

The Oregonian

Lyft Buys Biketown Operator Motivate; What's in Store for Portland Bike Share?

*By Andrew Theen
November 29, 2018*

Lyft, the car ride-hailing giant, is now the largest bike-rental company in the United States.

Lyft on Thursday closed its deal to buy Motivate, the bike-rental company that operates Portland's Biketown system as well as other on-demand systems in Chicago, New York City and San Francisco. The financial terms were not disclosed, but previous reports valued the transaction at about \$250 million.

The deal means users will be able to, in many cities, rent bikes from Lyft apps on a smartphone. Motivate accounted for 80 percent of the on-demand bike trips nationwide in 2017.

"With this acquisition, we are poised to help take bike share to the next level," Lyft said in a statement. Plans include "adding thousands of bikes and stations in communities that haven't had access to transportation; making bike share membership more convenient and affordable than ever; and deploying new electric bikes, on a major scale," the company said.

This week, New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio said Lyft would pump \$100 million into its Citi Bike system and add thousands of bikes.

So, do the company's grand plans include Portland?

Potentially, but we aren't likely to know more details for many months. Portland's contract with Motivate expires in July.

"That contract is still in effect," John Brady, a Portland Bureau of Transportation spokesman, said in an email, "and so we don't anticipate any changes to how Biketown operates."

Next summer, Portland will request operational plans from Lyft and other companies vying to run the Biketown system, which has 1,000 bikes throughout Portland.

The city has already said it wants electric-assist bikes to be included in the next contract.

A Lyft spokesman declined to answer specific questions about the company's plans in Portland.

The company also released a rendering Thursday of its new Lyft Bikes. It's unclear if the ubiquitous orange Biketown bikes would also be set for a makeover.

Portland Diamond Project Has Agreement For ballpark at NW Portland Marine Terminal (Renderings)

*By Elliot Njus
November 29, 2018*

An effort to bring a Major League Baseball team to Portland passed an early milestone Thursday when backers said they'd settled on a site for a new ballpark: Terminal 2, the expansive marine cargo site in an industrial district northwest of the Fremont Bridge.

The group also released sketches that show a ballpark with a retractable roof and a gondola reminiscent of the Portland Aerial Tram.

But much remains unknown: the terms of the agreement between the Portland of Portland and the Portland Diamond Project for the property, what stadium backers would pay to use Terminal 2 and who's agreed to foot the multibillion-dollar costs of building a stadium and bringing a team to Portland.

The transaction for the property would be structured as a long-term lease, with the Portland Diamond Project acting as master developer for the site, at 3556 N.W. Front Ave.

That means it would create a master plan for the site, but other developers could build ancillary projects, like the housing and commercial development the group has imagined going up next to the stadium.

The plan ultimately requires approval of the port's governing commission, when the terms would be made public.

The announcement came days ahead of Major League Baseball's winter meeting in Las Vegas, which Portland Diamond Project partners will attend to promote a Portland franchise.

"It's kind of their State of the Union," said Craig Cheek, the Portland Diamond Project's president. "This allows us to hold meetings, be visible, connect with the commissioner."

Port spokeswoman Melanie Mesaros said the agreement will allow the Diamond Project to determine whether Terminal 2 is a viable stadium location.

The terminal handles breakbulk cargo -- large items like construction equipment unloaded piece by piece, rather than in bulk like grain or in containers like consumer goods.

But Mesaros said the terminal is lightly used because access is difficult on the Willamette River, making it difficult to compete with other terminals in the region that can handle the same goods. That includes Portland's Terminal 6, on the Columbia River.

Still unclear is how the ownership group would pay for a site and its redevelopment.

The group has named some investors -- including Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson and Grammy Award winner Ciara, who are married -- and it would plan to tap up to \$150 million in state-issued bonds that would be paid back with income taxes from team salaries.

Cheek, a former Nike executive, former state Sen. Jason Atkinson and former Trail Blazers announcer Mike Barrett are Portland Diamond Project's managing partners.

The stadium will likely need millions more to complete but group leaders have declined to release further details.

Cheek said it could cost more than \$1 billion to build the park, and perhaps \$1 billion more to acquire a franchise.

He said the group has strong commitments from investors to move forward without further public funding aside from the previously approved bonds, but he declined to say who those investors are.

The sketches, created by the architecture firms Populous of Kansas City and TVA Architects of Portland, show a stadium with views of Mount Hood, the Willamette River and the Fremont Bridge.

