

The Oregonian

Sunday Parkways Will Hit Portland's Central City, 'Green Loop' This Weekend

By Andrew Theen

July 16, 2018

For the first time since 2011, Portland is bringing its Sunday Parkways street fair and bike and pedestrian loop to downtown.

This Sunday, tens of thousands of cyclists and pedestrians are expected to participate in the third event of the season. City officials shut down roads to motorized vehicles and freight, and set up family-friendly events, live music and free games along the route.

The 6-mile loop will also include close-in eastside neighborhoods. The Portland Trail Blazers are participating in the event and will host 3-on-3 basketball and other activities at the Moda Center.

"This could be one of the biggest Sunday Parkways ever," said Dylan Rivera, Portland transportation bureau spokesman. "We think we'll attract people from all over the city and the region."

Sunday Parkways, which is in its 11th year, typically draws 15,000 to 20,000 participants to each stop.

The first-of-its-kind route also coincides with the weeks-long Interstates 84 and 5 interchange closures. Sunday's event lasts from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., but it will involve street closures through key areas of the city where drivers may be diverting from the freeways to seek relief on city streets.

Rivera said the city was "definitely aware" of the ramp closures, but he expects the city road crews and police presence will help manage the situation.

Transportation leaders plan a Tuesday news conference to spread the word about the route, which heads through the South Waterfront, Park Blocks, Rose Quarter, Lloyd District and Central Eastside Industrial district.

The route follows the 6-mile path of what city leaders hope will eventually be known as the "Green Loop."

Portland codified plans for the loop into its official planning documents this year. It's envisioned as a multi-use path that will give pedestrians and cyclists a safe place to get around.

According to its new Green Loop website, the city hasn't fleshed out a potential price tag, but a similar project in Indianapolis totaled \$8 million per mile. "While specific funding resources for the Green Loop have not been determined, the project will require its own fundraising campaign," according to the project's website.

The Sullivan's Gulch Crossing, a pedestrian and bike-only bridge expected to break ground in 2019, is a key connection on the Green Loop that will eventually span I-84.

Much of the Green Loop isn't all that green in the Central Eastside at the moment.

Portland planning officials said the project "may involve repurposing some public space (streets or parts of them) into open space," down the line, "which would create more opportunities for trees and help us address climate resiliency and storm water management at the same time."

[Here's a map of the route and various events along the way.](#)

Portland Police Union Leader Slams Mayor's Response to Homelessness, Calls City 'Cesspool'

By Rebecca Woolington

July 17, 2018

The leader of the Portland police union defended officers interactions with homeless people, slammed Mayor Ted Wheeler's response to homelessness and said the city "has become a cesspool."

"Livability that once made Portland a unique and vibrant city is now replaced with human feces in businesses doorways, in our parks, and on our streets," Officer Daryl Turner, president of the Portland Police Association, wrote in a lengthy statement posted on Facebook Monday.

"Aggressive panhandlers block the sidewalks, storefronts, and landmarks like Pioneer Square, discouraging people from enjoying our City. Garbage-filled RVs and vehicles are strewn throughout our neighborhoods. Used needles, drug paraphernalia, and trash are common sights lining the streets and sidewalks of the downtown core area, under our bridges, and freeway overpasses. That's not what our families, business owners, and tourists deserve."

The union's statement comes in response to remarks the mayor made to the The Oregonian/OregonLive's editorial board last week, acknowledging it's a problem that half of the arrests police made last year were of homeless people.

"I am incensed that once again the Mayor has thrown Portland Police Officers under the bus instead of saying what we all know to be true: that his proposed solutions to our homelessness crisis have failed," Turner wrote in the statement.

Michael Cox, the mayor's chief of staff, said the office is reviewing the union's message.

The newsroom published an analysis last month that showed homeless people accounted for 52 percent of arrests while making up less than 3 percent of the population.

Wheeler told the editorial board that people who are experiencing homelessness or who have mental health and addiction issues should interact less with police and more with social service providers. But he praised officers for trying to connect homeless people with services and said arrests are "their last choice."

Wheeler said he wants to learn what's driving the arrests.

In the statement, Turner took particular issue with the mayor telling the newsroom that the city must determine whether officers are profiling homeless people.

"True to form, instead of standing up and leading, Mayor Wheeler has reverted to the, 'Is there some sort of profiling or implicit bias by the cops' rhetoric to smokescreen his own failed policies," the statement says. "Will investigating our officers result in more housing for the homeless? Will it provide more mental health or addiction resources for those in need? Will it resolve the livability issues that Portland residents and business owners face daily? Of course not!"

The city's police oversight agency, the Independent Police Review, launched an investigation last week to examine how police interact with homeless people in response to The

Oregonian/OregonLive's reporting and a complaint from the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon. Police Chief Danielle Outlaw requested the investigation.

In the police union's statement, Turner says the police bureau is understaffed and unable to take needed time to connect homeless people with social services.

The city has failed to give officers the resources they need, the statement says, and the mayor is blaming police for his own policy shortfalls.

