

## **Terri Preeg Riggsby | Candidate for Metro Councilor District 6**

**1. We are off track to achieve Metro's climate goals. Every successful candidate says they will work to meet the agency's climate goals, but entrenched and powerful interests want to continue to invest in 1950's era habits, which then ends up happening.**

**a) Will you commit to oppose Metro funding/incidental support for projects such as highway capacity expansions that counteract our climate goals?**

Yes

**b) How do we alter the power dynamic so that Metro does the right thing for the future health of the region, even in the face of opposition?**

We must start by getting big money out of elections. The City of Portland and Multnomah County have Honest Elections and contribution limits in place, and Metro should do the same. The matching fund system in Portland resulted in the first majority-minority Council in history. Elections shouldn't be dependent on big donors, PAC funds or unions, but candidates also need adequate funds to get their message to voters. I will vote for public campaign financing for Metro Council positions.

**2. Metro has recently embarked in a new direction with the 2020 houseless services high-earner income tax. How would you rate Metro's performance, what's working, what's not working, and how would you improve?**

Metro responded to the clear need in the tri-county area for additional financial support and regional planning to address the homelessness crisis through passage of the new tax. Land use, solid waste management and transportation planning, Metro's traditional focus, cannot be done well without considering the needs of the people living and working in the region – including those experiencing homelessness. However, these expanded responsibilities and increased revenues must be managed better, with transparency and accountability. The taxes approved by voters will be submitted via the IRS by the deadline next week. Metro must be prepared to distribute these funds quickly once the taxes are collected. The Council should prioritize overseeing the three counties' Local Implementation Plans, and make sure that taxpayers' money is spent wisely to get people off the streets and into supportive shelters and permanent housing as soon as the funds are available. In its regional convening role, Metro should already have in place an inventory of which non-profit organizations and local government partners are ready to quickly increase the scale of their services to utilize the additional funds immediately to serve people experiencing homelessness and address the core reasons why people are experiencing homelessness, including emergency rent assistance, mental health and drug use medical support, domestic violence support, and job training. As a professional government auditor, I will be a watchdog to make sure the new taxes are invested wisely to get results.

**3. Each council is presented with requests to develop over more farm and forest lands by expanding the Urban Growth Boundary. Often businesses apply pressure to the decision by dangling additional jobs or expanded facilities, and local governments seek to influence the decision to increase their tax base. How will you approach these votes if elected?**

The conversation and results regarding development/affordable housing and environmental protection must be both/and, not either/or. I've worked for over twenty years to preserve and restore urban watersheds and protect agricultural land within the Portland metropolitan area through my work on the West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District (WMSCWD) and the Tryon Creek Watershed Council (TCWC). During that time, we have been able to accommodate significant urban infill and have also found ways to protect natural areas, parks, and urban tree canopy while allowing for adequate density. More people keep moving to the Metro region, and with that comes a need for more housing and more commercial spaces for new jobs. That is a reality and presents an opportunity to grow in a smart way. Avoiding urban sprawl is necessary in order to protect natural areas, forests, and agricultural land, while encouraging innovative urban development strategies such as those in the residential infill project.

Infill development must be done without further impacting BIPOC communities through displacement, gentrification, and land speculation. I serve on the West Portland Town Center Advisory Committee and the Southwest Corridor Equity Committee. In identifying sites appropriate for increased density, we prioritized preserving Naturally Occurring Affordable Housing, as desired by our community members most closely affected. This thoughtful approach can be a model throughout the region. Jurisdictions requesting UGB expansions should demonstrate commitment to equity in their applications and be held accountable for outcomes after UGB expansions. Having served on the Metro Policy Advisory Committee since 2018, I know there is growing awareness of this responsibility. I will continue to work with leaders across the region to ensure that any UGB expansion is truly in the best interest of all communities in the ecosystem.

**4. What are the key metrics you think Metro should be using as the basis for determining the agency's success?**

I am a professional government auditor and specialize in performance metrics. We must include in our evaluations:

- Units of new housing, including number of bedrooms (3+ bedrooms for large or multi-generational families)
- Units of naturally occurring affordable housing that is preserved, avoiding residential displacement
- Acres of natural area preserved; number restored
- Acres of recreational outdoor space created
- Miles of walking and biking trails created
- Pounds of trash diverted for recycling and compost
- Number of people served by supportive housing services
- Number of new public transit riders
- Miles of safe sidewalks and bike lanes created

Auditors identify recommendations. Elected Councilors choose whether to make decisions based on metrics. I will do both. I will add more accountability and transparency to the Metro Council, to make sure taxpayers' money is used effectively and efficiently and gets results.

**5. What strategies will you support to bring community into partnership with the agency? How will you ensure community members are better aware and engaged with Metro efforts and investments?**

I've been engaging Metro-area communities for more than 20 years. I serve on WMSWCD, the Southwest Equity Coalition, as Executive Director of TCWC, and as General Manager of HAKI Community Organization supporting East African immigrants. Leaders need to connect with community members where they're at and that means volunteering and working at food banks, schools, community meetings, environmental restoration projects, as I have been doing in District 6 for 25 years and will continue to do as Metro Councilor.

**6. In order to achieve regional carbon reduction goals we need to triple or quadruple our transit ridership. What will you do if elected to make this happen?**

I live with a mobility disability. I will be the only Metro Councilor focused on accessibility in transportation and parks. More bus coverage and frequency, more sidewalks, and safer crosswalks are crucial for getting residents out of cars. Metro has the power to assume control from TriMet. I will support that transfer, if TriMet doesn't step up to improve service. We need bold, urgent action on the climate crisis, and I will take it.