

The Oregonian

Portland 911, at Rock Bottom, Looks to Reach the Top

By Gordon Friedman

August 25, 2018

Portland's 911 center, roiled by scandal for falsifying data to cover its failure to answer calls on time, has faltered as it works to improve under new leadership.

Since the agency began publishing accurate data in late 2017, its call times have lagged far behind national benchmarks and reached a record low in June.

That leaves those who call Portland 911 at risk of getting help from first responders too late to put out a house fire, revive someone after cardiac arrest or stop a crime in progress.

National standards say 90 percent of 911 calls should be answered in 10 seconds at peak call times. So far this year, just 14 percent of Portland's were. In June, the agency dipped to its lowest point – answering just 8 percent of peak-time calls within 10 seconds – before rebounding to 16 percent in July.

Any 911 agency so far behind the national standards ought to undertake a “wholistic, widescale assessment” to identify and correct its problems, said Christopher Carver, who oversees 911 standards at the National Emergency Numbers Association, the benchmark-setting group.

The revelation the Portland 911 center put out false data drove Mayor Ted Wheeler to seize control of the bureau from its elected commissioner-in-charge, Amanda Fritz. Lisa Turley, then director of the Bureau of Emergency Communications, was allowed to follow through with her planned retirement despite Turley knowingly reporting false data to the City Council. Even after she retired, the 911 center kept Turley on as a highly-paid consultant.

Since then, Wheeler installed a new director, Bob Cozzie. The mayor and his staff have closely overseen bureau operations for months.

Cozzie said during a recent interview that he is well underway on a months-long project to take stock of his bureau. He has conducted one-on-one interviews with more than 70 of its employees and plans to interview them all. He said his bureau is committed to accurately reporting its call times.

“We have to report the truth. You have to know where you are to improve,” said Cozzie, who previously directed the Clackamas County 911 system.

Cozzie said he believes the center's very low response times in June were “more than likely” caused by the high number of trainees at Portland 911 and increasing call volumes heading into summer. Call volumes were higher in spring than the winter months, but dipped slightly from May to June, agency data shows.

Cozzie's ultimate goal: Get Portland 911 call-takers to meet national standards for prompt answering times, he said.

But he admits his agency isn't on track to get there for 5 years or more because it needs to hire another 25 or so call-takers. The bureau has 105 dispatchers, 11 trainees who are not yet certified to take calls and nine vacant operator jobs, according to July data.

Elizabeth Perez, the mayor's liaison to the 911 center, said Wheeler supports Cozzie's hiring plan. “Our intention is to fully meet” the national 911 standards, Perez said.

Clackamas County's 911 operators have answered 95 percent of calls within 10 seconds this year, its data shows. Washington County data was not readily available.

One thing that has hampered Portland's 911 center, while purporting to help it, is software that directs incoming calls from cell phones to a recorded message, rather than directly to a live call-taker. The thinking was that a high proportion of cell phone calls are accidental pocket dials, so calls from landlines should take priority.

Calls from cell phones accounted for 41 percent of the nearly 850,000 calls taken by Portland operators last year.

To get to an operator, callers from cell phones must make a noise or press a button on their phone. If a caller does not do that fast enough, the automated system hangs up the call. Even if a caller makes it through the filter, they may be routed to a waiting queue if all operators are busy.

The filter is so sensitive to noise that it would be "really unusual" for a legitimate call to be filtered out, Cozzie said. The technology has filtered out more than 62,000 calls as apparently accidental so far this year, agency data shows.

But by directing all cell phone callers to a filter – which plays an automated recording lasting about 10 seconds, according to Cozzie – the 911 center by default hurts its call response times.

Cozzie said part of his reorganization has been an experiment to set the filter so it operates only when there are too many incoming calls for humans to answer. He said the change has caused a "pretty substantial improvement" in call response times. He said that should be evident in August data, which is not yet complete.

Still, Cozzie said, the bureau is "nowhere near where I'd like it to be." He said his ultimate goal is to hire enough call-takers that the call filter never needs to be activated.

National guidelines say 911 centers should not filter calls.

Carver, the manager at the national standard-setting organization, said filters should only be activated during "periods of exceptionally high call demand," such as in the immediate aftermath of a terrorist attack or natural disaster.

He said call filters are "not widely adopted in the United States" and there are many ways to manage accidental calls without a one. Many 911 centers launch public information campaigns to help stop accidental calls, he said.

