

The Oregonian

Former Portland Rivals Celebrate New Bus Line, Pedestrian Improvements on 122nd Ave.

*By Andrew Theen
September 10, 2018*

Residents along 122nd Avenue, one of east Portland's busiest and most dangerous streets, finally have a bus line that runs at least every 15 minutes seven days a week.

Portland, Multnomah County and TriMet leaders gathered Monday morning at the busy corner of 122nd and Stanton Street to celebrate the frequent-service bus line and one of the pedestrian safety projects they say made the service possible. They chose that location because of a new pedestrian flashing beacon at the intersection just south of Interstate 84.

"This is an area that we've neglected for too long," Portland City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly said in her first public comments as the elected official overseeing the Transportation Bureau. "It's an area that's now facing new pressures as Portlanders who've been displaced from the central city move in."

With bus, freight and commuter traffic roaring past the small news conference, Eudaly said the city must do more to make it safer for pedestrians citywide. "As your transportation commissioner I pledge that we're going to do better," she said. "I want to champion catalytic investments like the one we're celebrating today."

Line 73 became the 14th frequent-service bus line in the three-county transit system. Those lines run 15 minutes or so throughout most days. Frequent bus service began Sept. 2.

But beyond the ceremonial ribbon cutting, Monday's news conference presented a rare, and genuine, moment of political unity between two former rivals.

Eudaly invited Steve Novick, the former commissioner whom she defeated in 2016, to share in the celebration.

Eudaly said she bumped into Novick downtown last week for the first time since before election night 2016. Planning was underway for Monday's event, and Eudaly later thought it would be nice to invite Novick.

She asked Bureau of Transportation interim director Chris Warner, Novick's former chief of staff, whether it would be odd to invite her former rival. Warner thought it was a great idea.

Eudaly said it was a simple gesture. "This was his baby," she said after the news conference. "He deserves credit."

Novick and Eudaly are quick to credit east Portland residents who lobbied for years to add bus service on the important thoroughfare.

But Novick made the issue a talking point for his entire City Council tenure.

Novick, who was elected to the City Council in 2012, proudly called the bus line "a pet project," borrowing a phrase used to criticize politicians for wasting public funds.

"I'm darned proud of it," he said Monday, "and I defy anybody to tell the people of east Portland that the money was wasted."

When Novick for years lobbied TriMet to add a bus line on the key north-sound route, the agency highlighted a list of \$8 million in pedestrian safety improvements, like the safety beacon at Stanton, which it said would help justify adding bus service.

In 2015, then-Mayor Charlie Hales joined the fight, and the pair secured \$4.7 million in safety improvements.

TriMet created Line 73 the next year.

Portland plans to add nearly \$4 million in sidewalks and safety in coming years.

Even with new flashing beacons, sidewalks and other safety improvements, 122nd remains a dangerous place.

Eudaly said two people have died on 122nd so far in 2018, and three people were killed in 2017.

Residents who live in east Portland are more than twice as likely to be killed or seriously injured on city streets, she said, than other residents.

"Disparities like this are unacceptable," the new transportation commissioner said.

The Portland Tribune

City Hall Update: Police Oversight Panel Approved

By Jim Redden

September 11, 2018

Plus, comment sought on transit, bike projects and city management pay scales revised.

The City Council created a Portland Committee on Community Engaged Policing on Wednesday. It replaces the disbanded Community Oversight Advisory Board that was intended to oversee progress implementing the city's settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice over complaints of police use of excessive force against the mentally ill.

Mayor Ted Wheeler will appoint the 13 members of the new committee. It will meet monthly, beginning in November. Some meetings may be closed to the public. Protesters repeatedly disrupted the previous board's meetings, contributing to its demise.

"I am very excited about it," Wheeler told reporters on Thursday. "I am committed to making it highly successful."

U.S. District Judge Michael Simon approved the settlement in 2014. One requirement is a citizen oversight body to involve the public in monitoring its progress.

Comment sought on transit, bike projects

The Portland Bureau of Transportation has launched an online survey and scheduled two open houses to help narrow down a list of 18 possible Central City in Motion projects for City Council consideration.

They are intended to increase transit speed and bike use, but cost more than the available funds.

