

The Oregonian

Dueling Demonstrations Set For Portland Days After Protest Ordinance Fails

*By Shane Dixon Kavanaugh
November 15, 2018*

Rival protests are planned Saturday in downtown Portland, which could draw several hundred people — and potential conflict — to a pair of parks near City Hall.

An offshoot of the right-wing group Patriot Prayer scheduled a #HimToo rally and their left-wing opponents plan to hold counter demonstrations.

The demonstrations once again provide an opportunity for rival political factions to confront each other in the center of the city, in this case only days after a failed attempt by Mayor Ted Wheeler to restrict violent protests that have become a fixture in Portland.

The ordinance, backed by Portland police and business groups, failed to garner enough votes in the City Council.

Activists panned the proposal, as did civil rights organizations and city leaders, who worried it would stifle free speech and give too much power to the mayor.

Many of these critics will take to the streets Saturday.

The Democratic Socialists of America have scheduled a rally in the Park Blocks outside the Portland Museum of Art starting at 11:30 a.m. and will march from there to Chapman Square, where Popular Mobilization has planned a demonstration.

Those two groups, which count an array of progressive Portlanders among its supporters, aim to bring together survivors of sexual violence and other marginalized individuals who organizers say often remain silent about their abuse or trauma.

The event is meant to counter the permitted #HimToo rally scheduled for 2 p.m. across the street at Terry Schunk Plaza, which stands on federal property.

That demonstration, planned by activists aligned with Patriot Prayer and its leader Joey Gibson, seeks to draw attention to men who have been falsely accused of sexual attacks.

Like Gibson, the main organizer for the #HimToo rally, Haley Adams, has a conservative following that numbers in the thousands on social media.

Previous Patriot Prayer rallies in Portland have also been criticized for attracting members of the far-right fringe. They've included outspoken anti-Semites and Islamophobes, white nationalists and neo-Nazis.

Meanwhile, Rose City Antifa, a prominent antifascist group in Portland, has asked supporters to show up at Schunk Plaza before the #HimToo rally begins.

Portland police and federal law enforcement will both be watching over the demonstrations, said Robert Sperling, a spokesman for the Federal Protective Services.

Sperling said federal agents will set up checkpoints and screen individuals who enter Schunk Plaza. Those not participating in the #HimToo rally will be escorted out of the park, he said.

Sgt. Chris Burley, a Portland police spokesman, said officers in the area will attempt to prevent physical injuries or property damage. He said the Portland Police Bureau will provide more information about the protests on Friday.

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler: 'Cannot Wait' For Term To Be Over

*By Gordon Friedman and Molly Harbarger
November 15, 2018*

As he walked off stage Thursday after finishing a speech during which he was heckled, Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler muttered, "I cannot wait for the next 24 months to be over."

The comment suggests Wheeler may not seek re-election, or at least that he is frustrated with the job of being mayor. The aside echoes a comment Wheeler made during an interview with *The Oregonian/OregonLive* in July, when he said being mayor is "not a fun job."

Wheeler's remark came after his speech to the Oregon Health Forum, the educational arm of *The Lund Report*, a healthcare news publication. He was speaking about homelessness and health policy, but frequently riffed off-script.

Later Thursday morning, Wheeler released a statement downplaying the significance of his off-the-cuff remark and said he has not decided whether to seek re-election.

"If you know me, you know I mutter quite a bit. Not one of my most redeeming qualities," the statement said. "I will make a decision next year with my family if I am running for re-election."

The mayor's remark comes near the end of a particularly difficult week for Wheeler at City Hall.

During its Wednesday meeting, the City Council narrowly rejected Wheeler's plan to give himself new powers to restrict protests in some cases, a proposal he and his top aides lobbied for aggressively. During the same meeting, the mayor sharply criticized a half-dozen City Hall regulars -- many of whom taunt and jeer at Wheeler during the weekly council meetings -- after they criticized his Housing Bureau's decision to purchase an apartment complex.

It is a common refrain among City Hall staffers, and even elected officials, that being mayor is a thankless, winless job. Credit is not given to Wheeler when due, officials complain, yet the mayor finds himself blamed for anything and everything that residents dislike.

That difficulty is partly why Portland has had three consecutive one-term mayors: Tom Potter, Sam Adams and Charlie Hales.

Wheeler has said that trend should cease, but has not committed himself to seeking another term.

"In order to do the right thing and to provide the right long-term view for the city, it might mean you're only in politics for a little while," Wheeler said at a conference of mayors in February.

"And I made a decision that that's OK with me."