Here's the full statement that's posted on the union's Facebook page.

Our City has become a cesspool. Livability that once made Portland a unique and vibrant city is now replaced with human feces in businesses doorways, in our parks, and on our streets. Aggressive panhandlers block the sidewalks, storefronts, and landmarks like Pioneer Square, discouraging people from enjoying our City. Garbage-filled RVs and vehicles are strewn throughout our neighborhoods. Used needles, drug paraphernalia, and trash are common sights lining the streets and sidewalks of the downtown core area, under our bridges, and freeway overpasses. That's not what our families, business owners, and tourists deserve.

Mayor Wheeler's public policies have failed. Record tax revenues are being brought into the City; yet what do we have to show for it? I am incensed that once again the Mayor has thrown Portland Police Officers under the bus instead of saying what we all know to be true: that his proposed solutions to our homelessness crisis have failed. What we need is for our City and County leaders to take responsibility for this crisis getting out of hand. They need to put forth actual solutions with actual results and stop throwing hard-earned taxpayer dollars down a black hole.

True to form, instead of standing up and leading, Mayor Wheeler has reverted to the, "Is there some sort of profiling or implicit bias by the cops" rhetoric to smokescreen his own failed policies. Will investigating our officers result in more housing for the homeless? Will it provide more mental health or addiction resources for those in need? Will it resolve the livability issues that Portland residents and business owners face daily? Of course not! It's more of the same from the Mayor; failed policies and blaming others for his failures.

The Portland Police Bureau has not been given nearly enough resources to fulfill its small piece in addressing the homelessness crisis. We are understaffed. Officers are unable to spend the time needed to connect our homeless to necessary services, whether it be housing, mental health services, drug rehabilitation, or other resources. It's a recipe for failure to put the burden of the homelessness solution on the Police Bureau's shoulders and then give us insufficient resources to do the work.

The rank and file of the Portland Police Bureau are working tirelessly to improve livability in our City, preserve public safety, and connect our vulnerable communities to social services. We are the first line resource on the streets serving the public—including the homeless—every day with care and professionalism. The fact that our officers have become the scapegoats for Mayor Wheeler's failed public policies aimed at solving our homelessness crisis is insulting.

Portland Police Officers deserve better. Our families and communities deserve better. Our businesses deserve better. Our City deserves better!

Major League Baseball to Portland Backers are ‘For Real,’ Mayor Says

By Gordon Friedman

July 13, 2018

Mayor Ted Wheeler said Friday the businessmen and celebrities behind a push to bring a Major League Baseball team to Portland are “for real” despite his initial skepticism.

Wheeler said he assembled a team of “high-level national experts” in baseball economics and asked them to evaluate the plan of the investors, who are operating under the name Portland Diamond Project.

What they concluded surprised him.

“About 99 percent of me expected them to say it’s not there, not fully baked, they don’t really have their strategy in place. They don’t have the right team. They don’t have the right investors,” the mayor said.

“They advised me just the opposite. They said these guys are for real. They know what they’re doing.”

Among Diamond Project’s early investors are married duo Russell Wilson, the Super Bowl-winning Seattle Seahawks quarterback, and pop music superstar Ciara.

Retired Nike executive Craig Cheek founded the project, and brought former Trail Blazers announcer Mike Barrett and former state senator Jason Atkinson into the fold early.

Native Portlander and retired MLB star Dale Murphy is a consultant to the project, as is longtime pro scout Larry D’Amato.

The Diamond Project has also engaged lobbyists, architects, real estate agents, attorneys and branding pros to advise them.

Their first big move: an \$80 million offer on the Portland Public Schools headquarters building, near the Broadway Bridge. The bid is pending.

Though the Diamond Project has assembled a top-notch team, its investors face an uphill battle before the first pitch of a major league game can be thrown in Portland.

Wheeler has maintained that unlike other cities, Portland will not devise a new funding source to build a stadium or secure a team. He reiterated that commitment Friday, while offering measured support for the project.

“I’m cautiously optimistic,” the mayor said. “If they can pull it off, economically it’d be a tremendous opportunity for this community.”

And in Portland, where ever-rising levels of homelessness and an affordable housing crunch have some residents reeling, a new baseball team to root for would be “really good for civic pride,” Wheeler said.

Wheeler added: “This is of course all theoretical until you see the money.”

Building baseball stadiums and assembling teams can cost billions. The Diamond Project has so far been mum about its potential big-money backers, be they Wall Street firms or Northwest billionaires.

“It’s like a mystery,” Wheeler said.

The Portland Tribune

City Hall Update: Foreclosure Vote Delayed Until Aug. 8

By Jim Redden

July 17, 2018

Plus, Wheeler to make affordable housing bond request , employment grants available, and Gateway Discovery Park opening postponed.

The City Council's consideration of foreclosing on four "zombie homes" owned by Norman Yee has been pushed back from July 18 to Aug. 8, because the foreclosure manager in the City Auditor's Office will not be available for the earlier hearing.

