



# Platform: Part 1

1. Accountability & Accessibility
2. Housing & Houselessness
3. Public Safety

# Introduction

After beginning this campaign officially on August 1st, 2019, we have spent time on the trail listening to the lived experiences of Portlanders. From community events and forums to one on ones with experts and personal conversations, we have collected stories that contribute to the perspective we are sharing in this platform. As we continue to engage with the community in the months leading up to the primary, we intend to evolve our campaign and our platform to reflect the changes we all want to see to make Portland better. This is really important to our overall message that the leaders we need on Portland City Council must engage more with Portlanders and value their voices and their trust. Our leaders don't need to have all the answers, but instead must bring together the community to collaboratively and compassionately find the answers that make a better Portland possible. Connect with us about your thoughts on our platform and [tell your story](#) so we can do our best to reflect your lived experience in our vision for Portland.



Candace

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*"When looking out at Portland, many see division and tension, but I am hopeful. I see diversity of thought, diversity of lived experiences as our strength and our path forward. Our growth has brought challenges, but only by having everyone at the table can we come together as neighbors and tackle these issues." - Candace Avalos*

# A Functional Government **is Possible**

## Accountability & Accessibility

Portland is the last US city with over 100,000 residents to still have a commission form of government, where commissioners are not only responsible for overseeing the day-to-day functions of our bureaus, but are assigned arbitrarily by the Mayor. This archaic system rooted in Jim Crow-era segregation has created a lack of consistency and long term strategic planning to address the most pressing problems facing our communities. In addition, with a population of over 600,000 all of our commissioners are elected at-large, which means the leaders who most often succeed running for office come from wealthy families from the west side of town and do not reflect all of our unique communities. It's time we end this archaic form of government and bring district representation to Portlanders. We deserve to elect members of our own unique community that understand the lived experiences of our neighbors, and can bring new diverse voices to the table where crucial decisions are being made for our future. We must also improve access to our government by creating avenues for feedback to engage community members in the decision making process.

- ★ Create a community-driven process to restructure our city's governance
  - In 2021, Portland's city charter is up for review, meaning this is our opportunity to address our structure of government through the formation of a commission comprised of community members that will recommend changes and put them up for a vote to Portlanders. However, the process by which we do this matters and will greatly affect the outcome. We must prioritize engaging community leaders and organizations to discuss the options, and ensure Portlanders have optimal opportunities to participate before a structure change is sent to the ballot.
- ★ Increase accessibility by conducting continuing accessibility audits across all bureaus
  - Our bureaus are only as strong as the dedicated employees who work there. We need to ensure that our city is engaging in fair hiring practices for individuals of all races, sexes, gender, physical ability, and so forth. Furthermore, once hired, we need to make certain that city employees are working in environments that are accessible for everyone. This is not a one-and-done audit, but a continuing process to ensure that our city upholds the values our communities hold dear.
- ★ Update our government to reflect the 21st century
  - Let's get real: the world has changed so much and is dependent on the internet. We use technology to collaborate and connect, and it's time the government leverage this in ways that brings us into the 21st century. This means updating our website to be more user-friendly, leveraging the technology of the 21st century to create online opportunities to engage in discussion and decisions, and

finding more creative ways to reach Portlanders beyond requiring them to come to us.

- ★ Get out into the community—yes, it’s that simple!
  - Not only are we severely underrepresented by a city council that doesn’t get elected by districts, but we also have seen a lack of engagement on the community level. It really is as simple as creating a space for conversation, making sure it’s well advertised and has accommodations, and bring in the community to talk about what they’re facing and what ideas they have to address it. This includes holding official city council sessions throughout the city during varied times, with childcare options, to engage (the majority) of Portlanders who cannot attend meetings as currently scheduled. We need to meet people where they’re at and engage the communities impacted by policy decisions. It’s not our job as leaders to have all the answers, but instead to bring together different voices to create the ideas that will lead to them.

## Livable Communities **are Possible**

### Housing & Houselessness

In the next 20 years Portland is expected to grow by over half a million people. We have a lot of work to do to ensure our growth is scaled in a way that people can continue to afford to live and work in this city. As housing prices continue to skyrocket, more and more Portlanders are getting pushed to the outskirts of our city and our society. This gentrification threatens our residents’ way of life and the diversity of our communities. We need to create a city that has space and opportunity for everyone, while ensuring their voices are reflected in the decisions we as we continue growing. Every Portlander deserves a safe and stable place to call home and a community that helps them thrive. Keeping a roof over your head should not result in sacrificing food, healthcare, and the right to live a productive and meaningful life. Together we must create a culture that makes it socially and politically unacceptable for our neighbors to remain houseless.

- ★ Build More Affordable Housing, Affordably
  - While we must do everything we can to keep people in their homes, including fully funding rental assistance, we must address the root cause of the housing crisis by building affordable housing affordably and at scale. If the private market is left to its own devices was going to solve the housing problem it would have by now. Which is why we must incentivize ways to build affordable housing affordably at scale—consider creating innovation hub for affordable housing design and manufacturing. These units would be affordable not because of subsidies but because they are able to be built and sold at a market rate which is truly affordable. In addition to building more affordable housing, we must continue to build housing for all at every level.