Yet nearly a year ago to the day, he said during public remarks at the Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce that Portland needs "consistency" -- and two-term mayor.

At the time, Wheeler was taking pain medication after fracturing several ribs in a cycling accident. He joked with the audience that his judgment may be affected.

"If I declare I want to run for re-election today, it's totally the drugs," he said.

Portland Backs \$36 Million in Projects to Speed Up Buses, Make Protected Bike Lanes

*By Andrew Theen
November 15, 2018*

Within the next five years, Portland has pledged to create bus-only travel lanes on the approaches to three downtown bridges, build a network of protected bike lanes on both sides of the Willamette River and improve dozens of dangerous pedestrian crossings in the city's center.

The City Council on Thursday approved a \$36 million project list, the culmination of an effort which dates to 2012 and which transportation leaders say would make downtown streets more efficient, safer and equitable for all Portlanders. The city still faces a \$9 million funding gap to make the projects a reality. The overall effort, known as Central City in Motion, includes an additional \$37 million in projects to build within the next six to 10 years.

The vote amounts to one of the most significant council actions on bike and transit projects in years, and transportation officials say it's critical to give Portlanders a safe and efficient option to get around other than driving --- especially as the region grapples with how to meet its ambitious carbon emission reduction goals.

"For too long we've only been addressing one end of the spectrum, which are car drivers," said Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, who oversees the Portland Bureau of Transportation, "while neglecting the other end, until relatively recently."

Eudaly said the city was intentionally spending tens of millions on bike, transit and pedestrian projects and not on developments directly benefitting motorists. "We all own the streets," she said.

Mayor Ted Wheeler and Commissioner Nick Fish were absent from the meeting with previously approved excuses, leaving outgoing Commissioner Dan Saltzman with Eudaly and Amanda Fritz as the sole elected officials voting.

Saltzman, in one of the last significant votes in his City Hall career, said it was critical to make biking safer for all Portlanders and said he could relate to the testimony from concerned riders who said their spouses don't ride because of the conditions on Portland's streets. "That's me, too," Saltzman said, "I won't ride because I'm too afraid."

Saltzman said the city must also step up its traffic enforcement for distracted drivers, cyclists and jaywalkers who break the law. "Unless we do that, these strategies will all look good," he said, "but be ineffective."

The vote came after hours of public testimony, largely from transit and business groups who support the project list.

The top priorities:

- A \$5.3 million plan to build protected bike lanes, and bus and right-turn-only lanes on the Burnside Bridge and for blocks extending on either side.
- A \$6.6 million protected bike project in downtown, turning Fourth Avenue into a northbound route and Broadway into the southbound connector downtown.
- A \$4.5 million plan to turn Seventh Avenue in the Central Eastside Industrial District into a protected bike route.

- A \$4 million plan to convert the seasonal Better Naito bike lane into a permanent two-way cycle track on the riverfront road, which would convert one of the northbound travel lanes into the bike path.

Transportation officials described, at length, how Portland has fallen behind its peer cities nationally and in North America in how it treats transit and bike projects in particular. Vancouver, British Columbia; Seattle and Denver have all taken concrete steps in recent years to dedicate travel lanes to buses and to build protected bike lanes in their city centers.

Gabe Graff, the Portland transportation staffer who led the project, said Seattle had added 60,000 jobs in its city center but 4,500 fewer people were driving alone to work because of the transit and bike improvements.

The cumulative project list would result in about 1,000 curb parking and loading zone spaces being removed, leaving 19,328 spaces in downtown and the inner-eastside neighborhoods.

Representatives from Oregon Health & Science University and Portland State backed the project list.

Bernie Bottomly, executive director of public affairs for TriMet, said bus or right-turn-only lanes on the Burnside, Steel and Hawthorne bridges would help speed up 13 bus routes on their journeys throughout the metro area. Bottomly said it's critical that Portland get the projects out the door and soon to show voters in the region the benefit of speeding up transit and making it safer to bike. Metro plans a region-wide transportation bond in 2020, which could include up to \$20 billion in projects.

Several Central Eastside business owners or representatives expressed concern about the proposed removal of parking spaces or loading zones on Seventh Avenue, which runs through Northeast and Southeast neighborhoods.

The city wants to have a robust bike lane to connect with the Sullivan's Crossing, the bike and pedestrian bridge expected to begin construction in 2019 which will connect the neighborhood to the Lloyd District.

A representative from Elephants Delicatessen said losing much of the loading zone around the popular business's main kitchen and distribution center would be "devastating."

Fritz introduced an amendment, which passed, that ensured that adequate access and convenient loading zones will be maintained for those eastside businesses.

