to get affordable housing online. We can move affordability to the front of the line. My view is, in a perfect world, if somebody comes forward and says I want to bring workforce and affordable housing to Portland, Oregon, I want to roll out the red carpet; I want to eliminate as much as possible. I want to speed up the process for building affordable housing as much as possible.

I.B.: *Talk to us about tenant rights and what the city of Portland can accomplish and what the Oregon Legislature needs to do.*

T.W.: What I can tell you is we are looking at a tenant bill of rights platform that includes a just eviction process, which the city doesn't currently have. That would be in support of the efforts that are currently happening in Salem to lift the pre-emption of a just eviction process for the city of Portland.

I.B.: *What are the next steps in regulating the short-term-rental market? Are we getting it right?*

T.W.: No, we're not getting it right. I have had a number of meetings with the Airbnb folks in particular. They're at the bleeding edge of this issue, whether they want to be or not. But, clearly, there's not enough enforcement of the city's existing short-term-rental policies, and it may be the case that we need to take a look at a different set of strategies. Other cities seem to have formulas that work. For whatever reason, the enforcement mechanism for the city's policy isn't working. I'm in the process of evaluating what other cities have done, and I may come back to our City Council and ask us to adopt a different strategy with regard to Airbnb and short-term rentals.

I.B.: *Are there other revenue sources for affordable housing that you're exploring. Where are we going to get the cold, hard cash to invest in more affordable housing?*

T.W.: There will always be a revenue question. I can't deny that among my fellow commissioners we are having what I would describe as quiet conversations about revenue for affordable housing. My top priority right now is a just-cause eviction policy and making sure that the 15,000 units that are currently in the supply chain actually get built and that the city step up and do more to get affordable housing in particular online. It's got to move to the front of the line. We've got to treat it like the crisis that it is.

I.B.: *How do you see your relationship with law enforcement and people on the streets?*

T.W.: Could you be more specific when you say law enforcement and people on the streets?

I.B.: *I'll cut to the chase; do you see yourself leading ...*

T.W.: Am I going to criminalize homelessness?

I.B.: *That's what I'm going to ask.*

T.W.: No. Listen, you and your readers certainly know this – homelessness is almost a ridiculous term because it covers so many different circumstances and situations that require separate interventions. It's the term we give to all of urban America's societal ills, right?

There is no one easy solution. I have spent enough time walking the streets, even this week, talking to people who don't want to be on the street. They don't want to be there. I don't want them there either. We need humane alternatives to people living on the street, and we need those alternatives pronto. We also need more opportunities to get people the support they

T.W.: We have struggled as a city to get regional collaboration around the homeless issue. Life is much simpler if you don't own the problem, and in the city of Portland, homelessness is very visible. Therefore, we own the problem. People understand it is a complex, expensive problem to solve.

I am actually happy that there are more regional conversations on this issue and others, and I was pleased to see Clackamas County begin to really step up their outreach around homelessness. They've hired a director of homeless services. Marc Jolin, who is the director of our joint office between the city and the county has been building regional partnerships as well.



PHOTO BY JOE GLODE

need to get off the streets. For some people, it's a job; for other people, it's transportation; for others, still, it might be drug or alcohol treatment or mental health services.

We also need to acknowledge we will probably never in the near term have the resources that we need to end homelessness. This country does not value community-based mental health services; we just don't, and we should call it out and own it. Therefore, we will not have the capacity to address the mental-health need, and on top of that, when we look at the resurgent heroin and opiate epidemic, the meth problem – we're going to be living with homelessness in this community for a long time. So the question isn't how do we enforce the homeless away; the question is how do we support and build the services necessary to help people in a humane way. That's the challenge, and as you know, there's no easy solution.

I.B.: *People say Portland is a homeless mecca, which is a complex argument. On one hand, we know every urban environment on the West Coast is experiencing a housing and homeless crisis. We know people aren't moving to Portland en masse to be homeless and live off of services. At the same time, Portland and Multnomah County are holding the water for the region when it comes to providing services. It's true that if you find yourself homeless in the suburbs, some of your only options are to access services in Multnomah County. How will you work to motivate regional partners to step up their game when it comes to affordable housing and homeless services?*

I was elected as a regional mayor, and I intend to continue to push these issues when we are talking about economic development, housing and transportation. For me, it's just continuing to push the message about the facts. To your first point, the fact of the matter is every city on the West Coast of any size has a massive homelessness problem. We are not the only city that has it, and other cities I would argue have even worse circumstances. It all has to do with housing affordability and our inability to provide enough of the kind of services that people need to get off of the streets. I would like to think the public is beginning to better understand this. I'm feeling less pressure from people who say, "Portland has some unique Portland problem." I'm not hearing that anymore, whereas a year ago I was hearing that all the time.

I.B.: *Staying on the topic of the region and homelessness, Metro talks a big game about affordable housing but has done virtually nothing to create affordable housing in the region. It's one excuse after another. What gives?*

T.W.: So Metro is a really geeky government, and I say that in a positive sense. They are transportation planners, and they are urban planners. All of those things lead to the question of housing affordability. Where is the housing? How affordable is it? For whom? And where is it located in terms of economic opportunity? This, of course, gets to the question of people having the education and skills they need to be employed for jobs that actually

pay enough that you can afford to live here.

Where I'd like Metro and the city of Portland and Multnomah County and everybody else to continue to go is to also address the racial disparity question. I'm sure you've seen the chart that shows that there is no ZIP code in the city of Portland that is affordable to African-American families of median income. That's disgusting to me. I mean, that is a completely unacceptable statistic. I hope that Metro doesn't just talk about where roads should be built and where communities should be built, but who can afford to live in them, where they are located and where are the jobs that go with that housing. I get to sit at the regional table. We have representation on both the planning side and the transportation side, and I intend to be aggressive on both.

I.B.: *When you think about transportation planning, when the community is doing any kind of big project – a bridge, a new train line, whatever it might be – there is an environmental impact study that determines a formula that says we have to do XYZ to mitigate whatever environmental impact that project might create. Do you think that that same kind of policy should apply to housing?*

T.W.: Absolutely it should. Understanding now that development impacts housing prices. We should both be understanding what the impact is on housing prices in communities where we are doing development. We should be making sure that the economic benefits of those developments are staying in the communities that are impacted by that development. That's a fancy way of saying, let's make sure that more people have access to housing and jobs that are associated with those developments. That may mean proactive job training and skills development in addition to supporting local contractors. It may mean additional investments in housing.

I.B.: *What's going to happen to Right 2 Dream Too?*

T.W.: I don't have an answer. I've watched the city spend \$800,000 in four years and get zero results. I can't sit here and say and tell you I have a solution. Saying that, Right 2 Dream Too has done a great job of self-governance and creating standards for themselves. They are inspiring organization. Real estate options are limited. I don't know the answer today.

I.B.: *In many ways, you have a dream team at City Hall with all of the other commissioners either caring deeply about housing or having the experience of overseeing the Housing Bureau. How do you take that collective energy and expertise and move in the same direction?*

T.W.: I ran into a fellow that told me this morning "I don't believe anything you say. I will believe everything you do." I think that's the best answer that I can give. Watch what we do. I can tell you generally speaking that the team we have here is a highly motivated team that you're going to see some great things on housing come out of this City Council, and you're not going to have to wait very long.