

# The Portland Tribune

## Affordable Housing Funds Could Stretch

By Jim Redden

April 26, 2018

**Constitutional amendment up for vote would remove bond restrictions and allow Portland and maybe Metro to create more units.**

Mayor Ted Wheeler may not ask the City Council to spend any more affordable housing bond funds until next January — more than two years after Portland voters first approved the \$258.4 million measure at the November 2016 general election.

That is because bond counsel has told the mayor's office that the money can go a lot farther if Oregon voters approve an amendment to the state constitution this November. The amendment would remove spending restrictions on such funds and take effect on Jan. 1, 2019.

"The amendment would apply to all (affordable housing) bonds that have not been issued by the time it takes effect," says Carol McCoog, the Portland lawyer advising the city on the bonds.

The amendment was referred to the ballot by the 2018 Oregon Legislature. It would repeal a prohibition against governments partnering with private businesses on projects supported by property tax-backed bonds for affordable housing projects. The current restriction is why the council has only promised the bond would preserve or build 1,300 units, far fewer than what the city would normally help support with \$258.4 million spent on traditional affordable housing projects.

But that does not mean Wheeler might not ask the council to approve more affordable housing projects before January. McCoog says the city could use interim financing from other sources to start them and repay that financing with bond funds if the amendment is approved.

Wheeler first talked about the proposed constitutional amendment during his State of the City Address on April 12. He urged people to vote for it, saying its passage would allow the city to increase the number of units to be preserved or created with the funds.

"If voters approve it in November, our bond dollars will go much farther. We might be able to double, or even triple, the number of units created by the affordable housing bond," Wheeler said.

The city so far has received \$37,480,566.75 in affordable housing bond proceeds. All of it was spent to purchase the 263-unit Ellington Apartments in Southeast Portland when it went up for sale in late 2016. The council has purchased the former Safari Club at 3000 S.E. Foster Road with other funds for a future bond project that is now being designed.

Other possible projects are currently being considered by the Affordable Housing Bond Oversight Committee appointed to help the council select them. It could recommend one or more new projects to the council in the coming months.

Despite the limited bond spending so far, during his address, Wheeler said 600 new affordable units opened in 2017 and more than 700 others are under construction and scheduled to open in 2018 — the largest number ever produced with city help in a single year in modern history.

**Amendment could help**

**Metro measure**

Metro, the elected regional government, is also hoping the measure passes. It is drafting a potential affordable housing bond for the November ballot. Although many details have yet to be resolved, discussions are revolving around a \$500 million measure.

During a meeting of a stakeholders committee advising Metro on the measure last Monday, staff said that if the amendment passes, such a bond could preserve or build up to 3,654 units, depending on their configuration. If the measure doesn't pass, the number would only be 2,200 units.

Both those numbers are higher than ones discussed during a March meeting. Since then, Metro staff has reduced the average estimated per unit cost from around \$237,000 to about \$205,000.

During the April 16 meeting at Metro headquarters, one of the hottest subjects was how the money will be distributed within Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties if the measure passes. Based solely on assessed value, Multnomah County would receive 48 percent of the housing, Washington County would receive 34 percent and Clackamas County would receive 21 percent.

But if the distribution was based on severely cost burdened renter households of color, Multnomah County's share jumps to 64 percent, while Washington County drops to 30 percent and Clackamas County falls to a mere 7 percent.

Other possible distribution methods — such as the number of families with children making less than 50 percent of the region's median household income — fall in between the extremes, as does a blend of them. The Clackamas County Commission has sent Metro a letter saying the filter should be poverty, which was not broken out by itself in the discussion draft.

Metro is scheduled to release a potential framework for the measure on April 26, and the Metro Council is expected to vote on the referral on June 7.

## **Portland Cop Probed after Wrong-Way Pursuit Ends in Death**

*By Nick Budnick  
April 26, 2018*

**Officer Alfonso Valadez, Jr pursued car wrong way down I-84. Was just reinstated after 2017 firing.**

It looks so doable in the movies, but on April 19, when Portland Police Officer Alfonso Valadez, Jr. used his police patrol car to follow a hit-and-run suspect the wrong way into speeding traffic on Interstate 84, a fatal head-on collision ensued in which the suspect died.

Police are now reviewing the case to determine whether Valadez's decision to follow the suspect into incoming freeway traffic may have contributed to 59-year-old Christopher Gene Cannard's death.