Yee owns 10 derelict properties in Portland with city liens totaling \$668,970.21. Four others already are being foreclosed on by other parties. City bureaus are considering recommending the remaining two for foreclosure in the future.

There are hundreds of empty and neglected houses causing problems in Portland neighborhoods despite the hot real estate market and need for additional homes. The council can foreclose on properties and authorize them to be sold at auction to collect liens imposed on them because of code violations. To read more on the issue, go to

www.tinyurl.com/ycb7yjcl.

Wheeler to make affordable housing bond request

Mayor Ted Wheeler will ask the City Council on Wednesday to buy a 19,000-square foot property at 5827 N.E. Prescott for \$500,000 to build at least 50 new units of affordable housing.

If approved on July 18, the project will be the fourth announced in the last 18 months, totaling more than 560 units, purchased or planned with funds from the \$258 million affordable housing bond approved by Portland voters in the November 2016 general election.

The property is in the rapidly-gentrifying Cully neighborhood. Almost no new publicly-regulated housing has been added to the neighborhood since 2010.

"My pledge to the public is to deliver the 1,300 units promised under the Bond by 2023. With the 50 new units planned for this site, plus hundreds more under active negotiation, we are making aggressive progress to meet our commitment well ahead of schedule," says Wheeler.

Employment grants available

Applications are now being accepted for Community Opportunities and Enhancement Program grants intended to help build a more diverse local construction workforce and assist disadvantaged, minority-owned, women-owned, service disabled veteran-owned and emerging small businesses.

The funds were allocated by the City Council for the Portland Building Reconstruction, Washington Park Reservoir and Yamhill Garage projects.

Applications are due by 5 p.m. on Friday, Aug. 3. More information, including the grant application and instructions, can be found at www.portlandoregon.gov/brfs/75540.

Park opening delayed

The opening of the Gateway Discovery Park was postponed from July 1 to Aug. 4 because of construction delays.

The new 3.2-acre park at 10520 N.E. Halsey St. will feature an urban plaza, an inclusive play area, a skate area, picnic tables and a Portland Loo public toilet.

All previously scheduled events will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. during the rescheduled grand opening ceremony.

City Rezone Seeks to Protect 3,000 Families in Mobile Home Parks

By Steve Law

July 17, 2018

Fifty-six manufactured home parks would get special zoning, making it harder to redevelop the properties for other uses and uproot homeowners.

More than 3,000 Portland families in mobile and manufactured home parks stand to get new assurances their complexes won't be redeveloped for other uses, alleviating their fears of getting kicked out.

The city Planning and Sustainability Commission voted 7-2 last Tuesday to rezone 56 mobile and manufactured home parks in the city with a new "residential manufactured dwelling park" designation. The move is designed to protect affordable housing by thwarting redevelopment of the parks into apartments or other more lucrative investments.

The City Council is expected to consider the recommendation later this summer, said Tom Armstrong, supervising planner with the city Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, which researched and drafted the new policy.

Mayor Ted Wheeler, who oversees that bureau, welcomed the commissioners' decision.

"We're hopeful that this is an opportunity to protect one of the remaining sources of naturally occurring affordable housing, and we're looking forward to reviewing their recommendation," said the mayor's spokesman and chief of staff, Michael Cox.

The real estate boom has created new opportunities for park owners to convert their properties into more profitable ventures, such as multistory apartment complexes, spreading anxiety among mobile and manufactured home owners who rent spaces for their homes.

Four mobile home and manufactured home parks in Portland have closed since 2016 due to redevelopments, Armstrong said. The new zoning would apply to all but one of the city's parks, Fox Run, because it's on prime industrially zoned land.

Mobile homes aren't all that mobile.

Moving them can cost \$20,000 or more, and many of the homeowners are poor or of modest means, and can't afford that. Some older mobile homes, such as single-wide ones at Oak Leaf mobile home park in the Cully neighborhood, proved too rickety to move when a nonprofit bought the park to renovate it. Other owners say it's hard to find vacant slots to move their units.

"I'll be very sorry if they do not keep this affordable housing available to seniors and other families," said Rita Loberger, who lives in Eldorado Villas in Tigard. She's a volunteer advocate for fellow mobile and manufactured home owners via the Manufactured Housing/Oregon State Tenants Association. If more measures aren't taken to protect existing parks, Loberger said, redevelopments may put more vulnerable people out on the streets.

Living Cully spearheaded the campaign to rezone the parks.

"We're thrilled that it passed this first hurdle," said Cameron Herrington, anti-displacement coordinator for Living Cully. The coalition of four nonprofits got involved in the issue when Oak Leaf residents faced eviction after the owner signed a deal to sell the park for a redevelopment. That plan was blocked and St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County wound up buying the complex and is now fixing it up.

Landlords expect legal action

Landlord interests expect the City Council will enact the rezoning plan, but they predict a wave of legal claims will follow.