The top problem keeping 911 centers from reaching national standards is inadequate staffing, Carver said.

Cozzie recognizes this, too. He said meeting the national standards is ultimately "a matter of having enough call takers on duty."

Oregonians underwrite the state's 911 centers with a 75-cent per month tax on each phone line. The tax, which is distributed to local governments based on population, collected more than \$11 million last quarter. Portland is its biggest beneficiary.

Residents of Gresham and areas served by the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office also pay in part for Portland's 911 center because its operators provide dispatching for Multnomah County and Gresham emergency services.

Though Cozzie has built a strategy for his agency's future, that could change come January, at the direction of a newly elected commissioner-in-charge. Wheeler has said he will assign the bureau to whoever wins election to the seat Commissioner Dan Saltzman is vacating.

Whether candidates Jo Ann Hardesty or Loretta Smith win, neither have experience running a bureaucracy where saving lives depends on its proper functioning.

The winner of Saltzman's seat will also be assigned to run the Fire Bureau and Bureau of Emergency Management, Wheeler announced.

At an August 15 candidate forum that was the first face-off between Hardesty and Smith ahead of the general election, neither contender was asked a question about how they would manage the public safety bureaus.

10 Ways Seattle Has Blown Past Portland in Transportation Moxie

*By Andrew Theen
August 27, 2018*

This Pacific Northwest city has world-class coffee, plentiful beer and the nation's top public transit agency.

Wait. Seattle?

For years, Portland sat atop an invisible pedestal, routinely recognized as one of the nation's top transportation cities.

Bike lanes, TriMet's light rail network and the resurrection of the urban streetcar set the blueprint, in some ways, for other cities to step up their transit game.

Many have done just that, including Seattle. But now, in many ways, the city to the north is eating Portland's brunch on transportation ideas, and we're playing catchup.

While Portland is poised to finally act on some big projects, and TriMet plans its biggest bus expansion in its history, the city has undeniably stalled in addressing its transportation issues in recent years. Seattle, meanwhile, has been forging ahead with voter-approved projects costing in the tens of billions and transit ridership is up double digits there.

The Emerald City in recent years has bored long stretches of tunnels for cars or transit, spent more on light rail and buses per capita than any U.S. city and dwarfed Portland's protected bike lanes infrastructure. And elected officials have demonstrated political leadership in putting transportation at or near the top of the city's priorities list.

Things are far from perfect up there. Seattle drivers, like Portland's, are socked in by stifling congestion on major freeways. Much of the city feels like it's an active construction zone, and more headaches are to come as key projects will shut down major sections of downtown for years – Seattle is calling this era the “Period of Maximum Constraint.” Costs overruns have angered taxpayers. Portland experienced its own issues with cost overruns on the aerial tram connecting OHSU to the South Waterfront.

Not all agree Seattle, which can appear as one big gnarly construction site, is on the right track. It's had its share of boondoggles. But others say the short-term pain will bring long-term gain and give people more options other than driving alone.

The state – and region – acted with several large transportation packages in part because the public demanded action in the face of the gridlock.

There's also no way to just add more freeways – or freeway lanes -- to our dense cities and build our way out of the mess. So, Seattle, which feels like a real-life version of Sim City right now, has gotten busy and passed massive transportation plans, invested in creative ways to move people around and set the roadmap for a more transit-friendly future.

Seattle offers both a cautionary tale for Portland and a glimpse of what is possible.

This transportation reporter/tourist recently took a trip north earlier this month to get the lay of the transit land. And while I experienced Seattle through emerald-tinted glasses, I saw many examples of our frenemies to the north being bold where Portland has stood still.

PROTECTED BIKEWAYS

Minutes after arriving in Seattle, I landed on a beautiful, physically separated bikeway on Broadway near Capitol Hill. This was largely by accident. I'm no Ferdinand Magellan, though I did later locate a handy Seattle bike map. My great fortune of finding comfortable bike streets happened several times over the course of a day and a half while exploring the city sans car.

Portland has historically landed national accolades for being one of the nation's best bike cities, but did you know Seattle has nearly three times as many miles of physically separated bike lanes (16 miles) as Portland (5.8 miles), with another 7 under construction and expected to be finished this year?

This despite Portland being significantly larger – 145 square miles versus Seattle's 84.

