

November 2, 2022

To: Portland Business Alliance
From: DHM Research
Re: Homelessness Policy Survey, #01159

INTRODUCTION & METHODOLOGY

From October 29 to November 1, 2022, DHM Research conducted a survey of Portland voters. The purpose of the survey was to assess opinions towards policies to address homelessness that are currently being considered by the Portland City Council.

Research Methodology: The survey consisted of 400 registered voters and took approximately 8 minutes to complete. This is a sufficient sample size to assess voter opinions generally and to review findings by multiple subgroups.

Respondents were contacted from a list of registered voters. Telephone respondents were contacted by a live interviewer and text-to-online respondents received a text invitation directing them to an online survey. Quotas were set by age, gender, education, race, area of the city, political party, and May 2022 primary vote participation to match the population of registered voters in the city.

Statement of Limitations: Any sampling of opinions or attitudes is subject to a margin of error. The margin of error is a standard statistical calculation that represents differences between the sample and total population at a confidence interval, or probability, calculated to be 95%. This means that there is a 95% probability that the sample taken for this study would fall within the stated margin of error if compared with the results achieved from surveying the entire population. The margin of error for this survey is $\pm 4.9\%$.

DHM Research Background: DHM Research has been providing opinion research and consultation throughout the Pacific Northwest and other regions of the United States for over 40 years. The firm is nonpartisan and independent and specializes in research projects to support public policy making.

Key Findings

This week Portland City Council is considering several policies to address the homelessness crisis in the city. In light of this, this survey asked voters about their preferences for how the city should manage homelessness, their opinions about unsanctioned camping, and their support for some of the City Council's proposals.

Portland voters are deeply dissatisfied with the job that Portland and Multnomah County are doing to address homelessness in the community.

- 86% of voters disapprove of the job the City of Portland and Multnomah County officials are doing to address homelessness in the community, including 67% who strongly disapprove.

Portland voters are more likely to assign responsibility for addressing homelessness to the city rather than either Multnomah County or Metro.

- A plurality (42%) of Portlanders think the city has the most responsibility versus 21% for the county and 14% for Metro.

Voters in Portland strongly support taking action to move people from unsanctioned camps and to designated camping areas and shelters, especially as a first step towards permanent housing.

- When presented with the choice, 78% of voters believe local governments should require those camping on city sidewalks, streets and public areas to sleep only in shelters or authorized camping areas, while just 14% think that local governments should allow people to sleep in these areas if they don't want to move. This sentiment is shared across the city and across all demographic groups.
- 64% of voters agree that local governments should prioritize funding more shelters and designated camping areas as a first step toward permanent housing, while only 26% say local governments should prioritize permanent housing even if it takes longer to move people off the streets.
- 75% support police or other city officials forcing people to move to a shelter or designated camping site if they refuse. This particular opinion is weaker among voters under age 44, those of lower income levels, white, and Democratic voters, but still well above 50% among these groups.
- 79% support banning unsanctioned homeless encampments in public areas as part of Portland City Council's proposed plan to address homelessness.

A large majority of Portland voters support City Council's proposal to create large, designated camping areas.

- 82% support creating designated camping areas for hundreds of people, that include bathrooms, water, hygiene services and trash, professionals to help people connect to social services and housing, and on-site security.

When it comes to costs, voters want to see the county, city, and state pitch in to provide funding for the designated camping sites.

- 66% of voters think Multnomah County should help pay to build and operate outdoor designated camping sites.
- 72% think a statewide emergency declaration related to homelessness should include funding for Oregon cities like Portland to build and operate designated camping sites.

**Portland Homelessness Policy Survey
October 29 – November 1, 2022**

**All registered voters
N=400; ±4.9% margin of error
8 minutes**

Hello, my name is _____ from **[name of fielding house]**. I am not selling anything. We're conducting a community survey about important issues in Portland, which will take about 5-10 minutes to complete. May I please speak to _____? **[Must speak to name on list. If unavailable schedule callback.]**

1. Do you approve or disapprove of the job City of Portland and Multnomah County elected officials are doing to address homelessness in our community? **(Wait and ask strongly/somewhat)**

Response category	n=400
Strongly approve	2%
Somewhat approve	7%
Somewhat disapprove	19%
Strongly disapprove	67%
Don't know	5%
TOTAL APPROVE	9%
TOTAL DISAPPROVE	86%

2. In your opinion, which local government jurisdiction and elected officials are most responsible for managing the response to the homeless crisis in our community? **[Randomize]**

Response category	n=400
City of Portland	42%
Multnomah County	21%
Metro Regional Government	14%
Don't know	23%

3. When it comes to homeless policy in the city of Portland, which comes closer to your opinion? **(Rotate statements)**

Response category	n=400
Local governments should require those camping on city sidewalks, streets, and public areas to sleep only in shelters or authorized camping areas.	78%
Local governments should allow people to live on public streets and sidewalks if they don't want to move.	14%
Don't know	9%

4. Thinking about housing specifically, when it comes to homeless policy in the city of Portland, which comes closer to your opinion? **(Rotate statements)**

Response category	n=400
Local governments should prioritize funding more shelters and designated camping areas as a first step toward permanent housing. It's inhumane and dangerous to allow people to camp on streets and sidewalks.	64%
Even if it takes longer to move people off the streets, local governments should prioritize permanent housing. It is inhumane to force people to live where they do not want to and the only true solution to homelessness is to build more housing.	26%
Don't know	9%

