

### **Position 3**

#### **Amanda Page**

**OPB: How can the county address housing shortages and rents that are out of reach for many residents? What is your proposal for a long-term solution to the management of shelters and sanctioned camps?**

Page: Housing costs in Deschutes County have risen faster than wages for decades. The solution will require both an increase in supply and affordability. As a single, working mother, I know that policy can't just be theoretical, it has to have impact.

That's why I propose real solutions. The county can implement fees on Short Term Rentals and Second Properties. The problem of affordability in Central Oregon is significantly impacted by the fact that we are a tourist destination. And although that provides industry, it also drives up housing prices.

By implementing fees on these properties, we can create an affordability fund that will, in turn help create workforce, deeply affordable, rapid, transitional and permanent supportive housing. The county has an opportunity to partner with municipals to support missing-middle and workforce housing. One way is by choosing wisely where growth happens. Which affects housing costs greatly.

The cheapest place to build houses is where there is already infrastructure. This means doing infill first. Building homes on available land within the city. Emergency shelters and sanctioned camps should be managed as part of a coordinated regional system, not treated as temporary stopgaps. The county should partner with cities and service providers to ensure sites have sanitation, case management, and clear pathways into housing. The long-term goal must be moving people from shelter into permanent housing, using supportive housing, rental assistance, and behavioral health services.

**OPB: What measures would you champion to address resident concerns about natural hazards like winter storms, wildfire and extreme heat? Please address each type of disaster in your response.**

Page: This is a critical area to address.

Natural hazards impact everyone in our community, but especially impact communities already pushed to the margins. We must address these concerns with both infrastructure and community resilience.

Wildfire is a huge threat that grows every year. Our snowpack is at just 38% of normal, predicting a bad fire year. In order to mitigate impact of these wildfires, we need to strengthen our wildfire overlays, which are land-use planning tools that apply additional building, vegetation management, and access standards in high-risk wildfire areas to reduce the chance homes ignite and to improve firefighter access and evacuation safety. Programs that help low-income

homeowners create defensible space or retrofit homes with fire-resistant materials are also critical so safety measures are not only available to those who can afford them. Temperature extremes like winter storms and extreme heat are the result of climate change that has hugely impacted our area. Winter storms can isolate rural communities and interrupt access to essential services.

The county should invest in resilient transportation corridors, reliable snow response, and backup power for critical facilities. Residents need community resilience hubs where residents can access warming/cooling shelters, food, and information during outages. Extreme heat is a public health threat. As a paramedic, I've seen the impact it can have on our most vulnerable populations. In addition to expanding cooling centers, the county can increase urban tree canopy and shade infrastructure and coordinate outreach to protect those most at risk. We must build systems that ensure everyone, regardless of income or housing status, has the resources to stay safe.

**OPB: How would you approach applications to rezone parts of the county for denser development? How do you propose the county grows to accommodate a growing population?**

Page: I have a very clear standard when it comes to rezoning requests: They MUST serve public interest, not corporate interests and those of the wealthy.

Oregon has a strong land-use system that exists to prevent sprawl and protect agricultural and natural resources. Rezoning for higher density should only occur when it aligns with comprehensive plans, contributes meaningfully to housing supply, and is protective of water, wildlife, natural resources, and agriculture. In almost every case, accommodating population growth should happen through thoughtfully planned infill and increased density within cities and the UGB.

These spaces already have the necessary infrastructure to support more affordable housing. But it isn't just about housing, we also need to ensure that we are fulfilling our duty to have housing that is paired with transportation, community spaces, and infrastructure. We have the opportunity to change course from the destructive practices of the current commission towards something that benefits everyone in Deschutes County and protects the land, water, and wildlife that makes this place special. In essence, we must plan for the next seven generations, not to fill the pockets of greedy developers and corporate interests.

**OPB: Where would you propose the county build a new solid waste facility and how do you propose helping the county reach the state's Department of Environmental Quality goal of reducing waste disposals in landfills to 45%?**

Page: Although we are obviously going to have to choose a place for our new solid waste facility, I believe we need to address the larger problem of consumerism and waste creation without accountability. Deschutes County will eventually need additional solid waste capacity, but simply moving waste somewhere else should not be the primary strategy. Shipping garbage far away may make it less visible locally, but it reduces accountability and does nothing to address the underlying problem: we produce too much waste.

The county should evaluate sites through a transparent, science-based process that considers groundwater protection, transportation impacts, wildfire risk, and environmental justice. Communities that already bear disproportionate environmental burdens should not be expected to carry the cost of the region's waste. Previously evaluated sites like Moon Pit demonstrate the type of criteria that should guide the process, but the final decision must follow a transparent environmental review.

More importantly, the county must focus on reducing the amount of waste going to landfills in the first place. To reach the Department of Environmental Quality's goal of reducing landfill disposal to 45%, we should expand composting and food waste diversion, strengthen recycling infrastructure, and support reuse and repair businesses that keep materials in circulation longer. Public education, construction waste recovery, and regional partnerships with businesses can significantly reduce landfill-bound waste.

Ultimately, this issue should push us toward a broader conversation about sustainability and consumption. The goal isn't simply to find a new place to put our trash. It's to create a system where we produce far less of it.

**OPB: Do you support the district map going before voters in November? Why or why not? If not, how do you think commission seats should be apportioned? Why?**

Page: Absolutely not. These maps are clearly rigged. But I also believe our current at-large single winner election is extremely problematic as well. In the current system, 51% of the population can control the entire commission, reducing the number of people who are truly being represented by the commission. It increases polarization, homogenizes viewpoints and lived experiences, and disenfranchises voters. Single-winner-at-large systems have been used to prevent racial and political minorities from electing candidates of their choice.

I fully support Proportional Ranked Choice Voting with multiple winners. This system does the opposite: proportionately gives voices to various voting blocks, increases equity for racial minorities, decreases polarization, creates an overall fair system, and it does this while preserving the majority. It is the best tested system that is constitutional and used in Oregon with a high degree of voter satisfaction. It can also have the effect of decreasing the cost of campaigns. To my knowledge I'm the only candidate who has signed onto the Statement in Opposition to the Deschutes County Redistricting Process and Proposed Map put forth by Deschutes Defend Our Democracy and signed by organizations like the Oregon League of Conservation Voters, League of Women Voters, and Sierra Club.