Those totals don't include the miles of waterfront multi-use paths in Seattle along Elliott Bay or elsewhere.

And local politicians there aren't content with the status quo. A majority of the City Council in July signed a resolution calling for a connected series of downtown protected bike lanes by 2020, The Seattle Times reported. Like Portland, many downtown bike lanes aren't contiguous, leaving spotty connections for riders.

Portland's nearly 6 miles of protected lanes doesn't include the seasonal Better Naito project downtown or multi-use paths elsewhere in the city, nor 17.4 miles that are funded but yet to be built, according to transportation officials. Portland, of course has 85 miles of multi-use trails such as the Springwater Corridor, Willamette Greenway and Marine Drive trail.

Because of a 2016 voter-approved gas tax and charges collected on new development in the city, Portland has money to make some big changes in coming years. It's hoping for "world-class" bike lanes downtown. The City Council is expected to discuss creating new protected north/south bikeways and other projects in the central city next month, and construction could begin on some of them in 2019.

But there's yet to be a full-throated endorsement from Portland's elected leaders on the level that Seattle's leaders have embraced in recent years.

FERRIES/WATER TAXIS

The Pacific Northwest offers few simple joys comparable to riding a ferry across Puget Sound, watching Seattle's skyline slowly shrink from sight -- not unlike the Seahawk's playoff futures.

Washington's ferry system started in 1951 and is the nation's largest. Last year, the 22 vessels moved 24.5 million riders. Terminals serve suburbs to the north and south of the Emerald City, but Seattle's two routes alone moved a combined 9.3 million in 2017. There's also the private Clipper service, which runs to the San Juan Islands and Victoria, British Columbia.

In the mid 1990s, the metro region added passenger-only water taxis to serve West Seattle and Vashon Island. Those moved nearly 600,000 passengers last year.

In Portland, we have the Big Float.

You know, the citizen-led bootstrapped event that brings thousands of people to the river that one time each summer.

Oh, we also have the Beer Barge. And the Portland Spirit dinner cruise boat.

We're not suggesting Portland should, or could, rival Seattle's water system, which is aging and has its own slew of issues.

But as we grapple with potentially adding up to 500,000 residents by 2035, another transit option is always welcome, and the rivers are sitting right there.

In the mid-1800s, Portland had a fleet of ferries connecting the east and west sides. Those went by the wayside when bridges were built spanning the Willamette.

Would people welcome ferries or water taxis from Vancouver's shimmering new waterfront to downtown Portland? Perhaps. It's worth discussing. But it's not being discussed publicly.

TUNNELS

In recent years, Seattle transportation engineers have spent more time underground than a Mariners fan in October. Miles of new tunnels carrying transit or cars are under construction in the Puget Sound region.

In the early 2000s, Seattle retooled its signature downtown transit tunnel to accommodate buses and light-rail trains. In 2012, the region opened a 3-mile tunnel carrying light rail to the University of Washington.

Later this year, the long-awaited tunnel along the Elliot Bay waterfront is expected to open, and with it the newly tolled State Route 99. The Alaskan Way Viaduct, an elevated highway downtown that currently carries SR 99, will be demolished.

Seattle's experience offers cautionary tales, too.

The projects have made national headlines for various reasons, like when its 57-foot-diameter Bertha boring machine ran into issues and was shut down for nearly two years. Cost overruns have plagued that project and others, but the Alaskan Way viaduct removal opens dramatic opportunities for the city along its waterfront.

More tunnels are coming, too, including the \$2.1 billion project to expand light rail to Northgate by 2021 and the tunnel bringing light rail to Bellevue by 2023.

In Portland, we built the transit tunnel through the West Hills in 1998, but the topic hasn't come up much publicly since. Now, TriMet officials are starting to openly discuss putting MAX trains underground, what would likely be a more than \$1 billion project. The agency leases space on the Steel Bridge in downtown Portland, a key logjam on an aging structure that is often interrupted by crashes and could spell doom if no alternative is in place in the event of an earthquake or bridge failure.

But as of now, that's our only tunnel talk.

ELECTRIC-ASSIST BIKE SHARE

LimeBike, the Silicon Valley startup running hundreds of electric-assist scooters in many big cities, has a different menu of options in Seattle. Instead of scooters, Lime has nearly 2,000

electric-assist bikes scattered around our hilly neighbor to the north. The bikes are not uniformly awesome (and according to Seattle Times reporters, they are often vandalized or damaged), but they are a novel addition to the on-demand bike rental market.