- ★ Every level of income living together in 15 minute neighborhoods
  - We must invest in more integrated housing, and create neighborhoods with families of mixed income. Your ability to have a thriving community with access to resources and activities should not be determined by the type of home you can afford to buy or rent. When we make decisions about transportation, parks, and commerce, we need to take into account the needs of those communities and create spaces that are more financially welcoming to families of all incomes and this is done by creating spaces where Portlanders have immediate access to basic needs like healthcare, groceries, education, and transportation networks.
- ★ Keep people in their homes
  - A recent [report](#) has shown that more than 30% of families in Multnomah County are struggling to meet their basic needs. Our municipal governments need to create more strategies through collaboration to efficiently spend money on short term solutions that will help keep those who are living on the edge from falling into homelessness. As our city continues to grow and develop we need to ensure strong anti-displacement policies are in place. In addition, rental assistance needs to be fully funded, and the office of Rental Services needs to be fully staffed and funded as well.
- ★ Supporting the currently unhoused
  - We cannot continue to spend our limited resources with inhumane and costly sweeps that only further push vulnerable people into more dangerous situations. The reality is that we will not be able to have a home for everyone who needs it overnight. Therefore, we need to invest in short term solutions providing basic services like sanitation, water, and trash to help the houseless community. We need to get creative to ultimately offer the houseless the kinds of services they need to get off the streets, from things like laundry vouchers to have clean clothes on their backs, to mental health and addiction services to help people recover from the challenges keeping them on the streets.
- ★ Decriminalizing houselessness and poverty
  - We need to treat others with the dignity and respect they deserve, full stop. The houseless epidemic is growing in every large city in America, and we must take this seriously and act with compassion. We must ensure the policies we pass as a city do not continue to cause trauma to our houseless neighbors, and instead focus our resources and energy on pushing for reforms at the state and federal level to address this crisis.
- ★ Increasing tenant protections and funding the office of Rental Services
  - In a world with growing income inequality, the expectation of homeownership is simply not an option for everyone. As more Portlanders are renting, we must continue to build in protections for tenants in our infrastructure. In addition, rental assistance needs to be fully funded, and the office of Rental Services needs to be fully staffed and funded as well.

# Police Accountability **is Possible**

## Public Safety

In a community like Portland with many diverse needs, the people we put in charge of overseeing our safety must be responsive and accountable to what our community says they need. In my time working in police accountability as Vice Chair of the Citizen Review Committee, I've learned a lot about the challenges our officers in the Portland Police face. There is a desire to confront biases, help the houseless, and improve interactions during protests, and we must be open to the fact that there is good work being done to address these things within bureau leadership. At the same time, we need to be brave enough to have tough conversations and challenge old habits that continue to harm trust between the community and the police. Change cannot come without accountability—accountability of our officers and accountability to our citizens. We need to empower the chief of police and our elected leaders to hold problem officers accountable while strengthening the citizen review process.

- ★ Strengthen citizen police oversight
  - Our current system of committees and advisory boards leaves the people without the power to influence change and hold their community leaders accountable. We need citizen oversight that has the authority to recommend changes and city officials committed to making those changes a reality. We must review all advisory boards and assess their efficiency and be prepared to create, disband, or adjust these boards as needed.
- ★ True accountability that values our voices and our trust
  - Since it's nearly impossible to remove officers for racism or killing civilians in our current system, we need to reassess if the system is truly working for the people and with their best interests. Portlanders of all walks of life want the police to succeed just as much as they do, but that success varies based on the unique relationship every community has with the police. It's important to acknowledge the history and current norm of over policing black and other communities of color. We need to learn from this history to ensure the next generation of police reflects how our society has evolved. The inability to effectively remove officers that cause harm in our community does not reflect the values we stand for as a city.
- ★ Prioritize wellness programs over more police on the payroll
  - Instead of using our limited resources to continue adding more police to the payroll, we should invest those funds into wellness programs. We need a cultural shift in our police, and that's going to require openly addressing the well being of the people who we give the responsibility of carrying a lethal weapon and overseeing the community.
- ★ Recruitment and training that reflects and comes from our neighborhoods

- Hiring officers takes so long that many leave the process as a result, making it more difficult to bring in quality hires in a timely fashion to respond to our urgent needs. In addition to shortening the hiring process, we need officers to reflect our neighborhoods - meaning they must not only live in these neighborhoods, but represent different communities of people. When it comes to training, we are a city rich with knowledge and resources from leaders who have committed to improving the relationship between the police and the communities they are sworn to protect. Let's bring these leaders in to share this knowledge and create a more robust training program that involves the community.
- ★ Protecting our right to protest and assemble
  - Our society is in a moment of growing inequality and rampant corruption which has awakened us, bringing us to the streets to speak out for the changes we want to see. While maintaining a safe environment to engage in our democracy, we must ensure those standards are applied fairly. Growing hostility on the streets between Portlanders and the police during public demonstrations fosters an environment where people become afraid to speak out and participate, and this must be corrected.
- ★ Demilitarization to remove barriers between Police and the Community
  - Protecting our communities requires building relationships, understanding the unique needs of each neighborhood, and working collaboratively with community leaders to solve chronic public safety problems. Access to military grade weapons and uniforms instantly puts up a barrier between Portlanders and the people sworn to protect them. According to Campaign Zero, "studies show that more militarized police departments are significantly more likely to kill civilians." We must respond by implementing policies on the city level that put our funds elsewhere.