The first open house is scheduled from 4-7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 13, at PSU's Karl Miller Center, 615 S.W. Harrison St. The second is scheduled from 4-7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 18, at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry auditorium, 1945 S.E. Water Ave.

The online survey and information on the projects can be found at centralcityinmotion.com/#.

Management pay revised

The City Council revised the pay scales for management employees on Wednesday. The changes were the result of a years-long study of non-unionized workers.

The unanimous vote affects around 1,600 employees and eventually could cost up to \$3.5 million in additional payroll costs. The previous payment levels had evolved over years and did not necessarily reflect market salaries, the council was told.

Human Resources Director Serilda Summers-McGee testified that the changes will ensure managers are paid "fairly and consistently."

Willamette Week

City Commissioner Amanda Fritz Endorses Council Candidate Jo Ann Hardesty

*By Rachel Monahan
September 10, 2018*

Both women serving on City Council have endorsed Hardesty.

Portland City Commissioner Amanda Fritz has endorsed former legislator Jo Ann Hardesty in the race for an open seat on City Council.

It's a fairly rare move in Portland for a sitting city commissioner to endorse for an open seat, where the winner of the race will join the five-member council.

But now Hardesty has the endorsement of both women currently sitting on the council: Fritz and Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, who endorsed earlier this year. (The other commissioners, Mayor Ted Wheeler and City Commissioner Nick Fish—as well as the departing commissioner whose seat is coming open, Dan Saltzman—are not expected to endorse in the race.)

Fritz cited Hardesty's policy positions, including on publicly funded elections and other issues, as well as a style of leadership.

"Jo Ann has been a staunch proponent of Open and Accountable Elections, police accountability, and equity for East Portland—all priority issues for me," Fritz tells WW via email. "She has demonstrated her capacity to listen, learn from mistakes, and collaborate. She has earned my endorsement, over many years of advocacy for and service to Portland's communities."

Hardesty faces County Commissioner Loretta Smith in the November election to replace Saltzman, who is retiring after five terms.

"Portlanders are looking for real leadership to solve our city's toughest problems, like housing, police reform and climate change," Hardesty said in a statement. "I'm excited that together with my colleagues we can get our city back on track and know that as a team we can achieve what's needed. [...] I'm looking forward to working with all my colleagues—and I'm grateful for the early support of both Commissioner Eudaly and Fritz who I will be working with closely to plan for my arrival on Council in January."

A victory by Hardesty could re-shape the Council—at least to the extent the three women align on policy issues and vote as a bloc, including on the issues Fritz mentions.

This represents an opportunity, especially for Fritz, who has been sidelined by Wheeler, who has reassigned two key bureaus, both Parks and the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, away from Fritz.

It's also clear that on some issues there isn't a natural alliance. Fritz and Eudaly don't vote together on some issues—including tenant rights, where Fritz has pushed the council to moderate Eudaly's reforms.

The Portland Business Journal

City, County Tout Accomplishments of Homelessness Response

*By Jon Bell
September 10, 2018*

Despite a sentiment from some that the city of Portland and Multnomah County aren't doing enough to tackle the homelessness challenge, officials say they are making headway.

In a release from the Joint Office of Homeless Services, the city and county provided an update on the goal of creating 2,000 units of supportive housing by 2028. (Supportive housing combines affordable housing with services for mental health, addiction and other areas.)

“Homelessness begins and ends with a home,” said Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury in the release. “Supportive housing isn’t just the right or compassionate solution. It’s sometimes the only solution that works to end chronic homelessness.”

The update comes from a report by the Corporation for Supportive Housing, a New York nonprofit that focuses on supportive housing.

According to the report, the city and county have made progress since announcing their 2000-unit goal last October. Since then, more than 500 new units of supportive housing are operational or in development.

To reach the 2000-unit goal, however, the city and county will need to spend an additional \$592 million to \$640 million over the next 10 years. On top of that, operating costs for those 2,000 units could hit \$47 million a year.

The report also noted that close to 6,000 people have been helped out of homelessness and into housing throughout the most recent fiscal year, a jump of 21 percent over the prior year. In addition, about 6,300 people received rent assistance to help them stay in their housing.

Commissioners from both governments will get a direct briefing on the report from CSH during a joint work session Sept. 11.