"If the city adopts a zoning change that is residential uses that significantly impairs the value of the property, they subject themselves to claims," said John DiLorenzo, a Portland attorney who lobbies for Oregon landlords. Under Measure 49, an initiative sponsored by property rights advocates, individual park owners could file claims for compensation.

"I think Measure 49 is the strongest thing that we've going for us now," said Chuck Carpenter, executive director of Manufactured Housing Communities of Oregon, which includes more than 500 parks.

Carpenter said he's confounded why the city would want to hamper investors who are already providing affordable housing. He urged advocates to allow for conversions to, for example, affordable apartment complexes, which could house more people on the sites.

"These parks were never built with the idea of some sort of permanence," Carpenter said, and some are ripe for redevelopments when the homes and infrastructure get tired.

The city rezoning could cause a slow decline in the quality and conditions at some of the parks, Carpenter said.

"I just don't know what they're thinking," DiLorenzo said of city officials. "They're going to wind up with an albatross."

Adding development opportunities

Eight of the parks are located in non-residential zones, making those ineligible for Measure 49 claims, Armstrong said.

And the Planning and Sustainability Commission adopted several new provisions that will allow for more development at the parks and off-site, which could mitigate any Measure 49 claims.

The new zoning will allow one home on every 1,500 square feet of space within the parks, compared to the current 2,000 square feet. In total, that could allow 33 percent more units at the parks.

Two innovative designs could allow greater density, Armstrong said. One is called "park model," which is akin to a tiny house on wheels. There also are new stacked models that are two stories high and include two units.

Park owners also could gain rights to build denser developments on multifamily properties they own off-site, throughout the city.

Park owners also can make commitments to the city that they'll keep at least half of their units affordable to those earning less than 60 percent of median income, and qualify for greater density that way. "I would say most of them probably qualify for that" already, Armstrong said.

Combined, the total number of units at the 56 parks could mushroom from 3,000 to 7,800 if all the owners max out on the allowed density bonuses.

In addition, the proposal provides more flexibility for park owners to use sites for RVs, which are not generally allowed now. RV sites may be rented out for tiny houses on wheels, providing a new niche for those popular dwelling units.

Once the new special zoning is applied to the parks, it should make it easier for nonprofits like St. Vincent de Paul of Lane County to buy more of them, Herrington said, or for CASA of Oregon to help homeowners buy the land beneath their complexes and form resident cooperatives.

"We think both of those models will be more likely if the competition from other developers isn't there," Herrington said.

The City Council recently adopted new language in its 2035 Comprehensive Plan to establish the importance of manufactured home parks as an affordable housing option. Such parks are considered the largest source of affordable housing in the private sector.

A blanket zone change is a relatively cheap way for the city to stabilize that supply.

The 3,000 mobile and manufactured homes are more than twice the number of affordable units the city of Portland promised to create with proceeds from the \$258.4 million affordable housing bond approved by voters in November 2016. And they're comparable to the 2,400 to 3,900 units to be created if voters approve a \$652.8 million bond proposed by Metro this November.

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To get Sustainable Life news delivered weekly to your inbox: <https://bit.ly/2Isfz1F>

Mayor Believes City's Future Bright

By Jim Redden

July 17, 2018

Wheeler says Portland homeless strategy is working but understands frustration with outdoor camping.

After 18 frequently-bruising months in office, Mayor Ted Wheeler is still enthusiastic about Portland's future, even though he admits problems like homelessness, the affordable housing crisis and traffic congestion worry many residents.

"Portland is a fantastic city," he says. "Mostly, things are going pretty well. A lot of people want to live here."

Wheeler spoke to the Portland Tribune editorial board and reporters last Friday. The wide-ranging conversation came after a year-and-a-half of sometimes contentious City Council meetings and public events.

Although he's leaning toward running for reelection in 2020, Wheeler says he will not decide until about a year before, and only after talking it over with his family.

Protesters have occasionally disrupted council meetings and many Portlanders believe the city is growing too fast. Despite the turmoil, Wheeler repeatedly said his administration and the council are responding well to problems, such as homelessness, that are largely the result of national policies, including large and ongoing cuts in federal spending on affordable housing projects.

"Homelessness is increasing in all major West Coast cities. It actually increased less in Portland than San Diego, San Francisco and Seattle last year, and our unsheltered population was the only one that declined," Wheeler said.

Although Wheeler admitted that many people are angry and frustrated about the number of people they see camping outside, he insisted the situation would be far worse if the council had not substantially increased spending on homeless services and new affordable housing projects in his first two budgets. Much of the money has gone into prevention and transitioning people from shelters into permanent housing.

"We've kept 6,000 people from becoming homeless and moved another 5,000 off the streets. There's much more to be done, but I'm convinced we have the right strategy," Wheeler said.

Wheeler also defended the Portland Police Bureau in response to reporting by the Oregonian that a little more than half of all people arrested in 2017 were homeless. Wheeler denied that officers were profiling the homeless, saying that they were largely responding to citizen calls about criminal activity, including trespassing.