I rode them all over Seattle this month and wrote a review about my experience.

Portland may have e-bikes sooner than we thought. A three-year contract with Motivate, the operator of Portland's Biketown system, expires in a year. The city is free to seek other companies or ask for new perks in the next Biketown contract.

Transportation officials say electric-bikes are going to be an important part of any new agreement and will be included in the request for proposals.

RAPID BUS SERVICE

Last week, the Portland City Council vowed to spend \$17.7 million on TriMet's proposed high-capacity bus service along Division Street between downtown and Gresham. We're likely still at least four years away from actual bus service on the route.

Meanwhile, Seattle has six rapid bus routes serving a number of different neighborhoods, with a seventh expected to operate by 2020.

Seattle's routes aren't exactly Bus Rapid Transit – where buses are physically separated from the rest of traffic -- but the vehicles are larger, have fewer stops and arrive more frequently than standard lines.

By the time Portland hopes to open its lone high-capacity bus line, King County Metro expects to have another 13 express lines in service. King County said its new bus lines draw 67,000 daily boardings.

TOLLS

Washington may be shooing Oregon away from the idea of tolling a new Interstate Bridge at the states' border, but the Seattle region is off and running with a growing toll system.

Drivers must pay to use the Tacoma Narrows Bridge, certain lanes on the Interstate 405 express between Bellevue and Lynnwood, lanes on State Route 167 between Auburn and Renton and on State Route 520 between Seattle and Bellevue.

The SR 99 tunnel is expected to open this year, and drivers will be charged to drive through it.

Tolls are designed to raise revenue, manage congestion and encourage drivers to find a way to get around other than driving alone.

In 2017, the state brought in \$192 million in tolling revenue on those freeways and highways, and it estimated drivers are saving about 12 minutes of travel time on the I-405 lane alone. Other projects haven't yielded broad controversy, and the toll revenue is funneled back into repaying debt on the road projects.

Seattle's Mayor, Jenny Durkan, also floated the idea of charging users to drive on surface streets in the city.

Washington has thus far kept its tolls low, but the state has a looming debt issue because of a slew of construction projects. Toll users may be asked to make up the difference.

Oregon is expected to ask for federal permission by the end of 2018 to study tolling on sections of Interstates 5 and 205, with eventual plans to study wider tolling.

But that plan is also being challenged by two Republican state lawmakers, who seek to derail the idea and send a different plan to voters.

BUS ISLANDS

Buses and bicyclists mix about as well as Supersonics fans and Oklahoma City. Or Jeff Bezos and Seattle socialist city councilor Kshama Sawant.

The bus-and-bike dance gets more dangerous on busy streets where buses must frequently stop to pick up passengers, creating conflicts with cyclists in bike lanes adjacent to bus stops, cars and the curb.

Seattle is one city that's aggressively tried to change that dynamic by creating bus islands, where bike traffic is routed around the right side of the platform. That reduces the potential for direct issues between buses and cyclists.

According to Seattle transportation officials, the city has 22 bus islands. Most of those stops are on Dexter Ave North, Roosevelt Way NE and Greenwood Avenue N.

Elsewhere in the city, I found bike lanes that went around streetcar stops, such as on Broadway in the Capitol Hill neighborhood.

As a cyclist, the medians provided a lot more certainty about what the bus will do and whether you need to crane your neck to watch for oncoming traffic.

Cyclists must yield to pedestrians crossing the island to get to the sidewalk, but it's a safer alternative than the status quo.

In 2016, the Better Block PDX community group tested bus islands during a trial project on Northeast Broadway.

But Portland has one such streetcar/bus island -- in the South Waterfront neighborhood. TriMet said it was not aware of or planning any such stops, though the Division Street high-capacity bus line will include newly configured stops.

HEAVY RAIL

Seattle has two commuter rail lines and a planned 7-mile expansion underway.

The Sounder commuter rail runs north from downtown to Everett and south to Lakewood. The system covers more than 80 miles along heavily traveled commuter routes.

The trains run on BNSF tracks and are operated by Sound Transit, the regional rail service.

