

The Oregonian

Portland Mayor Charlie Hales will seek second term in 2016

By Andrew Theen
March 06, 2015

Portland Mayor Charlie Hales is officially running for a second term in 2016.

Hales told the Portland Tribune's Editorial Board on Friday that he was running for re-election. "I'm enjoying the job and believe I am the right person for it," Hales told the newspaper.

Dana Haynes, Hales' spokesman, confirmed the mayor's decision but had no additional information.

The first-term mayor's announcement ends weeks of speculation about when Hales would make a formal announcement.

In an interview in mid-January, Hales told The Oregonian/OregonLive he wasn't ready to formally announce re-election plans. At the time, Hales acknowledged asking campaign donors for contributions.

First, Hales pulled in \$21,000 in contributions from developers and longtime supporters in the span of a few weeks. That trend had continued since mid-February, with the mayor reporting an additional \$18,350 in contributions from prominent Portlanders such as Central Eastside developer Brad Malsin and Portland Timbers executive Mike Golub.

Would you prefer a text to voicemail? Emergency officials want to know: Portland City Hall Roundup

By Andrew Theen
March 09, 2015

Portland is updating its evacuation plans for a "large-scale highly unlikely event," according to emergency management officials.

Included in that heady conversation: Are you more likely to respond to a text message or a voicemail?

The Portland Bureau of Emergency Management already offers residents who enroll in the free Public Alerts system to decide which medium they prefer, or trust, when receiving an urgent message.

"We want to improve the messages and figure out how people are responding to what we're currently doing," said spokesman Dan Douthit.

Public Alerts is a free voluntary program that allows residents to register cell phones and emails with public agencies to receive messages of crises such as natural disasters or law enforcement in their neighborhood

PBEM posted a survey on its website this week, asking residents a variety of questions, including what they'd do if they received a call from 503-823-3947 (incidentally -- that's the Public Alerts phone number, so bookmark those digits if you're interested).

Portland is also in the midst of hiring a new emergency notification contractor, replacing the previous company that officials publicly criticized last year for its performance during a shooting in Southwest Portland.

Douthit said the new contractor should allow the city to send alerts in 10 different languages. "As far as we know, we'll be the only country in the nation that," he said.

Residents must opt into the system to receive messages on their cell phones. As of earlier this year, just 22,186 devices had registered.

The Portland Tribune

Hales to run for re-election in 2016

*By Jim Redden
March 6, 2015*

Saying that he believes Portland has turned a corner and is heading into a period of unprecedented change, Mayor Charlie Hales has decided to run for reelection in 2016.

"I'm enjoying the job and believe I am the right person for it," Hales said during a Portland Tribune editorial board interview Friday afternoon.

Hales said he was not certain he would run for reelection when he first campaigned for mayor in 2012. But he said he finds the job invigorating and still has a lot to offer Portlanders.

"This is a time of great change for our city, and I believe my skills are right for the challenges," said Hales.

Hales explained he has spent much of the first two years in office fixing problems from previous administrations. They included strained relations between the police and the community, and the widely held perception that the water and sewer bureaus were wasting ratepayer dollars.

Hales believes he has made progress on such problems, including implementing the U.S. Department of Justice settlement agreement with the city concerning the Portland Police Bureau and reforms that created more public oversight of water and sewer spending.

Hales also believes the improving economy is increasing city revenues enough to launch new initiative, including more funding for affordable housing and tax breaks for businesses that benefit society by doing such things as hiring people released from prison. Both ideas were included in the State of the City speech Hales delivered before the Portland City Club at the end of January.

"Going forward, I'm going to be rolling out proposals to implement the talking points in the State of the City speech," Hales said.

Hales has not yet decided how much money he needs to raise for his reelection campaign, but noted that he has begun contacting donors. He would not comment on other potential candidates who are being mentioned within political circles, including State Treasurer Ted Wheeler and Oregon House Speaker Tina Kotek, saying he will wait to see who actually files for office.