It would feature a retractable roof, which Cheek said would be different from those familiar to baseball fans. Advances in technology have allowed for lighter and translucent materials that would allow light into the park.

Also pictured is a stadium gondola. Cheek said fans could buy tickets to view a few innings of the game from the gondola, which would move out to the outfield and back.

"We want this to be the next best ballpark, the one that everyone is talking about," Cheek said. "We think there's so much about Portland that's really showcased in this ballpark."

He said the group is considering pursuing a LEED Platinum certification, a recognition of sustainable building practices, energy efficiency and water use that no other ballpark has achieved.

He also said the group hopes that, with its central location, it would be one of the most easily accessible stadiums in the league.

But the location identified poses transportation challenges. While it has freeway access from Interstate 405, it's served by transit only through an infrequent bus route, and the site is more than a mile from MAX light rail.

And the site is zoned for industry, surrounded by warehouses and factories.

Cheek acknowledged planning challenges ahead, and he said his group would be meeting with Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler and city staffers from various bureaus Friday to start that work.

But getting those processes going now would be key to landing a team, through relocation or expansion, in coming years.

"There's going to be a window of opportunity and we don't know when it will open and close," Cheek said. "I'd hate for us not to have a sense of urgency."

The Portland Diamond Project and the Port of Portland have been in serious talks about the potential sale of the port's expansive Terminal 2 since May, when officials from both organizations signed a nondisclosure agreement.

Willamette Week

Portland Mayor Will Bring Proposal for Unarmed Police Officers to City Council Next Week

*By Katie Shepherd and Rachel Monahan
November 29, 2018*

The Public Safety Support Specialists, or PS3s, will be non-sworn officers who do not carry guns.

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler plans to bring a new policing pilot program before City Council for final approval on Wednesday, Dec. 5.

The Public Safety Support Specialists, or PS3s, will be non-sworn officers who do not carry guns.

"They will be engaged in the community in non-emergency calls, so that's things like property crimes, break-ins," Wheeler tells WW.

The PS3s grew out of a proposal in the 2016 police union contract approved under then-Mayor Charlie Hales to create Community Service Officers who would respond to minor property crimes and nuisance calls, among other things.

To fund the program, Wheeler cut the Mounted Patrol—cops on horseback—from the 2017-2018 city budget. A year later, City Council set a January 1, 2019, deadline to implement the PS3s. While none of the PS3s will be hired by that date, the Portland Police Bureau says it will begin processing some background checks for potential hires in January.

The police union has been in formal negotiations with the city over the new positions since July. Portland Police Association president Daryl Turner says the PS3s will not respond to calls for service without a sworn officer, but they may provide support by manning the front desks at precincts or waiting for tow trucks at car accidents.

City Council will vote on whether to ratify the agreement between the city and the union, the last step necessary before the Portland Police Bureau can launch the hiring process.

The Portland Mercury

Portland's Latest Community-Led Police Oversight Board Kicks Off

*By Alex Zielinski
November 29, 2018*

Portland's newest police oversight board is in session.

Last night marked the inaugural meeting of the Portland Commission on Community-Engaged Policing (PCCEP), a 13-member group tasked with reviewing the federally mandated reforms the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) must make to improve its interactions with people in mental health crises.

"I am very clear that this is the huge night," said PPB Chief Danielle Outlaw, addressing the commission and the 60 community members who came out to watch the Wednesday meeting. Outlaw showed gratitude—and relief—to see the long-anticipated commission hold its first meeting.

"Thank you so much for your time and your commitment," she said. "If you don't know, it'll probably be a lot. It's not a lot volume-wise, it's a lot because of what's asked of you and the value and the work that you're doing."

PCCEP is the latest step the city's made toward meeting the requirements laid out in Portland's 2014 settlement agreement with the US Department of Justice (DOJ). And the city and police bureau really needs it to stick.

The DOJ settlement was reached after federal investigators found, in 2012, that Portland police officers disproportionately used force against people in mental health crises. The settlement between the city and the feds mandates a number of detailed reforms to PPB, and requires the city create a community group to oversee PPB's rollout of the agreed-upon reforms.

Thus, the city created the Community Oversight Advisory Board (COAB), a 15-member group made up of police reform advocates, attorneys, and police officers, was plagued with disorder, to fill that role.

But infighting between police and activists, disruptions from the public, and general neglect from city hall led to COAB's quick demise. Portland City Council pulled the plug on COAB in late 2016, leaving the city out of compliance with its settlement agreement for nearly two years.