"We have not criminalized homelessness — we have criminalized criminal activity," said Wheeler, who supports Police Chief Danielle Outlaw's request that the Independent Police Review Division of the City Auditor's Office investigate the situation.

Density a big issue

Another issue generating a lot of public concern right now is the future of the city's single-family neighborhoods, Wheeler said.

The Residential Infill Project (RIP) initiated by former Mayor Charlie Hales has recommended that about 60 percent of them be rezoned to allow for relatively small multi-family housing projects, including duplexes, triplexes and four-plexes. It is supported by density advocates but opposed by many homeowners and historic preservationists.

Wheeler says he supports increasing density to help accommodate the additional people expected to move here over the next 20 years. He voted to raise maximum building heights in downtown and the Old Town/Chinatown neighborhood as part of the Central City Plan update recently approved by the council.

But Wheeler is not convinced the RIP recommendations currently being considered by the Planning and Sustainability Commission strike the right balance for single-family neighborhoods. Although the council had originally been scheduled to take them up by the end of the year, Wheeler said the vote has now been delayed until March 2019.

"I'm in no rush," Wheeler said of the postponement.

Also put on hold are bureau reassignments Wheeler had originally been thinking about making after the new budget was approved by the council in May, but delayed to accommodate commissioners' vacation schedules and see who fills the vacant council seat in November.

Assigning bureaus to the five council members is one of the few powers the mayor has under Portland's unique form of government.

"I've told the council we're all going to have some reassignments, including me," Wheeler said.

Wheeler has not yet decided which bureaus to reassign. But he said one candidate is the Bureau of Development Services, which accepts and processes building permit applications, including referring them to the other construction-related bureaus that must approve them, such as the Portland Bureau of Transportation.

"There's a backlog of permit applications at BDS that needs to be reduced. I'm thinking that could be done by clustering it with the Housing Bureau and the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability," he said.

Commissioner Chloe Eudaly is currently in charge of BDS, while Wheeler oversees the housing and planning bureaus.

Major projects on horizon

Much of Wheeler's optimism about Portland relates to large redevelopment projects that are moving forward. They include the ongoing master planning of the Broadway Corridor at the west end of the Broadway Bridge, which includes the former U.S. Post Office distribution center that was purchased by Prosper Portland, formerly known as the Portland Development Commission.

"That's an opportunity to create an entirely new, sustainable neighborhood in the middle of the city that will attract national attention. I think it will interest a Fortune 500 company or educational institution," Wheeler said.

Wheeler also said he is not discouraged because negotiations have broken down between Prosper Portland and the Zidell family over the redevelopment of their former barge-building facilities in the South Waterfront neighborhood. Wheeler believes the parties will eventually reach agreement on who will pay what share of the infrastructure costs necessary to support the project.

"I'm not going to negotiate on something for 18 months just to give up on it," Wheeler said.

Mayor Pushes for 'Bigger Vision' Around Need for New Schools

*By Shasta Kearns Moore
July 14, 2018*

As mayor, Ted Wheeler has little power to fund new schools, but he thinks new developer fees would be a good start.

As Portland grows by leaps and bounds, there is still no concrete plan to build any new schools in the city.

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler — who admits his position plays a "bit role" in education policy arena — says he sees one solution as charging developers fees for building new schools.

"We need a bigger vision around education infrastructure," he said.

A new school system development charge (SDC) would be a significant shift in both statewide policy and the level of cooperation between city government and local school districts.

Wheeler — as part of a wide-ranging Friday morning interview with the Portland Tribune reporting staff and editorial board — pointed out that the city already charges new housing projects in order build new parks, utilities and roads.

"If I were a candidate for governor — which I'm not — I would really hone in on that as an opportunity that I think would both be popular and interesting," Wheeler said. "Understanding, I do not control education. I do not control educational resources. But it's just noteworthy to me that we don't connect development to changing needs around school infrastructure."

State law is clear that cities can only charge developers for five areas of capital improvements: water, sewers, roads, parks and drainage.

In 2007, a bill to add schools to that list never got to the floor for a vote. It was co-sponsored by then-state Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, who is now a U.S. Congresswoman representing northwest Oregon, including parts of Portland.

The reelection campaign for Governor Kate Brown directed questions about the governor's stance on this issue to the governor's office, which did not immediately return requests for comment.

Knute Buehler, the Republican candidate for governor, said he would oppose the idea.

"Adding development costs to new housing that is already unaffordable for too many working Oregonians would make our housing crisis even worse, and it is not a solution to a classroom funding crisis brought about by state leaders' refusal to pursue real, cost-saving reforms to pensions and benefits," Buehler said in a statement. "Reforms to these programs would bring badly needed fiscal relief to school districts, freeing up resources that would allow us to recapture the lost school year and rise to the top five in graduation rates."

Currently, Oregon school districts look to district-wide property tax bond measures for a new school. A construction excise tax — 0.12 percent assessed on permits for new buildings — also brings in money from new developments but not enough for a new school.

