

## The Oregonian

### With mayor's help, Eastmoreland fights 'Portland Creep': Editorial Agenda 2016

*By The Oregonian Editorial Board  
March 14, 2016*

There's nothing like success, and a hot real estate market, to unmask Portlanders' ambivalence about the density-first land-use planning they're supposed to love as a birthright. Small acts of rebellion have been popping up for months. They include Mayor Charlie Hales' ill-fated proposal to tax home demolitions and the proposal, on Wednesday's City Council agenda, to levy steep penalties for cutting down large trees. Some people prefer to see such proposals as a response to aggressive developers, but the removal of old structures and plants is what happens as property values rise within a regulatory framework that seeks to concentrate people and jobs in a relatively small area.

While frustration has been evident in various parts of the city, perhaps no neighborhood has been more uncomfortable lately than Eastmoreland. Many residents of the shaded enclave have been scandalized by developers who tear down stately old homes and build two in their place. It was here last year that neighbors mobilized to fight the felling of several large sequoias to build housing. And it's here that Hales, himself an Eastmoreland resident, now proposes to fight density head-on. The mayor, *The Oregonian's* Brad Schmidt reported, would like to "down zone" the neighborhood by resetting minimum lot size, now 3,000 square feet, to 4,200 square feet.

You certainly can't blame Eastmoreland residents for seeking a get-out-of-density-free card. It's a beautiful and distinctive neighborhood of big trees and large lots only minutes from downtown, and those who've spent heavily to call the place home would like it to stay that way. This impulse is hardly unique to Eastmoreland, however, as Jennifer Bragar, president of nonprofit Housing Land Advocates, pointed out in a January 2015 letter to the city's Planning and Sustainability Commission.

"Many other neighborhoods in Portland have been similarly faced with rising land values and redevelopment pressure," she wrote, "but they do not receive special treatment that guarantees their preservation at current densities." In addition to raising equity concerns, Bragar argued, downzoning Eastmoreland could boost the cost of housing elsewhere in the city given Portland's "fixed amount of urban land available for development."

Another argument against downzoning Eastmoreland makes regular stops on Southeast Bybee Boulevard near the Eastmoreland golf course. TriMet's Orange Line, built with a great pile of public funds, will operate more efficiently as development along its corridor becomes more dense. For that reason, Bragar wrote last year, "Maximizing this investment in urban services would indicate land that should be up-zoned to greater densities, not the reverse."

No one should blame Eastmoreland residents for seeking to further their own interests, but Portlanders in other neighborhoods should expect their elected officials — even those who live in Eastmoreland — to act responsibly. Hales, unfortunately, seems inclined to create a sort of

land-use unicorn within the Portland land-use mecca: A neighborhood of large lots and single-family homes served by high-cost light rail built with density in mind.

Convenience, elbow room, exclusivity: What could be better?

Back in the days when residents of Clackamas County (where the Orange Line terminates) were throwing political tomatoes at the project and saying things like "Stop Portland Creep," we asked some of them to explain their objections. Among the things they feared, they explained, was the sort of high-density development that's supposed to occur along light-rail lines. That's simply not the way many people in Clackamas County want to live, they said.

The Clackastanis, as some like to call them, lost the fight, and the Orange Line was opened. How ironic, in retrospect, that one of Portland's toniest neighborhoods is now fighting the same battle — albeit more subtly — and the city's mayor is helping to lead the charge.

## The Portland Tribune

### City report casts doubt on goals for homeless

*By Jim Redden*

*March 15, 2016*

Portland and Multnomah County officials promise to cut the homeless population in half by 2019 with an additional \$30 million in their next budgets.

But a new analysis by the City Budget Office questions whether the goal is realistic, saying the real cost is actually \$73 million over the next three years and the homeless population may be growing faster than predicted because of skyrocketing housing costs.

City Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who is in charge of the Portland Housing Bureau, believes the report makes a number of good points, but does not take into account all of the additional initiatives underway to create more affordable housing. They include affordable housing units the city will be able to require in new developments now that the 2016 Oregon Legislature repealed the ban on so-called Inclusionary Housing.

“Addressing homelessness and the housing crisis in Portland will take more than direct investment of public dollars, it must be tackled on multiple fronts. It will take the thoughtful implementation of policy initiatives such as Inclusionary Housing, tax exemptions, expedited permitting and fee waivers,” says Brendan Finn, Saltzman’s chief of staff.