In Portland, we have the Westside Express Service, which runs from Beaverton Transit Center to Wilsonville -- not exactly the most traveled corridor in the metro area. That orphan commuter line has been plagued by ridership issues since it began in 2009, and ridership dropped 13 percent this year over 2017 totals. TriMet has no plans for additional commuter rail service.

ELECTRIC BUSES

Seattle has the second-largest electric trolley-bus system in the country, trailing only San Francisco. The network of overhead power lines crisscrosses 68 miles of the city.

The quirky lines, though expensive to operate, reduce the amount of diesel emitted into the atmosphere.

While that system is a rarity nationwide, Seattle has also gone full-bore into the oncoming battery-powered bus revolution.

King County Metro Transit plans to transition to an entirely zero-emission bus fleet “no later than 2034,” the agency’s leader said in a 2017 op-ed in the Seattle Times.

Metro has two battery-powered buses on the road carrying passengers in Seattle. The agency in 2017 ordered 120 all-electric buses.

In Portland, we have one pilot bus undergoing field tests. TriMet has no timetable to bring electric buses into service but plans to order four more buses after the pilot.

This month, U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley said he secured \$2.3 million in grant funding for TriMet to order another five electric buses. It’s unclear when those vehicles would be delivered, but it’s unlikely to happen for years.

AMBITION

The above list of projects is somewhat staggering in scope, from a Portlander’s perspective.

This is all without mentioning Seattle’s ongoing streetcar expansion projects or the light rail lines expected to reach Federal Way, Ballard, Richmond and elsewhere in coming years.

Voter-approved transportation bonds and levies backed by sales taxes, property taxes and other measures are driving Seattle’s transformative projects.

But a lot of that comes down to one word: ambition. In 2016, voters approved the Sound Transit 3 ballot measure. The \$54 billion measure funds 62 miles of light-rail construction and other big-ticket items over 25 years. That measure came on the heels of the \$930 million Levy to Move Seattle passed in 2015.

Voters also approved a \$17.8 billion project list called Sound Transit 2 in 2008 paying for significant public transit projects.

All that growth and rapid expansion by Amazon and the tech industry have led to record public transit ridership gains. Ridership is up 17 percent systemwide, state transportation leaders said last week at a summit with Oregon and California transportation leaders, bucking nationwide trends of declining public transit ridership that have plagued TriMet and virtually all other transit agencies.

Because of that, the American Public Transportation Association named King County Metro the nation’s top large transit agency this month.

These project lists have not been without controversy or cost overruns or delays, which the Seattle Times has documented in recent months. Increasing land values are pushing some project costs up, like a light rail expansion to Federal Way.

But the scope is undeniable, as Seattle races to reinvent itself as it becomes an ever larger and more influential city in the national landscape.

The Portland region is poised to take on a major transportation package of its own in 2020, led by the Metro regional government and incoming Council President Lynn Peterson. Peterson led Washington’s transportation department for three years.

The project list is still being formulated, but it’s expected to number in the billions, but likely falling somewhere between Sound Transit 2 and 3 in its total price tag.

Portland’s only light-rail line currently on the table is a 12-mile extension to the Bridgeport Village shopping area in Tigard. Portland Streetcar is also eyeing a potential extension into Northwest Portland’s industrial area and Montgomery Park, but those plans are just being studied at the moment.

Perhaps the transportation package will also go to voters with an unwritten and hard to quantify project ingredient: ambition.

The Portland Mercury

Portland's Bureau of Development Services Has Nearly 100 Vacant Positions

*By Kelly Kenoyer
August 24, 2018*

Portland's Bureau of Development Services (BDS) is currently missing a quarter of its staff, and it could be impacting the city's building inspection and planning process.

BDS, which oversees land use review, permits for construction projects, and inspections, is budgeted to have nearly 400 staffers.

"We have almost 100 vacancies, mostly in inspections and plan review," says BDS spokesperson Thomas Ngo.

"There's truth to the fact that we're having trouble hiring folks. That's across the board, throughout the [construction] industry," Ngo says.

State employees point to the economic crash in 2008 as the cause of the tight labor market in construction. At the depth of the Great Recession, Oregon lost nearly 29,000 construction jobs, according to Stephen Simms, an administrator for the Oregon Apprenticeship and Training Division. Now that the construction industry is booming again, BDS is competing with private developers for talent in a labor market short of qualified workers. The lack of staffing combined with an increased workload has slowed BDS's permitting process down significantly.