Portland Public Schools, which serves most of the city through more than 80 school buildings, is in the middle of a 30-year plan to roll out regular bond measures to update its largely dilapidated facilities. The latest bond measure, passed in 2017 to patch up some K-8 schools and rebuild three high schools, is already projected to be \$100 million overbudget.

There are no official plans to build any new PPS schools. Some have pointed to the new neighborhood planned on the U.S. Post Office site in downtown Portland as an opportunity for a new school.

David Douglas School District in East Portland owns property in Gateway that leaders would like to build on, but there are no concrete plans nor identified funding.

Wheeler acknowledged the push would have to be led by school districts, but added: "I would very much like to provide whatever leadership that I could provide as the mayor."

Willamette Week

Plans for Record-Setting Timber Tower in Downtown Portland Fall Through

*By Rachel Monahan
July 16, 2018*

The building faced a funding shortfall despite significant pledge of public dollars.

The deal to build a record-setting wooden Portland tower that was expected to be the tallest in North America is off.

Framework, which was designed to be 12 stories including a roof deck, was to be constructed from cross-laminated timber, an innovative lumber product made by gluing sheets of wood together.

Two sources, one at City Hall, tell WW the cost of building the project proved too high.

Framework's developer, a Portland developer called project^, had received commitments from the city and the county housing authority for affordable housing subsidies—despite a whopping price tag.

The building, which was slated to include 60 affordable apartments, was projected to cost \$651.43 per square foot, WW reported in December. (The 660-square foot two bedroom apartments were projected to cost \$567,389 to build.)

Despite a pledge from Mayor Ted Wheeler to bring down the cost of affordable housing in Portland, the Portland Housing Bureau had nonetheless awarded the building \$6 million toward the \$29 million total.

The Housing Bureau justified the decision to spend urban renewal dollars on the project in part by saying the project was ready to go, including funding. But it wasn't. The project faced a \$2 million funding gap, which had not been filled.

The high-tech cross-laminated timber project has received widespread interest and support from Oregon politicians looking to resuscitate the state's rural timber industry. The state's U.S. senators, Ron Wyden and Jeff Merkley, last week helped secure a half a million dollar grant to Oregon State University to study the durability of cross-laminated timber.

But the the construction material has endured several setbacks.

On March 14, the construction of a cross-laminated timber building at OSU was temporarily halted after materials failed. The contractor ultimately identified a failure in the manufacturing process at the only Oregon manufacturer of CLT.

Update, 8 pm:

A statement tonight from the developer blamed "market challenges" for the decision not to move forward with the project. But it did not address the fact that the project had a funding gap since last year.

"Although beset with market challenges beyond our control, we are very proud of Framework's achievements and the new standards we've established for the use of CLT in the U.S.," said Anyeley Hallova, a developer with project^, in a statement.

The firm had succeeded in getting approval from the city of Portland and the state to build 12 stories with CLT.

Portland Police Union Calls City A “Cesspool” And Lambastes Mayor For Questioning Arrests of Homeless People

*By Katie Shepherd
July 16, 2018*

"It's a recipe for failure to put the burden of the homelessness solution on the Police Bureau's shoulders and then give us insufficient resources to do the work."

The Portland police union president called Portland a "cesspool" and criticized the mayor for allowing an investigation of police interactions with homeless people.

The press release comes on the heels of an investigation announced by the Independent Police Review, which vowed to look into statistics published by The Oregonian that show homeless individuals accounted for more than half of arrests last year.

In the wake of the story, Mayor Ted Wheeler said the arrests should be questioned, but stopped short of saying police had acted inappropriately.

The Portland Police Association did not appreciate the mayor's suggestion that there could potentially be bias in officers' actions.

"Mayor Wheeler's public policies have failed," union president Daryl Turner said in a press release July 16. "The fact that our officers have become the scapegoats for Mayor Wheeler's failed public policies aimed at solving our homelessness crisis is insulting."

Turner said he was "incensed" because the mayor had "thrown Portland Police Officers under the bus." He pointed to low staffing and a lack of resources for the police as one of the reasons homeless people aren't able to find help in Portland.

"Will investigating our officers result in more housing for the homeless?" Turner asked. "Will it provide more mental health or addiction resources for those in need? Will it resolve the livability issues that Portland residents and business owners face daily? Of course not! It's more of the same from the Mayor; failed policies and blaming others for his failures."

Turner's criticisms come after Wheeler spent months arguing to fund more police officers.

During the budget negotiation process, the police bureau asked for 93 new officers be funded next year. Wheeler proposed a budget that would allocate funds for 58 new positions in the Portland Police Bureau.

Despite the planned increase in staffing coming to the bureau, Turner still says Wheeler's policies have been a failure.

"The Portland Police Bureau not been given nearly enough resources to fulfill its small piece in addressing the homelessness crisis," he says. "It's a recipe for failure to put the burden of the homelessness solution on the Police Bureau's shoulders and then give us insufficient resources to do the work."

The mayor's office says it will keep the union's complaints in mind.