PCCEP (pronounced pee-sep) is Portland's second attempt at meeting this community oversight requirement. As the group's architects, Mayor Ted Wheeler and his staff members have laid out the group's directives and hand picked the 13-member committee (which this time, does not include cops). That leadership changed hands at Wednesday's meeting.

"This panel will be independent—they will determine where they go, they will determine their agenda, they will determine how they govern themselves, they will determine their own North Star," said Wheeler, before the meeting began. "My job was to get it to this point... but this will be their show."

While Nicole Grant, Wheeler's senior policy advisor, will continue to be the city's liaison to PCCEP, she reassured commission members Wednesday that she would only act as a direct line to Wheeler's office and not interfere in any decision-making.

Despite the years of anticipation hanging on PCCEP's success, Wednesday night's meeting followed the ordinary script of any committee gathering for the first time. Members voted on PCCEP's bylaws, and added a few amendments to cement the group's independence, guarantee the city doesn't leave seats empty for too long (one of COAB's flaws), and clarify the city's financial promises (a monthly stipend of \$120 per member). [The monthly meetings will be open to the public.](#)

Members also selected their co-chairs: LaKeesha Dumas, a community health care worker with Multnomah County's mental health and addiction services division, and Lakayna Drury, a high school social studies teacher and founder of "Word is Bond," a group formed to improve relationships between young Black men and law enforcement.

"This board is much more than a settlement agreement, I believe it is the way we interact in the community," said Drury. "It is how we interact as citizens, as officers, and as neighbors. With PCCEP we have the opportunity to reframe policing policies [and] we have the opportunity to authentically engage the community."

The meeting included a presentation by Davis, Hibbitts & Midghall Inc., a local research company that's been hired by the city to survey Portlanders on how PPB interacts with the public. After detailing how their company conducts randomized surveys, yet still sees a unequal number of white people returning their surveys, a number of PCCEP members raised concerns about the true diversity of those surveyed.

"You have not heard enough from the people who these issues probably matter to most," said member Michele Lang, an administrator at Warner Pacific University. Lang was selected to be PCCEP's secretary at the Wednesday meeting.

"One of the themes I've heard throughout the night is the need to really incorporate other groups of people [in PCCEP's work]," said Drury. "Not only reach out to them but make sure they're heard."

All members agreed that the overarching focus of the committee was to hear from the city's most marginalized communities—whether that be people with a mental illness, people of color, people without a home, or youth. Many of PCCEP's members represent those communities.

"I have an African-American son with mental illness and I have mental illness," said Dumas. " So I'm coming at this [not] from a lens of sympathy, but empathy. My son is under fire. If I'm not pushing because of my personal involvement, I'm not sure who could push harder than that."

A MLB Stadium Is (Maybe) Coming to NW Portland, and It Will (Maybe) Have a Sky Tram

*By Blair Stenvick
November 29, 2018*

Beautiful views of Mt. Hood, sleek wood-and-steel finishes, cheerful diverse Portlanders drinking beer and taking selfies... and a sky tram. These are all present in new renderings of a possible future ballpark in Northwest Portland, released Thursday by the Portland Diamond Project.

The group, founded by former Nike executive Craig Cheeks last year with the aim of bringing a major league team to Portland, released these images along with the announcement of its agreement to purchase the Port of Portland's Terminal 2 property, with an eye toward building a potential Major League Baseball stadium on the site.

Terminal 2, currently used as a marine cargo terminal, is located along the Willamette River in Northwest Portland's industrial area.

As the Oregonian reported Wednesday, it's unclear where the money would come from to develop the stadium. While Mayor Ted Wheeler has expressed support for the project in the past, he's also said the city wouldn't subsidize a new stadium under his watch.

If a stadium is built at Terminal 2—and if the city can attract an MLB team—additional transit infrastructure will probably be needed to support it. Right now, just one TriMet bus serves the location, and it doesn't run on Sundays.

Portland Diamond Project's Thursday announcement comes a few weeks after the organization announced it was retracting its offer to buy a Portland Public Schools property near the Moda Center.

If you're curious what affect a new baseball stadium might have on Portland's already impacted housing market, [here's an interesting article](#) that concludes that "stadiums often can become a massively powerful gentrifying force."

The Daily Journal of Commerce

Baseball Group Takes a Swing at Terminal 2

*By Chuck Slothower
November 29, 2018*

Portland Diamond Project has reached an agreement in principle with the Port of Portland to potentially develop Terminal 2 into a major league ballpark, the group announced Thursday.

The 53-acre industrial site is on the west bank of the Willamette River, across from Daimler Trucks North America's headquarters.

