

Long Time Advocate Runs for Office

Markgraf promotes jobs, new I-5 bridge

Tom Markgraf has a long political work history spanning mental health services, transit-oriented public works projects including various MAX lines and the streetcar, and a stint as an adviser to Congressman Earl Blumenauer, D-Portland. Now Markgraf, whose family has been living in north and northeast Portland since the 1920s wants a seat on the Multnomah County Commission.

Why are you running?

I'm running because right now in the county and the region there is a big need for more jobs. I've got a lifetime of history working to create jobs and I have a lot of experience with issues the county deals with. I'm the only one running who has ever led an organization that has dealt with



Tom Markgraf

mental health. I was the board chair of Mental Health Services West, which was the largest health care provider in the state as the provider for the mentally ill in Multnomah County. I was Earl Blumenauer's transportation advisor, and I have a history of getting federal money for local projects, and getting local projects ready for federal money.

How do you intend to create jobs?

By getting infrastructure

projects going. You get the Sellwood Bridge going. You get the Columbia River Crossing going, which is a disaster. If you can get it going you can get 27,000 jobs, and those are family wage jobs.

How is the Columbia River Crossing a disaster?

Well the existing bridge is a disaster. It's spewing pollution. You have cars stopped and trucks stopped beginning at two o'clock every afternoon. I live four blocks from the freeway, and I wash my house every year, and it's a yellow house and it becomes indigo ink; it's filthy. The deal with the bridge is it's got to be replaced. It was designed in 1907. It was designed for horses. My grandfather used to drive the streetcar across that bridge.

I don't think that people realize that 40 percent of the building trades are unemployed and don't expect any work in the next few years. That's devastating, and if the elected leadership in this

community doesn't get its act together, they really are going to miss its opportunity to get money from the federal government.

Do you think the environmental justice impacts of the bridge have been adequately addressed?

I think the analysis that has been done has been huge. I think they've looked at a lot of those issues. What amazes me is that it's been a six year process, and it seems like for the first three years you didn't have the community paying attention while the project was beating the drum saying 'look at this,' and then all of a sudden you have interest groups, who haven't done any of the analysis or even read the analysis, jumping on, and that's scary.

What do you want to do with mental health services provided by the county?

If you look at mental health and you look at what's going on at the county and in the region

you see a big gap in understanding what's happening. You see dysfunction with the police; you see that we're housing mentally ill people in jails, which is maybe the most expensive place to house them rather than housing them in places with mental health professionals. That's the humane way to deal with mentally ill and it's the cheapest. We need to train police officers.

North and northeast Portland has changed a lot. Do you see the county as having any role in mitigating or easing that change?

When you say "ease" what do you mean? My family has been in this neighborhood since 1920. People are getting priced out. This is a concern that people have.

A big problem is moving county services to where people need them. Rockwood is an area that really needs county help and at-

continued ▼ on page 17

PORTLAND PLAN PHASE II
SETTING DIRECTION

**IT'S MY CITY TOO,
SO DON'T MESS IT UP.**

YES, SHE'S TALKING TO YOU.

Because a lot can happen in 25 years. Portland will be different and today's children will be all grown up. Many of us love what Portland has to offer, especially its natural beauty and quality of life. But today we face some real challenges that impact our day-to-day lives. How we respond to them will affect the children and grandchildren of tomorrow. That's why your ideas for the Portland Plan are essential to make this a thriving and sustainable city for everyone.

Through community input in Phase One of the Portland Plan and visionPDX, we heard that education, jobs, equity, public health and sustainability are important to the people of this city. Now it's time to take the next step.

The Phase Two community workshops will focus on setting direction – identifying our goals and choosing targets that will help us meet them.

We want your input, so come to a workshop or take an online survey at www.pdxplan.com. **There's talking about it. And then there's actually doing something about it.**

PORTLAND PLAN PHASE II WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

SOUTHEAST

April 26, 2010, 6:30–9:00pm
Central Catholic High School
2401 SE Stark Street

NORTHEAST

April 29, 2010, 6:30–9:00pm
Beaumont Middle School
4043 NE Fremont Street

NORTH

May 1, 2010, 10am–12:30pm
University Park Community Center
9009 N Foss Avenue*

CENTRAL CITY

May 10, 2010, 6:30–9:00pm
University of Oregon in Portland
70 NW Couch Street

EAST

May 15, 2010, 10am–12:30pm
David Douglas High School
1001 SE 135th Avenue*

WEST

May 18, 2010, 6:30–9:00pm
Jackson Middle School
10625 SW 35th Avenue

www.PDXPlan.com | Twitter: @PDXPlan, #PDXPlan | Facebook: www.facebook.com/PDXPlan

*Childcare provided

The Portland Plan team is committed to providing equal access to information and meetings. If you need special accommodations, please notify us five (5) days prior to the event by phone at 503-823-7700, by the TTY line at 503-823-6868, or by the Oregon Relay Service at 1-800-735-2900.

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Oregon Health & Science University | University of Oregon | Portland Community College | ML Hood Community College | TriMet | Portland Development Commission | Housing Authority of Portland | Worksystems Inc.
East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District | West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District | Multnomah County Drainage District