"We are reviewing the message from PPA and will continue this conversation with Daryl Turner, and the many other groups and individuals who are rightly interested in these issues," says Michael Cox, the mayor's chief of staff.

The Portland Mercury

Police Union Says Homelessness Has Turned Portland Into a "Cesspool"

*By Alex Zielinski
July 16, 2018*

The Portland Police Association (PPA) isn't happy with Mayor Ted Wheeler.

In a long Facebook message posted this afternoon, likely penned by PPA President Daryl Turner, the police union excoriated Wheeler for expecting the police to solve the city's unaffordable housing (and, resulting homelessness) crisis.

"The rank and file of the Portland Police Bureau are working tirelessly to improve livability in our city, preserve public safety, and connect our vulnerable communities to social services," the post reads. "We are the first line resource on the streets serving the public—including the homeless—every day with care and professionalism. The fact that our officers have become the scapegoats for Mayor Wheeler's failed public policies aimed at solving our homelessness crisis is insulting."

The PPA writes the mounting side-effects of homelessness (like public camping, public defecation, and "garbage-filled RVs") have turned Portland into a "cesspool."

Here's the complete Facebook post:

Our City has become a cesspool. Livability that once made Portland a unique and vibrant city is now replaced with human feces in businesses doorways, in our parks, and on our streets. Aggressive panhandlers block the sidewalks, storefronts, and landmarks like Pioneer Square, discouraging people from enjoying our City. Garbage-filled RVs and vehicles are strewn throughout our neighborhoods. Used needles, drug paraphernalia, and trash are common sights lining the streets and sidewalks of the downtown core area, under our bridges, and freeway overpasses. That's not what our families, business owners, and tourists deserve.

Mayor Wheeler's public policies have failed. Record tax revenues are being brought into the City; yet what do we have to show for it? I am incensed that once again the Mayor has thrown Portland Police Officers under the bus instead of saying what we all know to be true: that his proposed solutions to our homelessness crisis have failed. What we need is for our City and County leaders to take responsibility for this crisis getting out of hand. They need to put forth actual solutions with actual results and stop throwing hard-earned taxpayer dollars down a black hole.

True to form, instead of standing up and leading, Mayor Wheeler has reverted to the, "Is there some sort of profiling or implicit bias by the cops" rhetoric to smokescreen his own failed policies. Will investigating our officers result in more housing for the homeless? Will it provide more mental health or addiction resources for those in need? Will it resolve the livability issues that Portland residents and business owners face daily? Of

course not! It's more of the same from the Mayor; failed policies and blaming others for his failures.

The Portland Police Bureau has not been given nearly enough resources to fulfill its small piece in addressing the homelessness crisis. We are understaffed. Officers are unable to spend the time needed to connect our homeless to necessary services, whether it be housing, mental health services, drug rehabilitation, or other resources. It's a recipe for failure to put the burden of the homelessness solution on the Police Bureau's shoulders and then give us insufficient resources to do the work.

The rank and file of the Portland Police Bureau are working tirelessly to improve livability in our City, preserve public safety, and connect our vulnerable communities to social services. We are the first line resource on the streets serving the public—including the homeless—every day with care and professionalism. The fact that our officers have become the scapegoats for Mayor Wheeler's failed public policies aimed at solving our homelessness crisis is insulting.

Portland Police Officers deserve better. Our families and communities deserve better. Our businesses deserve better. Our City deserves better!

This message is most likely the result of long-simmering tension in the PPA—but it was probably stoked by a data-driven story published by the Oregonian on June 27. The sweeping investigative report found that 52 percent of all Portland arrests in 2017 were of people who were experiencing homelessness. Only 3 percent of the city's population, however, fits that description. This disproportionate finding sparked outrage in Portland's homeless advocacy circles and civil rights organizations like the ACLU—which eventually prompted Wheeler to announce an investigation into the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) to determine whether officers are unfairly profiling Portland's houseless population.

"The real question here is, 'Is there some sort of profiling or implicit bias?'" Wheeler told the Oregonian in an interview last week. "From my perspective, that's the crux of the situation. The police should be focused on policing criminal activity, and that's sort of the beginning, the middle and the end of it for me."

PPA's Turner responded to this direct quote in today's Facebook message:

"True to form, instead of standing up and leading, Mayor Wheeler has reverted to the, 'Is there some sort of profiling or implicit bias by the cops' rhetoric to smokescreen his own failed policies. Will investigating our officers result in more housing for the homeless? Will it provide more mental health or addiction resources for those in need? Will it resolve the livability issues that Portland residents and business owners face daily? Of course not! It's more of the same from the Mayor; failed policies and blaming others for his failures."

Homeless advocacy groups don't necessarily disagree. In a quickly-circulating online petition, a group of local housing advocates are calling on Wheeler and his fellow city commissioners to cut the number of police officers and use the funds to increase access to affordable housing, and mental health and addiction services. The petition, which has collected nearly 1,800 signatures, also asks city council to allow houseless Portlanders to create their own self-governed camps until the city's affordability crises abates.