Developers have long bemoaned the tedious permitting process in Portland for adding an element of uncertainty to their projects. Tom Brenneke, the president of Guardian Real Estate Services, says the permitting process can take nine months or more for larger projects.

Dan Drinkward, the Vice President of Hoffman Construction, says peer cities like Seattle have a much shorter review process by comparison. To shorten this timeline in Portland, he says, "You could streamline the design review process, you could add more staff at BDS, or hire out some of that work."

But with nearly 100 unfilled positions at BDS, it will take some time to speed up the permitting process. But the jobs available at BDS are lucrative ones: Building inspectors and plan examiners make between \$35 and \$41 an hour.

Ngo adds that BDS is working with Portland Community College and Chemeketa Community College to draw in new talent, but notes that competing with demand in the private sector makes things challenging. "People who can go to the private sector and make more hourly," he says. "There's an appeal to that."

The Daily Journal of Commerce

Possibly Willing to Bend For a Loop

By Chuck Slothower

August 24, 2018

Portland design commissioners signaled Thursday they may be flexible in interpreting a 12-foot setback requirement for new development fronting the Green Loop.

Designers for the Block 216 project, along with city officials, are working to interpret new city standards for the Green Loop – a six-mile route in the Central City. The proposal from developer Walt Bowen and GBD Architects for a 35-story mixed-use building is the first along the Green Loop to undergo design review since the Central City 2035 plan was enacted.

A key question is how to enforce a guideline requiring 12-foot setbacks along 75 percent of the property line facing the Green Loop. The Block 216 tower would adjoin the Green Loop on Southwest Ninth Avenue between Washington and Alder streets.

Several commissioners said they would be open to a modification for the Block 216 project.

“I’m not going to be really a stickler on the 12-foot setback requirement; it’s going to be more about the environment you create,” Commissioner Andrew Clarke said. “I think you’re going in the right direction.”

If the Design Commission approves a modification of the setback requirement, it could open the door for developers of future projects to argue they, too, deserve an exception.

“I do believe this is precedent-setting for the city as well,” Commissioner Don Vallaster said.

Phil Beyl, GBD’s director, said the Design Commission’s decision on the Block 216 project does not need to bind the commission in the future.

“What’s developed here does not have to be a precedent for all other block faces,” he said.

The setback would require the building to give back approximately 1,800 square feet along the ground-floor property line. That would render some projects undevelopable, Beyl said.

“From a plan development standpoint, it’s an extremely difficult condition to accommodate on our small blocks,” he said.

Beyl said if he’d been aware of the rule when it was being considered, he would have been “screaming from the rooftops.”

Bowen is proposing a food hall fronting the Green Loop. Early designs indicate large trees, benches and other outdoor seating would be installed where the Green Loop and building meet.

Commissioner Tad Savinar suggested the Design Commission should see what the landscape architect comes up with before the commission prescribes what the Green Loop frontage should look like. PLACE Studio principal Charles Brucker is leading the landscape design.

“I’d like the landscape team to go crazy on this first,” he said. “We want it to be fantastic.”

Commissioner Zari Santner suggested plants may be the way to go, recommending clematis and trellises. “It would be wonderful if you could treat these as gardens,” she said.

Commissioners said they can’t be sure the Ninth Avenue side of the building will always be a food hall. The design must meet guidelines regardless of future tenants.

“This could be a Walgreens,” Commissioner Jessica Molinar said.

The Ninth Avenue frontage was being designed with small-scale tenants in mind, Beyl said.

“We certainly can’t guarantee that it will never become a Walgreens,” he said, “but it’s highly unlikely.”

City officials are also weighing whether to remove curbside parking spaces on the east side of the block fronting the Green Loop. Several commissioners said they favored removing the parking spaces to help create a Dutch-style woonerf, or shared street.

City officials have not decided if motor vehicle traffic will continue to be allowed on that stretch of Ninth Avenue.

“In the near term, it may need to accommodate vehicles,” senior planner Mark Raggett said.

“Long term, we may want to take advantage of the opportunity to remove vehicles entirely.”

The Block 216 project is scheduled to return for another design advice meeting on Sept. 13. Beyl said the Design Commission discussions were helpful.

“We’ve advanced our critical issues a long way and understand what we need to do to finish up,” he said.