The letter of intent will kick off a process with the city and port to create a ballpark and community destination, the baseball group said. Now all it needs is a franchise – something that can be granted only by Major League Baseball.

“We’re committed to building a sustainable, equitable and accessible ballpark that reflects what makes Portland such a special place to live,” Craig Cheek, founder and president of Portland Diamond Project, stated in an announcement.

The group shifted its focus to Terminal 2 after efforts to acquire two other sites fell through. Portland Diamond Project withdrew an offer made to Portland Public Schools for its 10.5-acre headquarters property north of the Rose Quarter, the group announced in early November. Portland Diamond Project representatives said they were deferring to Albina Vision, a community group that seeks to rebuild a neighborhood in the area.

Previously, in August, the Portland Diamond Project pursued the 22.45-acre Esco Corp. industrial site in Northwest Portland. But it was purchased for \$33 million by a group of mostly local investors. The baseball group stated its timeline didn’t match up with the seller’s.

“For the past year, we’ve been highly focused on securing the best possible property for development of a ballpark and have deeply analyzed multiple sites,” Cheek stated Thursday. “Although additional options continue to present themselves, we are excited to announce that Terminal 2 is our preferred location and want to thank the Port of Portland for being such a great partner in this vision.”

Mayor Ted Wheeler quickly backed the project with a tweet.

“Baseball has a rich tradition in Portland,” he wrote. “A ballpark along the (Northwest) bank of the Willamette River would have a positive impact on our economy while shaping the next great (Portland) neighborhood.”

The Portland Diamond Project is working with Populous, a design firm based in Kansas City, Missouri, that has designed stadiums for clients such as the 2012 London Olympics, Texas A&M University and English soccer club Tottenham Hotspur. TVA Architects of Portland, led by founder Bob Thompson, also is working on the design.

Terminal 2 was operated by Willamette Iron & Steel Co. before the Port of Portland acquired the property in 1953. During the 1960s, it had dedicated space for auto imports including Volkswagen and Datsun, Port of Portland spokeswoman Melanie Mesaros stated in an email.

Terminal 2 was renovated in 1988 and a Post Panamax crane was added. The terminal has mostly industrial neighbors, including Ager Tank and Equipment and Viking Automatic Sprinkler Co.

The extent of MLB’s interest in Portland, or expanding or relocating a team to any market, is unclear. Commissioner Rob Manfred, in a July TV appearance, listed Portland along with Las Vegas, Charlotte, Nashville; Montreal and Vancouver, Canada, and Mexico as potential expansion markets.

MLB has 30 teams, and expanding to 32 could allow for a divisional realignment. MLB last expanded in 1998, when it added teams in Phoenix and Tampa Bay.

The last team to relocate was the Montreal Expos, which moved to Washington, D.C., for the 2005 season, and the club became the Washington Nationals.

On Wednesday, the Oakland A’s, one of the clubs thought to be a potential relocation candidate, unveiled new designs for a stadium at Howard Terminal. The team is negotiating with the Port of

Oakland to lease or buy the property, with an April deadline to come to an agreement or lose a deposit, the San Francisco Chronicle reported.

Portland Diamond Project has been on a months-long marketing campaign to generate interest locally and catch MLB's attention. The group has rolled out a list of celebrity investors, including the power couple of Seattle Seahawks quarterback Russell Wilson and singer Ciara, and retired baseball players Dale Murphy and Darwin Barney.

Cheek, a former Nike executive, is the founder and president of the Portland Diamond Project, and former Trail Blazers broadcaster Mike Barrett is managing director. The group has not revealed the extent of its financial backing. Professional sports teams are often owned by individuals or groups with billions of dollars in assets, such as the late Trail Blazers owner Paul Allen, or the Los Angeles Dodgers ownership group that includes billionaire investment manager Mark Walter, basketball legend Magic Johnson and others.

The Portland Business Journal

Mayor Wheeler Calls on Private Sector Innovators to Help Address Homelessness

*By Mayor Ted Wheeler
November 29, 2018*

The Portland mayor says the city's efforts can be buoyed by innovative partnerships with business and nonprofits

As a city, we are experiencing the consequences of a housing affordability crisis, an addiction crisis, a mental health crisis and a failure of national policy to address our housing needs.

Homelessness is a function of our housing crisis — in particular, the lack of homes affordable for people who make no more than 30 percent of our area's median income. This is the permanently disabled person living on \$750 a month from the federal government. A senior living on an average Social Security benefit of \$1,300 a month. Or a disabled veteran surviving on less than \$1,500 a month.