Eudaly later cautioned that projects were not "carved in stone."

"We're picking 18 projects," she said. "The next step is more engagement, more outreach, before we build them." She said the city would create a working group to oversee the project list.

Transit and bike advocates pushed the council to dream big and to move along with the projects faster than the five-year time frame.

Paul Frazier, a North Portland resident, told the council he biked to the meeting and witnessed a cyclist narrowly avoid a vehicle that turned right without looking. "The only thing that we don't know," he said, "is do we have the courage and will to do this?"

The Portland Tribune

Happy America Recycles Day, Oregon - But You're Failing To Meet State Goals

By Steve Law

November 15, 2018

Recycling rate has been down in all parts of the state in recent years, though, surprisingly, it may have gone up a bit in 2017

It was America Recycles Day on Thursday, Nov. 15, and Environment Oregon marked the day by releasing some sobering numbers on the declining share of waste being recycled in Oregon.

The advocacy group reported that the recycling rate in Oregon — and in every single county in the state — fell from 2012 to 2016, the latest year for which data is available.

"It's America Recycles Day but unfortunately, Oregon is moving in the wrong direction," said John Ammondson, a fellow at the Environment Oregon Research and Policy Center who contributed to the report.

Environment Oregon recommended new statewide policies to reduce the use of harmful and hard-to-recycle single-use plastics, as well as investment in curbside compost collection, education and outreach efforts, local recycling facilities, and remanufacturers.

Peter Spendelow, a state recycling expert for the Department of Environmental Quality, concurred with Environment Oregon's assertion that the state won't meet its looming statewide recycling goal.

"I can't see any way where we can meet the 52 percent goal by the year 2020 at this point," Spendelow said.

His recently updated data found the state recycled about 42.2 percent of its waste in 2016. But he expects the 2017 rate, which will be formally calculated and released in December, should be a tad higher.

"It's probably up a little, but not more than 1 percent," Spendelow estimated.

That may surprise some people, given China's well-publicized decision to stop buying mixed paper and plastic scraps collected on curbsides here, which has wreaked havoc in the markets for reusing those products.

But recycling for items like steel, cardboard, wood waste and yard debris appears to have offset reductions in paper and plastic recycling, Spendelow said.

One of the big causes of the reduction in statewide recycling from 2012 to 2016 was the closure of a big paper mill in Newberg, which had been using recycled wood as "hog fuel," Spendelow said. That wood was supplied from many surrounding counties, driving down their recycling rates.

Another big factor has been the ongoing shift to on-line newspapers and magazines, which reduced the amount of paper being produced, and recycled, in Oregon.

That may not be all bad, Spendelow said. "We can see tons (of recycled materials) go up and down, but what we really care about is the impact on the environment," he said. And paper often requires cutting down trees and tremendous energy usage at paper mills.

One of the factors that drove up recycling in 2017 was the expansion of the Bottle Bill. The deposit on beverage containers doubled from a nickel to a dime, resulting in less glass and plastic bottles tossed in the trash.

The city of Portland has a higher recycling rate than the state average. Bruce Walker, the solid waste and recycling program manager for the city Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, said the recycling rate in the city in 2016 was about 53 percent.

But the rate for residential recycling was higher, hovering around 60 percent, and it hasn't changed much in recent years, Walker said.

"Our residential recycling rate is staying pretty steady, at right about 60 percent or sitting above 60 percent," he said.

But the recycling rate for the city's business and commercial sector is lower, and that accounts for a much larger share of the city's waste stream. "It's about a 4 to 1 ratio," Walker said, meaning the commercial sector accounts for about four-fifths of the waste stream and the residential sector accounts for only about one-fifth.

In other parts of the state, there is more balance between commercial and residential waste, Spendelov said.

The city of Portland is hoping to increase the commercial rate by getting more recycling among large apartment complexes, and via a looming Metro mandate for large producers of food waste to recycle it. Metro is in talks with Waste Management to use an anaerobic digester system at the city's sewage plant in North Portland to process the region's food waste, and turn it into energy.

The city also expects to reduce waste coming from plastic straws, stirrers, condiments and tableware with a new policy about to be approved by the City Council.

DEQ and others also are involved in ongoing discussions about how to find new markets for plastics recycling in the state, and on ways to reduce the amount of waste being produced.

Willamette Week

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler Mutters That He Can't Wait for His Term to Be Over

By Rachel Monahan

November 15, 2018

"If you know me, you know I mutter quite a bit," says Wheeler in a statement. "Not one of my most redeeming qualities. I will make a decision next year with my family if I am running for re-election."