The questions are raised in a City Budget Office analysis of next year’s budget request from the housing bureau, which is the city’s lead agency on affordable housing issues. The housing bureau requested \$153 million for the fiscal year that begins on July 1, a 116 percent increase over its 12-year average investment and a 77 percent increase over the current year total budget of \$86 million.

But the analysis goes well beyond the budget request, to include a review of previous city initiatives to reduce homelessness and the current efforts by A Home for Everyone, a coordinating committee including Portland, Gresham, Multnomah County and Home Forward (formerly known as the Portland Housing Authority.)

The analysis found that since 2005, the city spent \$847 million — an average of \$70.6 million per year — on affordable housing production and homeless prevention and support services. Just over 70 percent of that money went for housing. But, according to homeless counts conducted in 2005 and 2015, the number of homeless people only dropped from 4,000 to 3,800.

“Many people wonder why, after hundreds of millions of dollars in investments and a coordinated strategy to address homelessness and affordable housing needs, the problem persists; and further, wonder how we can be sure that an increased investment will substantially reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness and will achieve their ambitious goal of cutting the homeless population in half by 2018,” the analysis says.

Mayor Charlie Hales has promised \$20 million in next year’s budget for a plan developed by A Home for Everyone to cut the homeless population in half by 2019. He has directed general fund bureaus to propose 5 percent cuts in their next budgets to help raise the money. Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury has promised to match that commitment with \$10 million, for a combined \$30 million.

According to the City Budget Office, the 2015 homeless count estimated that 4,600 people become homeless in the county every year. The estimate was subsequently updated to 4,900, but the analysis says that number is probably still too low because local housing costs are increasing so fast.

Budget analysts note that in the year since the 2015 count was conducted, the Portland housing market had the highest price increases among the large metro areas tracked by the Standard and Poor’s/Case-Shiller home price index. Portland-area home prices in December 2015 increased 11.4 percent year-over-year, outpacing even San Francisco’s and Denver’s increases. The Portland Housing Bureau estimates that rents have increased at least 11 percent over the same timeframe, the analysis says.

The City Budget Office “believes that this issue of inflow — particularly in expanding economies with limited housing supply like those that Portland and other West Coast cities have been experiencing — presents one of the most critical challenges to decreasing homelessness, because it is a problem that is largely driven by market forces, many of which are outside of local government’s control,” the analysis says.

Finn says the additional city efforts will “augment our public investments for housing those most vulnerable in our community along with the coordinated efforts between the City/County Home for Everyone board to provide homeless services in a more efficient manner.”

## **The Portland Business Journal**

### **Portland vying for \$50M smart cities grants**

*By Malia Spencer*

*March 14, 2016*

Portland is among seven cities still competing for a combined \$50 million in funding from the federal Department of Transportation and Seattle-based investor Vulcan Inc.

The money aims to help create smarter cities.

The finalists were named over the weekend at the South By Southwest Interactive conference. Portland's fellow finalists are:

- Austin.
- Columbus, Ohio.
- Denver.
- Kansas City, Mo.
- Pittsburgh.
- San Francisco.

The winner will be named in June.

The Smart City Challenge aims to help local governments integrate new technology into the transportation network. That means everything from autonomous vehicles to connected vehicles and sensor networks.

The Department of Transportation pledged \$40 million to the program while Vulcan offered an additional \$10 million to winning city to support electric vehicle deployment.

Seventy-eight cities applied for the challenge. Organizers expanded the finalist count from five to seven based on the number of quality entries received.

“The level of excitement and energy the Smart City Challenge has created around the country far exceeds our expectations,” said U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx in a written statement.

Portland and the other finalists will receive \$100,000 to continue to work on their proposals. The next round of reviews will analyze details on integrating technology and prototype.

Cities will work with their own partners plus such project partners as the vehicle vision company Mobileye, 3D software maker Autodesk, NXP Semiconductors and Amazon Web Services.

The city of Portland has worked with its own partners including Portland State University and tech companies such as Intel and Verizon Wireless, as well as the Open Bike Initiative to begin the transformation of the transportation infrastructure.

According to Portland’s application, the city will attempt to create “ Ubiquitous Mobility for Portland.” That means using an extensive network of sensors, open-source data sharing and security to better move transit riders, pedestrians, drivers and bicyclists and track emissions.

The city will use the Columbia Corridor and Powell/Division Corridor as demonstration areas.