It also includes thousands of families fighting hard at minimum wage jobs who can't afford even a one-bedroom apartment.

And just like homelessness, this housing crisis is hitting people of color the hardest. Right now, there isn't a single neighborhood in Portland where the median-earning African American, Native American or Latinx household can afford a two-bedroom unit.

A new report by ECONorthwest and the Oregon Community Foundation found 56,000 households across our region are at risk of losing their homes on any given night, hoping and praying a job loss or car crash or medical bill won't tip them over the edge.

Additionally, much of the private suffering that's painfully public on our streets also stems from a mental health and addiction crisis.

We have already begun, with help from voters, providing more housing for those the market has left behind. We are working to increase our supply of workforce and affordable housing, and are reforming the permitting process to make creating housing opportunities more efficient in the

future. City Council recently passed the Central City 2035 Plan, a long-range strategy to increase opportunities for workforce housing.

We must do our part to set policy, make investments and advocate for the state and federal government to act.

The city and county's Joint Office of Homeless Services has established an active, consistent approach to homelessness. Here's our strategy:

- Preventing homelessness by helping people stay in their homes.
- Placing people in permanent housing.
- Offering interventions around addiction, mental health and employment.

Connecting those on the streets with shelter.

Our shelters served more than 8,500 people last year. We found housing for nearly 6,000 people living on our streets. We kept an additional 6,000 people in their homes. Each of those neighbors has a story.

No mayor — no city — can do this alone. That's why we are so grateful for our partnerships. We have already seen so many businesses, nonprofits and neighborhood groups step up to help address homelessness in our communities.

For example, Columbia Sportswear CEO Tim Boyle made a generous contribution of \$1.5 million to get Harbor of Hope off the ground, a shelter and service navigation center adjacent to the Broadway Bridge. Businesses in Portland supported the business license tax increase to provide an estimated \$15.3 million in additional revenues to stabilize the budget for homeless services.

We are leading efforts locally, pushing for thousands more units of supportive housing. We are building on the city and county's unprecedented investments in rent assistance. We have expanded and transformed the way we offer shelter, so our beds work better for more people.

But we won't be able to end this cycle of loss until we acknowledge — across all levels of government and all sectors of our community — that every single one of us deserves a decent and affordable place to live and access to quality, life-saving health care.

To keep this progress going, we need the private sector to continue to help — not only through investment, but with solutions and innovation.

Will you join this fight with me?

A Riverfront MLB Stadium? We Talked to the Portland Diamond Project For More Details

*By Jon Bell
November 29, 2018*

The Portland Diamond Project made a big splash today when it released new renderings of a potential Major League Baseball stadium on a riverfront site where it now has development rights.

But PDP's renderings and release triggered a wave of questions about everything from who will own the Port of Portland's T-2 property going forward and if that over-the-top gondola suite in the renderings might actually come to fruition.

PDP spokesman John McIsaac provided some additional information and clarification on the group's big plans.

On the agreement with the port: PDP has not acquired the 45-acre Terminal 2 site, nor does it plan to anytime soon. Instead, McIsaac said the group has an agreement in principle with the port, which makes PDP master developer of the acreage, secured by a long-term land lease.

Port spokesperson Melanie Mesaros said the agreement with PDP will not impact the current tenants who have leases at T-2 — there are six — but the port "will evaluate options for the tenants in the future when it's appropriate."

She also shared this statement from the port's executive director, Curtis Robinhold.

"We're excited about the idea of baseball at Terminal 2 and a unique development on the river, close to downtown Portland. This creates a new opportunity at Terminal 2, which is no longer well positioned to compete in the region for what it has traditionally been used for – moving oversized international cargo."

On the lack of parking depicted in the renderings: "This is a 45-acre property," McIsaac said. "The park only takes up 15 of those. That leaves 30 for other stuff."

On how aspirational the renderings by Populous are: "These are early concepts, so these are of course inspirational," McIsaac said. "There's a lot of different directions we can go." As for the gondola suite depicted in one rendering, McIsaac said there may be a bit of "eye candy" at play, but anything's possible.

On that roof: It's Portland, so rain will no doubt come into play. The stadium depicted in the renderings shows a roof that looks like it could be retractable. McIsaac said it is. "It slides," McIsaac said. "Again, that's a concept, but we will have a roof treatment for this."

On what's next: "Now we get down to the business of doing the due diligence of the property in terms of developing it and the work with the city," McIsaac said.