In the strongest indication yet that Mayor Ted Wheeler may not seek reelection, Wheeler muttered today that he can't wait for his term to be over.

The sometimes temperamental mayor appeared to be venting after protesters disrupted his speech at the Oregon Health Forum this morning.

But Oregonian reporter Molly Harbarger overheard Wheeler saying he was looking forward to the next two years being over—roughly the amount of time until the next Portland mayoral election in 2020.

"I cannot wait for the next 24 months to be up," he said.

The mayor has complained about the job before, most notably calling it "no fun" in an interview with *The Oregonian*. But Wheeler has also said he aspired to break the streak of Portland's one-term mayors and in that same interview said he wouldn't decide on a reelection effort until next fall.

But it comes a day after Wheeler's most significant failure. On Wednesday, the City Council rejected his proposal to control warring protesters.

Portland hasn't had a mayor seek a second term since Vera Katz—who served three terms ending in 2004. And the overheard remark recalls the public frustrations of previous mayors, including Katz's successor, Tom Potter, who famously declared "I'm irrelevant" and stormed off the City Council dais.

In response to questions from WW, the mayor admits that he was muttering. But says he won't actually make a decision till next year on whether he's running for reelection:

"If you know me, you know I mutter quite a bit," says Wheeler in a statement. "Not one of my most redeeming qualities. I will make a decision next year with my family if I am running for reelection."

Each Time Patriot Prayer Rallies to Fight Antifa, It Can Cost Portland Police \$100,000

*By Katie Shepherd
November 15, 2018*

In 2018, 74 percent of police resources spent on protests has come from Patriot Prayer events and counter-protests.

Police presence at protests has cost the City of Portland more than \$3 million since 2016, with overtime and other costs topping \$2 million in 2017 alone.

Portland police detailed how much the bureau had spent on protests in a response to questions posed by City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, in anticipation of a vote on a controversial ordinance that would have expanded the power of the police commissioner to restrict some protests. The ordinance failed 3-2 on Nov. 14.

According to records obtained by WW through a public records request, the Aug. 4 protest was the most expensive this year—and when Patriot Prayer rallies draw large crowds of counter-protesters, they often cost the city more than \$100,000.

Portland police spent \$158,098 policing the Aug. 4 Patriot Prayer rally that attracted hundreds of right-wing demonstrators and Proud Boys from out-of-state.

That event ended in a clash between officers and left-wing counter-demonstrators that seriously injured several protesters. The Police Bureau spent \$10,431 on materials—including food and water for officers, and pepper spray, rubber bullets and flash-bangs—and the rest of the costs came from overtime pay and compensated time, which officers can either later use as paid time-off or cash in.

Portland police previously released its overtime costs for several Patriot Prayer events that took place in 2017, but those totals do not include material costs. The data recently released for Aug.

6, 2017, through Aug. 4, 2018, includes material costs and overtime pay. Portland police combined data for Aug. 6 and Sept. 10, two protests that erupted into violent brawls last year.

In 2018, 74 percent of police resources spent on protests has gone to policing Patriot Prayer events and counter-protests, according to the data released by Portland police.

Patriot Prayer supporters plan to return to Portland on Nov. 17 for a "Him Too" rally, which aims to discredit and mock the Me Too movement.

Here is how much PPB says it spent on Patriot Prayer protests in the past year:

Aug. 6, 2017 and Sept. 10, 2017, combined: \$199,516

Dec. 9, 2017: \$18,336

Dec. 23, 2017: \$22,792

Jan. 20, 2018: \$150,693

Jan. 21, 2018: \$3,262

June 3, 2018: \$39,415

June 30, 2018: \$73,657

Aug. 4, 2018: \$158,098

The Portland Mercury

Mayor Invites "Fair and Balanced" Reporters to Cover Protest From Police HQ

*By Alex Zielinski
November 15, 2018*

Members of Patriot Prayer will return, yet again, to downtown Portland this weekend to protest women who accuse men of sexual abuse or rape. (I know, it's terrible). Rose City Antifa has already organized a counter-protest. Patriot Prayer supporters have called the event "another opportunity to kick some Antifa ass," on the event's Facebook page.

Based on their history alone, its likely the clashing groups will become confrontational, if not violent. In the past, that violence hasn't just come from aggravated protesters—several peaceful protest attendees have been injured by Portland police officers who tossed "flash bang" grenades or shot pepper balls into a crowd.

Time after time, the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) says their decision to deploy those types on munitions come from calls made at the PPB command center—a room where officers, often including PPB Chief Danielle Outlaw, monitor active protests and give direction to officers on the ground.