In addition to Hales, commissioners Amanda Fritz and Steve Novick are up for reelection in 2016. Fritz has already announced for reelection and Novick has not made any public statements.

The Portland Tribune will have more information from the interview in the Tuesday, March 10, issue.

Council to consider Uber-related policy Thursday

*By Jim Redden
March 9, 2015*

Commissioner Steve Novick will ask the City Council to prepare to regulate so-called ride sharing service like Uber and Lyft on Thursday.

Novick, who in charge of the Portland Bureau of Transportation, has submitted an ordinance that will define "Transportation Network Services" in the section of the City Code that already regulates taxis and other Private For Hire Transportation services.

The ordinance would also require that those who operate or drive for TNCs obtain a permit from the city before providing rides.

The ordinance does not say which regulations TNCs operators and drives must meet, however. They are currently being considered by a citizen task force appointed by Novick to make recommendations to the council by April 9.

Uber has said it will begin offering rides in Portland on April 9. The company had starting serving Portland last year but suspended operations after being sued by the city for not following the existing private for hire ride rules.

Lyft has said it will wait to see what regulations the council adopts before deciding on whether to enter the Portland market.

The Thursday hearing will be the first time the entire council discusses TNCs, which use the internet to connect passengers and rides through smart phone apps. The city's taxi companies insist TNCs should play by the existing rules, including conducting background checks on driver, carrying the same level of insurance, and picking up all passengers, including those that are disabled.

Willamette Week

Portland Mayor Charlie Hales Will Seek Re-election in 2016

*By Aaron Mesh
March 6, 2015*

Portland Mayor Charlie Hales has made it official: He's running for re-election in 2016.

Hales announced his decision to The Portland Tribune editorial board this afternoon. Hales' announcement comes after two months of fending off potential challengers with a show of fundraising strength. As WW reported earlier today, he has raised more than \$35,000 of campaign contributions in less than two months—much of it from real-estate developers and business executives close to the Portland Streetcar.

That money was disclosed nearly a month before campaign law requirements—suggesting Hales was trying to scare off potential 2016 challengers.

Multiple sources have told WW that State Treasurer Ted Wheeler has been approached by Portland business leaders about challenging Hales.

Mayor Charlie Hales Keeps Flashing Money Amid Whispers of Ted Wheeler Running Against Him

*By Nigel Jaquiss and Aaron Mesh
March 6, 2015*

Portland Mayor Charlie Hales continues to flex his fundraising muscles, even as whispers increase that his path to reelection in 2016 could include a serious opponent.

On Wednesday, Hales disclosed \$5,750 in campaign contributions, bringing his total fundraising in the past two months to more than \$35,000.

It's the third time in less than a month that Hales has disclosed donations long before campaign law required.

The latest disclosure came hours after WW reported Wednesday morning that representatives of the Portland business community have reached out to State Treasurer Ted Wheeler to gauge his interest in running for mayor.

Wheeler, whose chances of running for Oregon governor dimmed with the elevation of Gov. Kate Brown, is non-committal about challenging Hales.

"I have been approached by lots of people about lots of opportunities," he told WW this week, "but it would be premature to comment on any of them. I haven't ruled anything in and I haven't ruled anything out."

Portland Business Alliance president Sandra McDonough declined to say whether her organization had talked to Wheeler about a mayoral bid.

"The election is two years off," McDonough tells WW. "There's going to be a lot speculation in the next two years about who is and isn't running for mayor, and I'm not going to engage in that."

Hales' office, which has refused to confirm whether Hales is running in 2016, declined comment. Other political figures rumored to be possible 2016 challengers to Hales include Oregon House Speaker Tina Kotek and former Portland Police Chief Mike Reese.

In trying to ward off potential opponents, Hales has turned to his base: real-estate investors and developers.

Hales' latest donors include freight giant Con-Way, which is developing large swaths of its property in Slabtown, and Mississippi Avenue developer-cum-arts patron Brian Wannamaker, who has been called "the Medici of Portland." Both gave Hales \$1,000 this week.

