

# Return Bragdon to Metro; Christy, Harrington ahead

**W**ashington County voters have important choices for the Metro Council that will help shape not only local communities but also the economy of the entire metropolitan region and the state.

As a regional government, Metro shapes policy on key critical matters such as transportation, land use, housing density, urban growth boundaries, solid waste, open spaces and the protection of natural areas and streams. Most importantly, Metro should do these things in partnership with – not in domination of – the region's three counties and its more than two dozen cities.

That's why it is important to return David Bragdon as the regionally elected president of the Metro Council.

Bragdon has served as a unifying force on the Metro Council and within the Metro bureaucracy. He also has been a unifying voice for regional cooperation and policies that make a difference. While we don't always agree with Bragdon, we salute his hard work, his accessibility to citizens and community leaders around the region and state and his demonstrated practice of not only listening to others, but learning from others. In four years as Metro Council president, Bragdon has improved greatly in his ability to manage complex policies, build consensus and achieve success.

This is no easy task for the leader of an organization that for more than a decade consistently demonstrated the ability, if not unmitigated passion, to tell others in local government, the business community and community organizations that Metro knew what was best for them despite opinions to the contrary.

We expect Bragdon to be returned to office. We look forward to him continuing to grow and work even more effectively with others on the Metro Council, local governments, the business community and citizens.

Washington County voters living in Beaverton, Hillsboro and western Washington County inside the UGB have a much tougher choice for Metro Council District 4. Running for office are Tom Cox, a management consultant and past Libertarian candidate for governor; Kathryn Harrington, a retired Intel manager and current community volunteer; Kathy Christy, a real estate broker and former Washington County Commissioner; and Al Young, a masonry contractor and former state legislator from the Hillsboro area.

This is a critical race for Washington County, which in the past has not received passionate, involved local representation from Susan McClain, who is leaving the Metro District 4 seat.

At this time, we most favor Christy and Harrington for this seat. Christy has significant experience with working with local governments during eight years on the county commission board and long service in county planning, community social services and local parks matters. That experience and those relationships would serve her well if elected to the Metro Council seat. But to date, in numerous public settings and in her own campaign literature, we have not seen Christy set out a defined strategy that shines brightly and describes her clear vision for the Metro Council.

Harrington is much clearer in her positions on matters such as housing supply, transportation improvements, natural spaces, land for jobs and keeping local cities and Metro working better together. Her organizational skills and listening skills were well seasoned at Intel. She is bright, well organized and could represent Washington County's needs well to other Metro councilors. But she lacks immediate proof that she can not only listen and talk well, but also cast votes and help shape regional public policy. Frankly, she hasn't ever been elected before.

Cox and Young are good people with qualities that are attractive. Cox doesn't favor big government and certainly not the expansion of Metro responsibilities. He gains big points by talking passionately about what he believes in, but loses points for throwing out grenades like comparing Metro to Moscow. Young is a leader from the past whose contributions helped to shape Washington County in the 1970s and 1980s. He is committed to making a difference at Metro, but his reference points are more historical and state policy-based than are needed regionally in 2006 and beyond.

We think no one candidate will win the May 16 primary outright for District 4. We think voters should send Christy and Harrington on to the general election in November, giving both candidates the opportunity – and the requirement – to demonstrate far better to voters that they are the best choice for Metro Council District 4.