Israel Bayer, longtime advocate for Portland's houseless (and former executive director of Street Roots), also shifts the direct blame from the city's police to the city's policy-makers.

"The mass arrests of people on the streets aren't a reflection of the integrity of police officers," writes Bayer in message to the Mercury. "It's about creating smart public policy that isn't driven by neighborhood complaints and works towards creating collaborative harm reduction approaches that give people on the streets a fighting chance at ending their homelessness."

This isn't the first time the PPA has publicly slammed Wheeler. In 2017, the PPA thought the city's job posting for a new police chief made the PPB sound racist, and penned Wheeler a heated letter. Wheeler called the letter "needlessly inflammatory and divisive."

How will he chose to respond this time?

Police Tell LGBT Couple to "Ignore" Man Yelling Homophobic Slurs at Them

*By Alex Zielinski
July 16, 2018*

Wendy and Trudy Dragoon were crossing a street in their Southeast neighborhood of Brentwood-Darlington yesterday evening around 7:30 when they heard an engine rev nearby. They turned to see a truck speeding towards them. The couple ran onto the sidewalk to watch the truck whip by, do a U-turn, and park in front of a nearby home. Three men exited the vehicle, including a skinny 20-something who had been yelling out the window at the women as the truck drove by.

"He got out of the car and said something about 'Beating the shit out of fucking dykes,'" says Wendy. When Trudy crossed the street to where the truck was parked to confront the man, Wendy began filming using her cell phone.

In a video that's since been uploaded to Facebook, the man is seen throwing up his fists at Trudy, who stands patiently in front of him. He doesn't swing. But he does go on to call her a "gay pride-ass bitch" and a number of other homophobic and sexist slurs.

"You think you scare me? You're a fucking woman," says the man, as his friends start unloading some bags from the truck and bringing them into the house. "I'll spit in your face... I'll literally put you to fucking sleep."

The man's friends, one of whom tells Trudy he owns the neighboring house, attempts to separate the man from Trudy by standing between them.

At the end of the 3-minute-long video, a police officer on patrol happens to drive by and asks the group what's going on.

"He's harassing me," says Trudy.

"She won't get off my property," says the first man.

Then the video cuts out. In a interview with the Mercury, Wendy Dragoon filled in the rest of the story. Wendy said that the Portland police officer told Trudy to "just ignore them."

"I was like, 'Absolutely not,'" Wendy recalls telling the officer. "I said, 'This is harassment. This has to be a hate crime.'"

But according to Dragoon, the officer allegedly told the couple that unless the man was physically violent, it wasn't a hate crime.

"He actually said, 'Being mean to you isn't against the law,'" Dragoon says.

That's not necessarily the case. Under Oregon's hate crime law, a person can be charged with a second-degree misdemeanor if they:

- Intentionally, because of the person's perception of race, color, religion, sexual orientation, disability or national origin... subjects the other person to alarm by threatening:
- To inflict serious physical injury upon or to commit a felony affecting the other person, or a member of the person's family

Based on the video, yesterday's incident seems to fit this description.

According to Christopher Burley, spokesperson for the Portland Police Bureau (PPB), the unnamed officer said he "advised the groups to avoid one another and they separated." Because the incident "is an open investigation," Burley is unable to comment more specifically regarding the officer's response.

"I was not present at the time of the incident and a video does not necessarily convey everything that was occurring at the time of this incident," wrote Burley in an email to the Mercury. He said the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office may further investigate the video.

The evening incident continued into the early morning hours, according to the Dragoons. Wendy says that around midnight, she and Trudy were awakened by loud fireworks coming from the same property where the truck had parked. They walked outside to confirm, and discovered another neighbor already outside on the phone, reporting the late-night fireworks show to the police. The neighbor allegedly told the police dispatch that the suspects had been harassing Trudy and Wendy earlier.

Three officers showed up, including the same one from earlier. Again, Dragoon says she tried to explain to the two new officers that they had been harassed by a man on the property earlier. This time, Dragoon says, one of the other officers asked, "But how do you know it's a hate crime? How is he supposed to know you're gay?"

"And that was it," Dragoon says. "They clearly weren't there to help us."

Dragoon believes the owners of the property are new to the neighborhood—she doesn't recall seeing them before yesterday. She says she often walks by the house with her two kids, since it's on the way to Dairy Queen.

"I don't feel safe in my home anymore. It wouldn't take them long to find out where we live," she says.

This isn't the only recent incident involving Portland police officers allegedly ignoring allegations of a hate crime.

In June, a woman reported that a man had yelled homophobic slurs at her and beat up her brother while they were leaving Portland's Pride Festival. According to her, one of the reporting officers claimed it wasn't a hate crime because her brother was straight. PPB officers, however, have argued that the state law that addresses these crimes doesn't allow them to fully pursue alleged hate crimes.

While PPB's Burley can't comment on yesterday's event, he did acknowledge the underlying problem: "The Police Bureau is aware that speech, such as the speech present in this video, instills fear in members of our community."