The matter will shine a light on the bureau's pursuit policy, which was revised last year and which discourages officers from engaging in dangerous pursuits. It also is sure to reignite controversy over how difficult it can be to fire a police officer in Portland.

Valadez had been fired from the bureau approximately a year ago — the date was not immediately released by the city — by former Chief Mike Marshman. His firing came over an allegation that the cop had sexually assaulted a woman. After Valadez's union challenged the

firing to an arbitrator, after roughly a year off, Valadez was reinstated on April 5 — exactly two weeks before the chase that ended on I-84.

The bureau's vehicle pursuit policy revised in 2017 says that officers "must terminate a pursuit when the safety risks posed to the community clearly outweigh the benefit of capturing the suspect."

TJ Browning, a longtime police activist and appointee of the late former Mayor Vera Katz, had pushed the city for more than a decade to revise its pursuit policy to avoid fatalities.

Valadez's pursuit "clearly violates" the bureau's pursuit policy, Browning said adding that with a police car pursuing, Cannard presumably "is accelerating" to get away.

"Now you have two cars going down the freeway in the wrong direction," Browning said, adding that for oncoming drivers, "it compounds the confusion."

Daryl Turner, president of the Portland Police Association, declined to comment, citing the ongoing investigation.

### **Minor hit-and-run**

Cannard's fatal flight from police began when officers responded at about 11:30 p.m. to a report of a hit-and-run near Northeast 99th Avenue and Northeast Glisan Street. The crash resulted in no need for medical treatment, but a white Toyota Celica fled the scene.

Then a police officer not named in the official Portland Police Bureau press release about the pursuit sighted a white Toyota Celica in the 1300 block of Northeast 99th Ave. and attempted to stop him.

In the Celica was Cannard. It's unclear if he was intoxicated or why he fled police. Court records show he was prosecuted for driving while intoxicated in 1994, for fourth-degree assault in 1999. He also was cited for failing to use a safety belt in 2003, though it is unknown whether he wore his seat belt when he died on April 19.

Meanwhile, the officer who pursued Cannard was Valadez, the Portland Tribune has learned.

In 2014, Valadez drew some notoriety for posting a YouTube video describing himself as a tough'SOB'cop, including footage of himself on duty.

In 2015, he was accused of forcing a woman to have oral sex and intercourse with him while she was intoxicated and unable to consent at a party he held at his house while off-duty. The results of the investigation caused then-Chief Mike Marshman to fire Valadez in 2017.

News of the sexual assault investigation, reported in December 2017, did not disclose Valadez's name, only that an officer was fired. But the Tribune has confirmed that it was Valdez.

After approximately a year off and a successful challenge of the firing to an arbitrator, he returned to work on April 5, 2018.

Though details were not immediately available, the bureau typically requires retraining for officers in such situations. The bureau's vehicle pursuit directive, which was revised last August, calls for officers to only engage in potentially dangerous vehicle pursuits when it is objectively reasonable to do so.

That night, while fleeing from Valadez, Cannard drove the wrong way onto eastbound I-84 from 99th, and "As the driver of the white Toyota Celica drove the wrong way on eastbound Interstate 84, an officer pursued the suspected hit and run driver," according to a Portland Police Bureau press release, which did not name Valadez.

"Shortly after driving east on westbound interstate 84, the driver of the Celica collided with a yellow Toyota Prius being driven eastbound on Interstate 84. The collision between the Prius and Celica occurred east of Northeast 82nd Avenue. Upon observing the crash, the pursuing officer requested emergency medical personnel respond to the scene."

While Cannard was found dead, the driver of the Prius — a taxi owned by Broadway Cab — was transported to an area hospital with "what were believed to be non-life-threatening injuries."

Because of the involvement of its own officer, the bureau called in an outside agency, the Clackamas County Sheriff's office, to take over the investigation. When that is complete, the bureau will review Valadez's actions to determine if he complied with the bureau's pursuit policy.

"That is horrifying on a lot of levels," said Dan Handelman of Portland Copwatch, when asked about the crash and informed of Valadez's firing and reinstatement. He noted the new pursuit directive and said "It makes you wonder whether he got up to speed on the new version."

## **Willamette Week**

### **Rent Declined in 2017 in Portland's the Newly Constructed Buildings**

*By Rachel Monahan*

*April 27, 2018*

City's annual State of Housing in Portland report includes some hope for struggling renters.

Rents for apartments in newly constructed buildings declined last year—marking a real change, at least temporarily, in the upward trajectory of housing costs.

