

## The Oregonian

### Old Town Chinatown neighbors 'enthusiastically' endorse development plan for historic neighborhood: Portland City Hall Roundup

*By Andrew Theen*

The Old Town Chinatown Community Association formally endorsed the most recent plan to jump start development in Portland's oldest neighborhood last week with a detailed list of requests and conditions.

The community organization "enthusiastically" endorses the implementation of a city plan for the district, saying the neighborhood is "on the brink" of success.

"While there have been incredible successes in several parts of the district over the past decade," the board wrote in a letter sent to the City Council and Portland Development Commission's board last week, "We have not been able to sustain the economic momentum and positive revitalization for the entire district"

The PDC, the city's urban renewal arm, has a five-year action plan for Old Town. The five year action plans includes spending tens of millions in the district on redevelopment projects, putting urban renewal dollars on the table to woo housing developers. But both the PDC Board and City Council haven't voted on the 5-year plan.

Dana Haynes, Mayor Charlie Hales' spokesman, said the City Council hasn't scheduled a hearing for the 5-year plan just yet. Haynes said the mayor's office wanted to wait to hear from the neighborhood before voting on the plan.

Some of the big takeaways: The neighborhood board supports ending street closures tied to the Entertainment District (read more about that issue here).

The community members said they want the Portland Business Alliance, which is working on a neighborhood marketing plan, to "work closely" with the community association to plan its retail strategy for the district.

Historic preservation advocates will like at least one of the group's formal requests.

The board members "explicitly support" using tax increment financing or other dollars to redevelop historic properties "that will house historic, museum, and multi-cultural uses."

Here's a snapshot of specific concerns and requests from the Old Town board, split up into various topics (the full letter can be seen here)

#### **Public Safety and Livability**

- Increased funding for mobile crisis unit, police behavioral unit
- Better coordination with Multnomah County on alcohol, drug rehab services and mental health issues
- Restore funding for Multnomah County District Attorney dedicated to OTCT drug impact area
- Pay for public restrooms (like the loo) in the district
- Fund and enforce noise ordinance

## Development

- Encourage market rate, student housing using system development charge exemptions support tax abatements for affordable housing up to 100% MFI
- We believe the TIF resources of our district should not be restricted to the redevelopment of commercial property and that PDC funds should be used to develop and preserve mixed use and residential projects.

## Parking

- Develop parking strategy for entire district
- Use PDC funds to pay for structured parking on surface lots

## Marketing Plan

- Supports matching funds for marketing plan, if it's controlled by the community association

## Washington Park parking meter 'grace period' is over, Portland made \$434,882 in 2014 so far

*By Andrew Theen*

Washington Park users: your grace period is over.

It's been four months since Portland first started charging for parking throughout Washington Park, and after giving hundreds of warnings, Bureau of Parks & Recreation officials say they'll issue more yellow parking tickets as peak season begins at the widely popular destination.

"We started to ramp up enforcement and will continue to do that," said Victor Sanders, the city's parking program specialist.

Paid parking started at Washington Park on January 10. The city paid \$750,000 for 48 meters, which serve some 1,400 parking spaces at the park. The City Council approved the deal in December 2012.

For obvious reasons, city officials didn't publicize the relative lenience granted in these first few months to parking violators visiting the Oregon Zoo, Hoyt Arboretum, the International Rose Test Garden and other popular spots at the 400-acre regional attraction.

"It's only fair that there should be a grace period," said Mark Ross, parks spokesman.

According to data released to The Oregonian, just 14 tickets were issued at the park so far this year. All of those were given since April 21. The city did issue more than 400 warnings to parking violators, according to city data. Park rangers are responsible for handing out tickets at Washington Park, a policy decision that's the source of a union grievance filed on behalf of the city's parking enforcing officers.

During the first four months, the new paid parking program brought in \$434,882 in revenue,

The daily fee to park all Washington Park meters jumped to \$6.40 (\$1.60 per hour) on April 1, the start of peak park season.

Lisa Calef, a Southwest Portland resident, said she was shocked to hear the city's revenue total.

Calef, who lives close to Hoyt Arboretum, said people continue to park on the shoulder of nearby Southwest Fairview Boulevard near her home and walk long distances to the Arboretum.

"People are avoiding the pay lot and parking on the side streets," she said.

Calef expects the problem to get worse as the weather improves and more visitors use the park.

"The summer problem has become a year-round problem," she said.

Heather McCarey, executive director of the newly created Washington Park Transportation Management Association, which oversees all parking and transportation operations, said the city installed "no parking" signs along Fairview to address that problem.

"It sounds like that has always been an issue, for years and years," McCarey added. She said parking in that area of the park "is just tight."

McCarey said the city is "right on target" for annual revenue estimates outlined in December 2012.

