



**The logo means the Sun rising over the River. A brighter future.**

## **PRIORITIES AS MAYOR**

### **Get to the Bottom of the Budget Crisis**

I'm going to be working closely with our finance director to find out the issues regarding our budget. We need to have checks and balances. The first step in balancing the budget is going to be to control spending.

### **Meeting with Staff**

I already know many people who work for the City due to my time on the Planning Commission, the Budget Committee, and working with the City on various projects. As Mayor I want to hear from each and every person who works for the City: What's going well? Where can we improve? How can we improve? Is there something I need to know about that you believe is a serious concern? How can your job get better? I've been managing a law firm with 28 employees for many years. The first thing you need to do is hear from the people that know what's going on before making any moves.

### **The Police**

The collective bargaining agreement for the police will be negotiated next year. I'm going to make sure that St. Helens is well-prepared in that negotiation. We need to be making sure that we are meeting the officers' needs so that we can attract the best and the brightest to work here in St. Helens. Twenty-four-hour police coverage is a priority for our citizens. I'm going to be going through line by line the police spending, and we are going to be cutting out waste.

I think that our chief of police should live in our town. Or at least ten minutes away. So, I'm going to be discussing with the council whether we should be making a residency requirement for the chief a requirement for the job.

### **Land Use Planning and the Downtown**

We need to have a parking plan for the downtown. We need to have a plan for the type of housing that we need to get built downtown in order to maximize the economic potential of the area. We need to update our architectural standards so we can attract top quality developers to downtown.

Salem is forcing cities to adopt land use laws that are inconsistent with the community we would like in St. Helens. We need to be looking into these regulations and making sure that we can and will build housing for working people.

### **The Police Station and the Holten Business District**

The Holten Business District is the area of Columbia Boulevard between First Street and Highway 30. We have an economic plan to revitalize the Holten Business District. It is going to be my priority that the new police station is built within the Holten Business District. This way, we will either raise and rebuild our current police station or we will renovate it. Either way, we are going to be eliminating the blight of that police station.

### **Elimination of Blight**

We have a lot of people who own property in St. Helens that have not developed their property, and a lot of this property is falling into decay. While people spend millions of dollars around properties in this town, there are other people right next door that are spending nothing. This is holding us back. I'm going to meet with these property owners and discuss with them what can be done to get them to upgrade their properties. I will also ask the planning commission to investigate some laws, like those in Astoria, that are designed to prevent and eliminate blight.

### **Businesses and Business Regulations**

We need to cut the red tape that's holding businesses back. I'm going to be meeting with businesses and business leaders. This is going to include people in the construction trades. It is way too hard to get business done and moving along here in St. Helens. The owner of the America Market on Columbia Boulevard said that it took him 4 years to get permitting. I have heard stories from every business owner that it has been very challenging to cut through the red tape in St. Helens. I'm going to be discussing with business owners and contractors portions of the development and building code that need to be revised or eliminated so that we can have safe buildings, but we need to build them at less cost, and we need to build them efficiently. Also, our building department may need to have more resources put toward it. In eliminating waste in other departments, we may need to be able to find more resources for our building department.

### **Public Health – Environment**

A growing concern in St. Helens is the safety of our environment. I'm going to work with citizens that are trying to explore if there are toxic chemicals leaking into our living environment. These sorts of issues will be brought to the fore and discussed with the planning commission and the parks commission to make sure that our health and safety is protected.

### **Building the Downtown**

We need to have a parking plan for the downtown. We also need to be pushing developers to be building in the downtown that are of appropriate size and economic level to support economic prosperity. Don't be afraid that these buildings will not be built for people in St. Helens. I have heard from many people in St. Helens, the 50 and older crowd, who say that they want to make their lives less complicated and want to sell their homes, but they don't have anywhere to live. It is extremely attractive to St. Helens residents the idea of selling their home and moving into a

condominium on the waterfront. We need to be moving forward with getting that developed as soon as we can. We have not even started a plan for it. I'm going to get it done. We have built the streets downtown because we have not been able to attract a developer. I'm going to create the credibility we need to bring in quality development.

### **Planning, Decision Making, and Problem Solving**

I have studied the mistakes that have been made by the city, and they all have something in common: bad planning in secret, and bad legal analysis, and no budget oversight. This results of our moving forward with unlawful actions, thinking that we can get away with something. That does not work in 2024 in a city of this size. We need to revamp our decision-making process at the administrative level. We need to make sure that we have appropriate and proper legal analysis and risk assessment to getting things done.

I will empower our citizen commissions. We will plan in public. Enough with the secret committees that do their work outside of public view. Our Planning Commission will plan, with study, and will discuss budgeting, and this will be done in public.

I will study how other Cities in Oregon that have succeeded to plan, and we will implement their models.

### **Meeting with the Department Heads**

I plan to meet with every department head in the City of St. Helens to find out what the needs are.

### **The Office and Meeting with the People**

I have created an office on Cowlitz Street. Make an appointment. Come talk to me. It's a place for me to meet and to listen to you.

### **Skill Set**

A lot of problems facing this City are legal and regulatory. How do we get power here? How do we attract tech, industry, and jobs? Let's keep crime out. Solving complex problems and being proactive is what I've done for a living. I'm going to retire on January 1, 2025, from active law practice. That means I'm going to have a lot of time to devote to St. Helens. I have the intelligence to be able to keep track of a whole bunch of issues at the same time, and to manage the progress of different solutions. These are going to be publicly tracked and discussed. We are going to create a solid economic environment in this city.

### **The Ultimate Goal**

St. Helens will once again be the crown jewel of the Columbia River. We are going to show Oregon that we really know how to get things done here, and we know how to succeed. We are going to have safe streets, good schools, and good jobs. We are going to communicate with each other as friends and neighbors. The culture of attacking people and disparaging their reputations is going to end. All boats will rise. We will maintain our Community of Character.

Believe in Steve! Believe that we can, and we will have positive changes in our city.

“Smart Slow Growth,” “Competent Leadership,” “More Freedom,” “Stop Portland Creep”