"Properties built in 2014 or later were reducing their asking rents across all unit sizes last year—particularly among newly constructed studio apartments, where asking rents decreased up to 6 percent over 2016 prices," according to the Portland Housing Bureau's 2017 State of Housing in Portland report, which was posted to the city's website on Thursday.

Other highlights, as WW has reported, after four straight years of upwards of 5 percent increases in the average rent in Portland, 2017 saw a more modest of 2 percent.

But that doesn't mean those declines helped everyone. Generally, the newest buildings—the one's in which rent declined—are the most expensive.

The rental situation varied for different sized units. The cost of the average studios citywide declined, while one-bedrooms saw small increases. But rents for two bedrooms increased on average by 5 percent, and rents for three bedrooms increased 10 percent.

There were geographic disparities as well.

"Neighborhoods across the city experienced increases in rents with the exception of MLK-Alberta, Interstate, Northwest, and West Portland," the report shows.

"Rents for new apartments along the Vancouver/Williams corridor, Interstate Avenue, Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd, and Alberta Street may be reaching a peak and have likely contributed the decrease in average rents in North and Northeast Portland following several years of rapid growth in those areas."

In contrast, some of the least expensive city neighborhoods saw the sharpest hikes.

"Many East Portland neighborhoods have continued to experience larger-than-average rent growth, with Parkrose-Argay and Pleasant Valley both seeing double-digit average rent increases," the report notes.

The data on rent comes as the city ongoing construction continues to boom: 9,639 was the number of new units of housing produced in 2015 and 2016— that's more than the five-year period of 2009-2013.

"Housing production and permitting levels in the private market are higher than any point in the last 15 years—yet rents in too many of our great neighborhoods remain out of reach for a Portland family making the median income," notes Mayor Ted Wheeler, in his introduction to the report.

## The Portland Mercury

### Hall Monitor: Origin Stories

*By Alex Zielinski  
April 25, 2018*

#### **The Portland Police was first investigated by the feds in 2010. Have we forgotten why?**

It began with Kendra James in 2003. In 2004, James Jahar Perez. In 2005, Vernon Allen. The new millennium brought with it a near-annual trend of African Americans dying at the hands of Portland police. And as the officers involved were consistently let off the hook by local grand juries, anger and heartbreak grew among Portland's Black community. This frustration reached a tipping point in January 2010, when Aaron Campbell, an unarmed, suicidal Black man, was shot and killed by Portland police. No officers faced criminal charges.

"We then realized we were never going to get justice for these killings in Portland," recalls JoAnn Hardesty, one of many who called for police reform immediately after Campbell's death.

That's why, in early 2010, members of Portland's African American community requested a federal investigation into how Portland police officers treat the city's Black residents. While the Civil Rights Division of the US Department of Justice (DOJ) responded to their call, months of research and interviews led investigators to a somewhat different conclusion—that the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) regularly uses unreasonable force when interacting with those suffering from mental illness. It appeared racial injustice at the hands of PPB was no longer up for discussion.

Now—eight years later—the local conversation around police reform has all but erased Black lives from its narrative.

What happened?

Hardesty recalls the explanation given to her in 2012 by Tom Perez, the then-Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights who oversaw the feds' investigation. According to Hardesty, Perez said it would be difficult to bring a racial bias case to the US Supreme Court without obvious evidence of intent. Which, he argued, didn't exist in Portland's case. Perez also said that federal investigators solely examine a 12-month period—a period that, in this case, included a high number of officer shootings involving people in mental health crises.

“I did not find these answers sufficient,” Hardesty told me. “It was a bait and switch. It went from investigating African American deaths to putting police on the front lines of a mental health crisis.”

Last week, the city met with DOJ lawyers before a federal judge to show how its police force has improved since 2012. During public testimony, Hardesty railed against the DOJ and PPB for ignoring the initial reason the feds came to town, calling the settlement agreement reached between both parties a “colossal failure.”

According to Reverend LeRoy Haynes, who also testified at the meeting, the shift in the DOJ’s focus was based on the complexity of the case. Haynes is a founding member of the Albina Ministerial Alliance Coalition for Justice and Police Reform (AMAC), one of the organizations that initially called for DOJ intervention.

“The emphasis should have been on racial justice from the beginning,” says Hayes, noting that only six percent of Portlanders identify as African American. He believes the DOJ thought tackling police reform from a mental health angle would be a “much easier” task than unpacking systemic racism within PPB.