The city expects to bring in \$2 million annually in new parking revenue. That will be spent on services to improve parking and transportation problems at the park.

Sanders and McCarey said the city has tweaked some of the language that appears on the parking meters to make it less confusing for users. Instead of leaving the pay stub in your vehicle like other paid parking throughout the city, users enter the numbered parking space and the amount of time. Another difference: users keep their receipts.

"It's a learning curve," Sanders said of the system. That's why the city didn't want to enforce parking violations so strictly.

Park users should see some improvements already, McCarey said.

A new free shuttle service runs from the TriMet Providence Park MAX station to every popular destination in the park. The shuttle currently runs every 20 minutes on the weekend. Starting on Memorial Day, the shuttle will operate seven days a week, lasting until Labor Day. The shuttle is marked as TriMet's Line 83, McCarey said.

The parking meters were billed as a new revenue source to help fix roads, sidewalks and other major transportation needs, but Sanders and McCarey said it's too soon to say when those improvements will come.

The transportation management association and the bureau are "constantly evaluating" the parking situation at Washington Park, McCarey said.

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **City budget hearing set Thursday evening**

*By Jim Redden*

The City Council will hold a public hearing on next year's budget on Thursday evening. It will begin at 6:30 p.m. on May 15 in the Council Chambers at City Hall, 1221 S.W. 4th Ave.

Mayor Charlie Hales will formally present his proposed budget to the council at its regular Wednesday meeting. In the resolution submitting the budget to the council, Hales says it is the city's first "stabilization" budget after years of cuts due to declining revenues caused by the Great Recession.

Among other things, the resolution says the proposed budget includes an increase of \$11.3 million in General Fund revenue. That is less than 3 percent of the discretionary budget, however, Hales says.

Hales says he is proposing to spend the additional funds on programs aimed at three priorities: homelessness and hunger; emergency preparedness; and complete neighborhoods.

Hales' recommendations include: \$2.3 million for youth unemployment and more affordable housing; \$1.3 million to improve the community emergency notification system and help prepare for regional disasters; and \$2 million to expand Schools Uniting Neighborhood in various Portland Public Schools, the East County Action Plan, and other livability programs; \$1 million to continue an Innovation Fund begun in the current budget; and a \$3 million contingency fund to be used only for real emergencies and unforeseen costs.

Hales is also proposing to continue city support for youth TriMet passes, summer internships with the city, the Earl Boyles Early Learning Center, and the Black Male Achievement initiative. He also wants to continue funding the VOZ day laborers' work center, Southeast Works, and the Diversity and Civic Leadership Program.

The proposed budget does not include some funds requested by the Portland Police Bureau and Portland Fire & Rescue. Restoration of some police traffic patrols and money to retain firefighters when a federal grant expires after the coming budget ends did not make the cut.

And Hales' proposed budget does not include additional funds to maintain city streets. He and Transportation Commission Steve Novick are currently working on a street maintenance fee to be submitted to the council and possibly Portland voters later this year.

## **The Daily Journal of Commerce**

### **Portland Housing Bureau dangles tax-exemption carrot**

*By Lee Fehrenbacher*

Portland city officials are hoping to convince multifamily developers to include some affordable housing in their market-rate projects.

The 2014 application period is open for the Portland Housing Bureau's Multiple-Unit Limited Tax Exemption program, which provides developers a 10-year tax exemption on the value of structural property improvements in exchange for meeting minimum threshold requirements for affordable housing.

In 2014, as in past years, the PHB is offering \$1 million in estimated and projected foregone revenue. That sum represents the first year of foregone revenue and not the total. For instance, PHB staffers recently recommended an exemption for a development by Las Vegas-based Molasky Group of Companies in the amount of \$690,000. If approved by City Council on Wednesday, Molasky would receive a similar exemption (its value changes proportionately as the property's value changes) every year for 10 years, for a total value of approximately \$6.9 million.

Molasky and Portland-based E&F Properties are planning to build a 15-story mixed-use building with 196 units, at Southwest Jefferson Street and 11th Avenue. While most of the units of Sky3 Place would rent at market rate – as high as \$2,250 a month for a two-bedroom apartment – 20 percent would rent at an affordable rate for individuals earning 80 percent of the area's median family income – \$38,850 for an individual or \$55,500 for a family of four. Those apartments would range in rent from \$871 a month for a studio to \$1,118 for a two-bedroom unit.

The application for Sky3 Place is under the 2013 offering, and not the new one. The PHB formerly offered tax exemptions to all developers who met a minimum threshold, but ratcheted up its requirements in 2012 to try and raise the bar for building design, public welfare and social equity.

Also, to qualify for the current round of tax exemptions, developers must not have applied for a building permit. Andrea Matthiessen, neighborhood and housing program manager for the PHB, said the bureau is re-evaluating that requirement, among others, in an effort to make the MULTE program more user friendly.