City Council Set to Discuss Uber for the First Time Since It Left Town

By Anna Walters

March 6, 2015

Last December, Mayor Charlie Hales cut a deal with ride app Uber to temporarily leave Portland while city officials crafted new rules for so-called "ride-sharing" companies.

Just a little over a month remains until April 9, the date Hales promised Uber it could return to Portland—and the City Council has yet to publicly debate the coming upheaval in the taxi market. That silence is about end.

City Commissioner Steve Novick, who oversees transportation, has introduced new legal definitions for Uber and the rest of its "ride-share" brethren be added to city code. Those changes are scheduled to appear before City Council on March 11.

"It is a bit of a bureaucratic thing we're doing," says Bryan Hockaday, Novick's policy advisor. "Council can't pass regulations on something that doesn't officially exist within city code. But it's important that we're taking this first step, because it's the first time council will discuss this issue."

Novick isn't suggesting policies—the ordinance changes simply acknowledge the existence of ride-share companies that fall outside of taxis, limousines and other "for-hire" transportation services. He wants to approve the new definitions now to pave the way for City Council to craft new rules for ride-share, based on recommendations from an independent task force convened by Hales.

The change also defines the technology and platforms used by Uber and others to connect riders with drivers, and briefly lays out an expectation that the ride-share companies receive city permits to operate. The arrival of the code changes comes three months after Uber invaded the Portland market, forcing Hales and Novick to agree to a deal allowing the San Francisco company and its competitor, Lyft, to operate in the city.

Hales promised new rules by April 9, though officials from Novick's office have said it may take the city longer to finish crafting those regulations.

Since then, a city task force has been mulling what rules Uber and Lyft will have to follow—like picking up passengers with disabilities, or increasing their commercial insurance. The committee has spent less time discussing Uber's pledge to provide the city with data, or the suggestion from Hales and Novick that taxis could be radically de-regulated—an experiment Novick dubbed "Taxis Gone Wild."

Cab companies, meanwhile, aren't waiting to see what the city does. They're backing a bill in the Oregon Legislature to force ride apps to carry insurance for their drivers at all times.

Murmurs: Ted vs. Charlie? A Potential 2016 Fight For City Hall.

By WW Editorial Staff

March 4, 2015

- Portland Mayor Charlie Hales looks like a cinch for re-election next year, but some powerful constituents would like to see Hales work to keep his City Hall job. Three sources tell WW that representatives of the business community have reached out to State Treasurer Ted Wheeler to gauge his interest in running for mayor. Wheeler, whose term ends in January 2017, saw his chances to succeed former Gov. John Kitzhaber dim when Kitzhaber's Feb. 18 resignation elevated Wheeler's rival, then-Secretary of State Kate Brown, to the governor's office. Wheeler is cagey about his plans. "I have been approached by lots of people about lots of opportunities," he says, "but it would be premature to comment on any of them. I haven't ruled anything in and I haven't ruled anything out." Hales, meanwhile, has been aggressive about showing his political strength. As *wweek.com* reported two weeks ago, Hales recently raised \$21,000 from big donors—and then disclosed it nearly a month before he was required to. Hales has added nearly \$9,000 since then.
- The Portland cab industry's fight with ride app Uber is driving to Salem. An alliance of taxi companies is backing a bill in the Oregon Legislature that would require transportation companies like Uber and Lyft to carry commercial insurance at all times. The insurance industry has proposed a bill mandating that the companies' drivers carry such insurance. Cab companies, which are fighting Mayor Charlie Hales' deal to allow Uber to operate in Portland starting in April, say the insurance requirements would level the playing field. "It's proper for protecting the public," says Stephen Kafoury, a lobbyist for Broadway Cab. "I've talked to a lot of legislators about this, and I don't think anybody disagrees with me." Uber is urging lawmakers to wait until the city rules are written. "We think the Portland process is going very well," says Uber regional manager Brooke Steger, "and could be a model for the state."