In some cases, this shift in the DOJ’s focus has made members of the African American community feel as if they’ve been unfairly pitted against mental health advocates.

But so few of these cases are that clear-cut. In many incidents where officers use excessive force, the target is both African American and suffering from a mental health crisis. Such was the case with Aaron Campbell.

At least seven African Americans have been shot by Portland police since Campbell’s death in 2010. Four of them have died.

As the city trudges forward with new reforms to hold its police force accountable, it’s important to remember what sparked this overhaul in the first place: race. Until PPB confronts this unaddressed piece of the story, the city’s settlement with the feds won’t ever truly be resolved.

## **The District Attorney’s Office May Be Over-Protecting Cops**

*By Alex Zielinski  
April 25, 2018*

### **Legal loopholes could keep police testimony under lock and key**

A seemingly innocuous case against a Portland police sergeant may set a new precedent for how far the county’s top lawyer will go to protect cops—and how little the citizen-led police oversight board can do about it.

When a Portlander brings a potentially criminal complaint against an officer, it’s Portland Police Bureau (PPB) procedure to call for two investigations: one conducted by PPB or city staff to find if the officer violated workplace rules, and another conducted by the Multnomah County District Attorney’s office to decide if the officer broke any laws.

The administrative investigation is either handled by PPB’s internal affairs department or the Independent Police Review (IPR), the city department that investigates cases involving higher-ranking officers, crowd control cases, and issues involving vulnerable populations. A citizen can appeal a decision made by internal affairs or the IPR to the Citizen Review Committee (CRC)—a panel of 11 volunteer community members that then makes recommendations to the IPR.

That's what happened in December, when PPB's internal affairs decided Sergeant Erin Smith should not be disciplined for telling activist Ben Kerensa that he "could be arrested" for filming officers during a 2016 protest—despite Smith admitting to investigators that he had lied to Kerensa. Kerensa successfully appealed this decision to the CRC. Smith's admitted lie cemented CRC's recommendation that PPB discipline Smith, and Police Chief Danielle Outlaw agreed.

But last week, the Multnomah County District Attorney's office decided that Smith's empty threat didn't merit criminal prosecution, and promptly closed its investigation. While the DA's decision against pursuing the case isn't necessarily shocking, the office's explanation has raised concerns among police accountability advocates and lawyers.

In her April 18 analysis of the case, Senior Deputy District Attorney Amity Girt wrote that since Smith admitted to misleading Kerensa during an internal "administrative investigation"—not a criminal investigation—the admission cannot be used against Smith in a criminal trial. That's because during these administrative investigations, like the ones conducted by the IPR, an officer's testimony is considered "compelled," meaning they're at risk of losing their job if they refuse to testify. Thanks to the Fifth Amendment, a person's compelled testimony cannot be used against them in court.

"The result of Sergeant Smith going through the administration investigative process and providing a compelled statement presents the risk of transactional immunity," writes Girt. "Meaning that [Smith] could be entirely immune from prosecution for any crime stemming from this incident."

A day later, Girt had edited this sentence out of the memo. But to Mat dos Santos, legal director of the ACLU of Oregon, the implications of that statement couldn't be ignored.

Dos Santos says that while it's true compelled statements can't be used in the courtroom, they shouldn't prevent the DA's office from conducting a criminal investigation of an officer—an investigation where testimony is most definitely on the record. That's why PPB runs two parallel but independent investigations, administrative and criminal, if they believe a cop is guilty of a crime.

According to dos Santos, District Attorney Rod Underhill has taken an "overbroad position" on an officer's immunity from prosecution, blurring the line between these two investigations, and, in the process, shielding cops from criminal prosecution.

"It's such a troubling conclusion," says dos Santos. "This means police officers can never be prosecuted for information that comes out in an administrative hearing. What happens when it's something bigger—an investigation into sexual misconduct or a shooting? That means [the] DA could never get involved. It's absurd, and the public should be outraged."

It's also a sign that the office of Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill has not changed its mind about how cops should be treated after shooting a member of the public.

Last July, amid a police contract overhaul, Underhill argued that an officer involved in a shooting cannot be interviewed by internal affairs about the incident until after a criminal investigation is completed—a process that could take months. If PPB's compelled interview takes place before the completion of a criminal investigation, Underhill wrote, the accused officer could be immune to criminal prosecution.

Both the National Lawyers Guild and the IPR disagreed with Underhill, insisting that officers should be interviewed by PPB's internal affairs department within 48 hours of a shooting but that the content of those interviews should be kept from criminal prosecutors.

