

Portland Talks: What's the most important political issue facing Oregon?

BY ERIC SWEGER
STREET ROOTS VENDOR

Editor's Note: Street Roots Vendor Eric Sweger wanted to know what readers considered the most important political issue facing Oregon and what advice they would give to those in charge. Here are the responses he received:

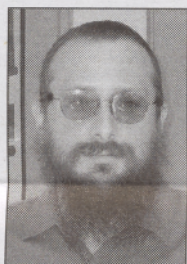


Misha

Misha: "Right now, I am really salty about all of the redevelopment happening. I really did not feel that our neighborhood needed a building full of tiny offices, and now we have like three or four of them popping up. Ask the people in the

neighborhood what they want before you start getting all of these development permits. We need housing around here, we need parking. We don't need another reason for another million go-bots to come down here and swarm the place."

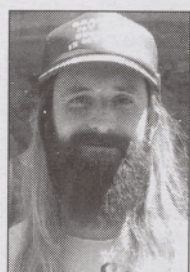
Jason: "Probably unemployment. There are a lot of things: unemployment, housing, taxes. Change zoning laws, reduce taxes, make low income housing. For every new apartment built there should also be



Jason

affordable housing built. For one luxury apartment that is 4,000 feet, you can fit a lot of other affordable apartments in that space, so the rents equal out."

Bridget: "I would say our statutes as a Sanctuary city. We need to back that up with more than words and put policies into action that justify the title of sanctuary city."



Dillon

Alex: "Nazis showing up in our city is a pretty big frickin problem. I think they should ban them."

Eric: "No doubt: housing affordable, and specifically the distinct lack of it. Metro's recent housing bond is a really good step in the right direction. That's going to be the big one because they are pushing all of the counties to get involved so it won't just be a single county solution. It's not just Multnomah making policy while Clackamas and Washington don't follow suit. It will basically force everybody's hand and

Dillon: "I think, probably, one of the biggest things politically facing Oregon would be the opioid epidemic, and how that affects so many different people and communities."



Eric

make them follow along. The big one for me is SRO's, single room occupancies, that's going to be it. That's only half the equation though, because only half of people need single room occupancy. We also need multi-family housing.



Rudy

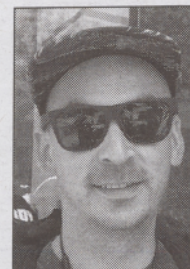
Rudy: "We need more unity. People need to get together to talk about things instead of just going out and throwing their hands up and complaining. Like us here talking, that's a good start."

Lauren: "Houselessness and the rising cost of rent and living is very important. We need to start addressing root causes instead of doing these patchwork solutions. We need affordable housing and rent scaled rent prices according to income."

Drew: "Most important political issue? Homelessness, and how it's being handled, is obviously one of the bigger issues out there. It will be interesting to see where the city goes. We need resources for houselessness and also job creation. We also need enforcement, not just for the homeless but also the rich, to make it more of a livable city for everyone."



Lauren



Chris

Chris: "There's more than one, but housing - it's kinda crazy. I've been a part of the Portland Tenants Union and they have done a lot to help people. I lived in this apartment complex and our landlords were kicking people out, long-term tenants. I thought that was horrible, so we formed a union and got a hold of the Portland Tenants Union and we were able to kind of fight back. More things like that would be cool."

Theo: "Health care. It should be able to be affordable for everybody. Not necessarily universal, but there should be some sort of a pot where money is pooled from taxes, so that everyone who makes under a certain limit could have the same access as someone else."



Theo

Abby Williams, a Street Roots intern, worked with Eric Sweger to produce this article.



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