Reporters have frequently asked PPB to sit in the command center during a protest, but have not been granted permission. Until now. Kind of.

According to Mayor Ted Wheeler's communications director Eileen Park, she and PPB had selected two local journalists—one from the Oregonian and one from the Portland Tribune—who have a history of "fair and balanced" reporting to sit in during this weekend's protest. No other

reporters working at those papers were allowed to go in their place, nor were any other media outlets told about this offer.

"In hindsight, I can see how this does not look good," Park told the Mercury. " Ideally, we should open this option up to every media outlet."

According to Oregonian Editor Therese Bottomly, the Oregonian refused to adhere to the city's specific conditions—specifically, the condition that allowed the city to choose which Oregonian reporter would cover the protest from the command center.

Park said she rescinded the entire offer to both outlets.

No reporters will join PPB's command center team during Saturday's protest. She says that going forward, the mayor's office will be more transparent about these decisions, and give more journalists an opportunity to report from the PPB command center (not just the ones the mayor's office has ruled "fair and balanced").

"I didn't think it through," said Park.

This gaffe comes a day after a particularly contentious Portland City Council meeting, where Wheeler suggested the press had been responsible for the downfall of his proposed protest ordinance.

Park's offer is a limited, yet clear, step forward in allowing media access to PPB. But will all reporters—especially ones who've been critical about Wheeler's protest tactics—get equal access to the PPB command center? We'll have to wait until the next Patriot Prayer clash to find out.

Update, 5 pm:

Vance Tong, managing editor for the Portland Tribune, sent the Mercury this comment about their involvement:

"Late Wednesday one of our reporters was offered the opportunity to report from the incident command center on Saturday. The offer was declined due to a scheduling conflict."

The Portland Business Journal

Portland's Mayor Defends Work on Homelessness, Outlines the Obstacles

*By Elizabeth Hayes
November 15, 2018*

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler outlined the strides the city has made in addressing the homelessness crisis, but said the scale is not great enough.

About 6,000 people were transitioned off the streets or temporary shelters and into housing last year and another 6,000 at risk of homelessness received interventions and stayed in their homes, Wheeler said during the Oregon Health Forum on Thursday.

"That's results," he said. "The problem is the upstream issues continue to dog us. More and more people come onto the streets. They're not feeling the progress."

The city is focused on providing more shelters and 2,000 units of permanent supportive housing, which will be made easier with the passage of metro region housing bonds last week, he said.

The city has increased trash collection with a program that employs the homeless. The city also just purchased a hotel in the neighborhood to be used for single-room occupancy housing. And a new navigation center is set to open next spring in Old Town.

“That’s the right formula,” he said. “We just haven’t been able to bring it to the scale we need to.”

As a demonstration of how emotionally charged the issue is, Wheeler faced a heckler in the audience who decried the way the city sweeps homeless encampments.

Wheeler countered that when a camp is identified, the city has a legal obligation to provide advanced warning and social service providers help them find housing alternatives.

“The vast majority of time, that happens,” Wheeler said.

“No, it doesn’t,” the audience member said. “You’re not telling the truth!”

Seattle and San Francisco have navigation teams that do just that and they track their results over time, Wheeler said.

“I think it’s a great idea,” he said. “Then we wouldn’t have these debates.”

The root cause of the crisis is not “squishy-headed liberals like me on the West Coast,” he said.

Rather, he pointed to escalating housing prices, especially for those at the lower end of the income spectrum and communities of color, lagging household wages, complex mental health and addiction issues and an 85 percent cut in federal housing support since the 1980s. The region needs 24,000 more housing units.

“People get really mad because they want to know their mayor is on top of it and going to solve the problem,” Wheeler said. “We’re approaching the issue of homelessness with a sense of incredible urgency.”

Audience members called on Wheeler to address immediate problems — the lack of port-o-potties and places to shower and do laundry. The problem, Wheeler said, is shower units are “ridiculously expensive” and port-o-potty companies will not rent to the city.

He suggested other out-of-the-box solutions, such as zoning changes that would allow surface parking lots owned by churches to be used for housing.

While investing in permanent supportive housing is expensive, at \$60 a night, not addressing the problem is far more so — \$210 for a night in the county jail or \$900 in the State Hospital, Wheeler said.

“The cost-effective way to address homelessness isn’t to strip services and let the ERs and jails be the safety net,” Wheeler said. “The cost-effective way is to create a safety net and robust delivery system that will restore people to a life of opportunity and dignity.”