5. The Portland City Council is currently considering a five-part plan to address the city's homelessness crisis. One component of the plan is to ban unsanctioned camping on city sidewalks, streets, and public areas and only allow it in designated camping areas. Given what you know, do you support, or oppose the city enforcing no camping laws and banning unsanctioned homeless encampments in public areas? **(Wait and ask strongly/somewhat)**

Response category	n=400
Strongly support	62%
Somewhat support	17%
Somewhat oppose	6%
Strongly oppose	12%
Don't know	2%
TOTAL SUPPORT	79%
TOTAL OPPOSE	18%

6. If people who are camping on the street refuse to move to a shelter or designated camping site, would you support or oppose the police and other city officials forcing them to move? **(Wait and ask strongly/somewhat)**

Response category	n=400
Strongly support	59%
Somewhat support	15%
Somewhat oppose	4%
Strongly oppose	16%
Don't know	5%
TOTAL SUPPORT	75%
TOTAL OPPOSE	21%

7. Another component of the city council plan is for city government to create legally authorized camping areas across the city where Portlanders experiencing homelessness can move rather than remain in unauthorized camps on sidewalks, streets, and public areas. These designated camping areas would each serve hundreds of people and have the following services:

- On-site bathrooms, water and hygiene services and trash;
- Professionals to help people connect to social services and housing;
- On-site security

Given this information, do you support or oppose this proposal? **(Wait and ask strongly/somewhat)**

Response category	n=400
Strongly support	52%
Somewhat support	30%
Somewhat oppose	7%
Strongly oppose	8%
Don't know	2%
TOTAL SUPPORT	82%
TOTAL OPPOSE	15%

8. Some Multnomah County officials have said they will not support providing funds to create and staff outdoor designated camping sites. Do you think that Multnomah County should help pay to build and operate outdoor designated camping sites?

Response category	n=400
Yes	66%
No	18%
Don't know	16%

9. Each candidate for Oregon governor has agreed to declare an emergency related to homelessness. To end self-sited and unsanctioned homeless camps, should that statewide emergency include funding for Oregon cities like Portland to build and operate designated camping sites?

Response category	n=400
Yes	72%
No	16%
Don't know	12%

10. In 2020, Portland area voters approved the largest homeless services measure, per capita, in the nation. This measure approved two new taxes that raise \$250 million a year to Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties for homeless services with the promise of ending homelessness in Portland. This measure will expire in 2030 unless Portland area residents vote to re-approve it. If it were on the ballot today, would you vote yes to re-authorize the taxes that fund the homeless services programs or vote no to discontinue the programs? **(Wait and ask certain/lean toward)**

Response category	n=400
Yes – certain	24%
Yes – lean toward	27%
No – lean against	15%
No – certain	26%
Don't know	8%
TOTAL YES	51%

Response category	n=400
TOTAL NO	41%

11. The Metro homeless services measure provides funding to Clackamas, Multnomah, and Washington counties based on total population rather than the total homeless population.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: Metro homeless services funds should be sent to counties based on the size of the homeless population rather than the total number of residents.

Response category	n=400
Strongly agree	49%
Somewhat agree	29%
Somewhat disagree	5%
Strongly disagree	6%
Don't know	12%
TOTAL AGREE	78%
TOTAL DISAGREE	10%

12. Do you describe yourself as:

Response category	n=400
Man	49%
Woman	49%
Non-binary or gender non-conforming	n=2
I prefer not to say	1%

13. Age [Don't ask, record from sample]

Response category	n=400
18–29	17%
30–44	33%
45–64	30%
65+	20%

14. Which of the following best describes your race or ethnicity? Please select all that apply. [Allow for multiple responses, randomize]

Response category	n=400
Asian/Pacific Islander	7%
Black/African/African American	9%
Hispanic/Latino	7%
Native American/American Indian	2%
White/Caucasian	71%
Other	5%
Don't know	n=1
I prefer not to say	4%

15. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

Response category	n=400
Less than high school	3%
High school diploma/GED	20%
Some college/2-year degree	26%
College degree/4-year degree	24%
Graduate/professional school	25%
I prefer not to say	3%

16. Which category best describes your 2021 gross household income, before taxes? Remember to include everyone living in your household. Your best estimate will do.

Response category	n=400
Less than \$25,000	10%
\$25,000 to less than \$50,000	12%
\$50,000 to less than \$75,000	14%
\$75,000 to less than \$100,000	14%
\$100,000 to less than \$150,000	17%
\$150,000 or more	16%
I prefer not to say	16%

17. Zip code **[Don't ask, record from sample]**

Response category	n=400
West of the Willamette River	20%
East of the River to I-205	56%
East of I-205	24%

18. Party **[Don't ask, record from sample]**

Response category	n=400
Democrat	56%
Republican	8%
Other	11%
Non-affiliated	25%

19. Voting history **[Don't ask, record from sample]**

Response category	n=400
0 of 4	10%
1 of 4	15%
2 of 4	21%
3 of 4	25%
4 of 4	29%

20. May 2022 primary vote **[Don't ask, record from sample]**

Response category	n=400
Yes	37%
No	63%