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# The Portland Observer 43

'City of Roses'



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## 'I Love This City'

Former city commissioner Charlie Hales reaches out for community support in his election race for mayor.

**Hales says he will put heart and soul into job as mayor**

BY MINDY COOPER  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Mayoral candidate Charlie Hales describes his moving to the city of Portland more than 30-years-ago as a choice that mattered, much like his current run for mayor. "I love this city," he said.

"I know I have the skills, the experience and passion this city needs right now," Hales said, in an interview with the Portland Observer. "I want to put my heart and soul into this."

Hales left city government in 2002. He was midway through his third term and took a job as a streetcar consultant. He said

it was a time where he felt he had accomplished a lot on the City Council, but also a time of personal change as his kids were going off the college and he was making plans for a new marriage.

Hales said he has no political ambitions beyond being the mayor of Portland.

"The big fall push is on," he said, less than two months before the Nov. 6 vote-by-mail election.

His number one priority if elected mayor, he said, was to make the city a place of opportunity for everyone.

"We need a good leader," he said. "Portland has changed from a town to a city and demographically in a huge way."

Nearly half the kids within Portland Public Schools are minority youth, he said. "And we are a better city because we are so diverse."

Hales added, however, that the inequalities minorities face within the city must become a main priority.

And education, he said, would be his first focal point.

"Adequate stable funding for every school—that is not too much to ask," said Hales, who said he believes lawmakers in Salem, including his opponent in the mayor's race, State Rep. Jefferson Smith of East Portland, have failed to uphold their responsibility to residents.

"If I'm elected mayor, our first job would be adequate school funding," he said. "It doesn't matter if it's not our department."

He also said he would give extra attention to those who need help and inspire good leadership and additional funding, a combination he said can "do great things."

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