In a statement to the Mercury, Underhill confirmed he hasn't changed his position on police immunity—but clarified Girt's newly-amended analysis.

“Any statement that indicates that the District Attorney's Office intends to reject all cases in which a compelled statement is obtained is incorrect,” Underhill wrote.

That statement, however, still implies that the DA's office might reject some of those cases.

City officials have often pointed to the IPR as a transparent, community-led solution to officer misconduct. But if the DA's ruling sets a precedent, it could mean that future complaints brought to the IPR could result in officers being shielded from criminal prosecution.

“It essentially guts IPR and internal affairs from being able to investigate their own officers,” says dos Santos. “That means those bodies have no power.”

IPR Director Constantin Severe doesn't think this is necessarily the case. While the IPR may keep compelled statements under wraps, it doesn't block IPR staff from tipping off the DA's office when they suspect criminal fault.

“If we become aware of possible misconduct issues during our investigation, we let the criminal side know,” Severe told the Mercury. “Then prosecutors can discover whatever information we've obtained independently.”

Smith's misconduct investigation might have been a low-stakes case, but it provided a glimpse into how the DA's office might operate when a more serious accusation of officer wrongdoing lands in front of the IPR.

In the words of dos Santos: “This could become a real problem.”

## **Highlights from Portland's 2017 State of Housing**

*By Kelly Kenoyer  
April 26, 2018*

Portland Housing Bureau has released its "State of Housing" report for 2017 is out, and it's a mixed bag. Rents are still rising (though at a slower pace) and the most affordable areas in East Portland have it the worst, leading to displacement of working class communities.

But according to Mayor Ted Wheeler's foreword to the report, "In the last year, the city more than doubled the number of affordable housing units it opened over the previous year, and there are currently more than 700 newly affordable units under construction and slated to open in 2018." Another 1,300 should open in 2019.

Portland City Council is set to hear about the report at a May 3 council meeting.

The affordability report analyzed 24 different neighborhoods in the Portland area and found that only two of them are affordable to with three-person household at 60 percent of Area Median Income—122nd-Division and Centennial-Glenfair-Wilkes—compared to four neighborhoods the previous year.

What's worse: "There are no neighborhoods affordable to rent for the average Black, Latino, Native American, and single mother households." Even historically affordable East Portland is becoming gentrified and pushing people out—probably because half of the city's total population growth is going to East Portland. Also moving at a fast pace is the so-called Central City, which

encompasses Old Town, Downtown, and the inner east side, and grew by over 8,000 people between 2000 and 2015.

And even though 83,000 people moved to Portland between 2000 and 2015, the Black population is actually decreasing. That, in conjunction with unaffordable rents, is "strong evidence of persistent racial inequity in housing and opportunity in the city," according to the report.

Homeownership rates among people of color are still abysmally low, despite city efforts to change that. White people still own a lot of houses—only 44 percent of white people rent (Asians households around the same level), compared to nearly 70 percent of Latino, Black and Native American communities. The percentage of renters is increasing steadily in Portland, meaning renters may soon outnumber homeowners.

"Approximately 72,585 Portland renters earn 80 percent of the Area Median Income or less. More than 31,680 of them are severely cost-burdened—spending 50 percent or more of their income on housing—putting them at substantial risk of displacement."

Around 4.2 percent of the population of Portland was homeless in 2017, and communities of color are over-represented here as well compared to their share of the overall population. Nearly 50 percent of the unsheltered population was concentrated in Downtown, Old Town, and Southeast Portland.

As for creation of new housing: Portland added 4,419 new units of housing in 2016, the vast majority being multi-unit buildings. "MLK Alberta, Lents-Foster, and Interstate Corridor neighborhoods accounted for nearly one-third of the single-family units permitted and produced in 2016," the report finds. Most of the multi-unit buildings are concentrated closer to downtown, and based on a cursory observation of how often I trip on construction equipment in that area, I'm guessing that trend shall continue. Construction has been higher than ever in the past few years.

Studios are getting cheaper—average rent dropped by 3.3 percent across Portland, though the Gateway neighborhood, which allegedly used to be affordable, saw average rents skyrocket by 83 percent on studios last year. 83 PERCENT. Multi-bedroom rentals are also getting significantly more expensive: 5.2 percent more costly for 2-bedrooms and a whopping 9.9 percent more expensive for 3-bedrooms.

There are some bold goals outlined in the report, like using the Portland Housing Bond to create 600 units of housing for the very poorest households and locating affordable housing in regions of the city where very little is currently available. The bureau also wants to make 30 percent of the housing in the central city affordable to low-income people, and the report says it's meeting that goal with over 7,000 units of publicly supported affordable housing in the area.

## **The Daily Journal of Commerce**

### **Residential Infill Project Coming into Focus**

*By Chuck Slothower  
April 26, 2018*

Portland officials plan to limit sizes of new homes in much of the city as part of a broader drive to encourage development of more housing units.

The Residential Infill Project is an ambitious rewrite of residential zoning throughout the city, with exceptions made for a few neighborhoods.

The long-gestating plan is moving closer to enactment. The Planning and Sustainability Commission will take it up in two public hearings in May. Then city planners will make any necessary changes before bringing the project to the City Council in the fall.

Developers and residents are being urged to submit public testimony now.

Planners aim to encourage more middle housing – anything larger than an apartment but smaller than a single-family house. Housing such as townhomes and duplexes can house more residents at lower cost with minimal disruption to existing single-family neighborhoods, city officials said.

As part of the zoning rewrite, city planners are proposing stricter rules on how large newly constructed homes can be. In an R5 zone, which covers 132,000 lots in Portland, homes would be limited to a 0.5 floor-area ratio – for example, a 2,500-square-foot house on a 5,000-square-foot lot. That’s a significant change from current rules that allow 1.35 floor-area ratio, or a 6,750-square-foot house on a 5,000-square-foot lot.

Instead of McMansions, the rules would encourage accessory dwelling units, duplexes and other building types in urban neighborhoods.

Existing homeowners would not be forced to make changes. But any expansion of a nonconforming home’s footprint, or a scrape-and-rebuild, would trigger the new requirements.

The Residential Infill Project allows more building options on residential lots, such as a house with two ADUs or a duplex with an attached ADU. Triplexes would be allowed on corner lots.

“What we’re trying to do is create options that are single dwelling-like, but smaller,” said Joe Zehnder, chief planner with the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

The rules are likely to prompt developers to build more small condominium projects.

“That’s our expectation; that’s our hope,” Zehnder said.

The restrictions on new, large homes are likely to make existing large homes more attractive, said Mike Nuss, owner of RareBird, a small-scale Portland infill developer. The rules will also make some projects infeasible because of the square footage limits. And developers are likely to be less aggressive in acquiring land for residential projects.

“The building community is in somewhat of an outrage for it, because it does limit what you can build,” Nuss said. “I think the end result will be smaller units.”

Meanwhile, the Portland real-estate market has a low inventory of single-family homes – only 1.6 months in the metro area. Median sales prices continue to rise, up 6.8 percent in March to \$395,000.

“The market need is more family-size housing, and this does not address that,” Nuss said.

The infill options – known as “A” overlay – would be available in most Southeast and Northeast Portland neighborhoods, and portions of Southwest Portland. Areas with natural hazards such as landslide risk were excluded. Neighborhoods considered at risk of displacement of existing residents of color, including Cully, North Portland and East Portland, were also excluded. (A map is available at [www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/infill/mapapp](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/bps/infill/mapapp)).

The “A” overlay could be extended to neighborhoods at risk of displacement in future years if conditions warrant it, city planners said.

“This is just being conservative to see how the thing plays out,” Zehnder said.

Some Cully residents have decried being left out of the overlay zone.

Houses would still be allowed as tall as 30 feet – two and a half stories – on standard lots. Rules would be changed to measure height from the lowest point near the house, not the highest point.

Parking would not be required for duplexes and triplexes.

“It’s a little bit of an incentive to build more unit types,” said Sandra Wood, supervising planner at BPS.

The city is also seeking to discourage driveways that access streets, and to encourage alleyway parking where possible.

“For every driveway, it eliminates an on-street parking space that would be used by many people,” Wood said.

The plan has garnered more than 180 public comments submitted online. Among them, Ethan Seltzer, a Portland State University professor emeritus of urban studies and planning, said the project falls short of what’s needed but would improve upon current rules.

“We need a city built for change, not one that is stubbornly committed to a past long since gone,” Seltzer wrote. “I applaud the RIP for moving us into what I think is a much better direction. It could do more, but this is a good first step and I support it.”

Another resident, Bruce Gilley, said the residential infill plan is “unfair to people who chose to buy houses in neighborhoods with the current density limits.”

The Planning and Sustainability Commission will hold public hearings on the Residential Infill Project on May 8 and 15.