

## The Oregonian

# 136,000 miles in, Biketown bike-share makes its mark on Portland

*By Elliot Njus*

*August 26, 2016*

Ashley Lyon never rode a bike on city streets until late last month, when the Portland resident and her husband tried out Biketown.

It was early on a Sunday morning to avoid traffic. They rode to the Portland Saturday Market, and then to breakfast in Old Town Chinatown.

It probably won't be her last ride.

"I'd like to get more comfortable with it and have it as just a daily way of getting around," Lyon said. "It was very new. I don't think I would have tried it without Biketown."

When the bike-share system launched in July, city leaders hoped it would get more Portlanders on bikes for more trips, taking cars off the road. In the first month, users took nearly 59,000 trips on Biketown bikes, traveling 136,000 miles and making significant progress toward a goal of 400,000 rides in the program's first year.

But new converts to bicycling are perhaps an even bigger coup.

"That's just been super gratifying," said Dorothy Mitchell, Biketown's general manager.

"Something we were really hoping might happen actually appears to be happening."

Biketown use has exceeded expectations, Mitchell said, to the point where it had to send mechanics out to give tune-ups earlier than expected to address slipping gears. (New bikes often need adjustments after a few weeks of use.)

The transportation bureau, which owns the bikes and other equipment, is also pleased with the response, said spokesman Dylan Rivera. It's contracted running the program to New York-based Motivate Co., which employs Mitchell and Biketown's other employees.

"We've been frankly just surprised, humbled and really overjoyed with the presence of Biketown bikes on city streets," he said. "The visibility has been sudden and really highly concentrated in the service area."

The city bought most of the equipment with a \$2 million federal grant. A \$10 million, 5-year sponsorship from Nike boosted the order from 600 to 1,000 bicycles and expanded the service area.

The program is on-track to be self-sustaining, paying for its operations with user fees and corporate sponsorships. The transportation bureau has said the program won't depend on city funds.

In its first month, Biketown signed up nearly 2,500 annual members, who pay up front for daily access to the bikes. Those core riders, who have so far accounted for 36 percent of rides, are seen as a key to keeping the program sustainable.

Other early maintenance issues have included over-greased seat posts that caused the bicycle saddle to slide down over the course of a ride, but Mitchell said that has been addressed as well.

Vandalism has taken some bicycles briefly out of service, but Mitchell said that's not unexpected.

"That's kind of typical for any city that experiences graffiti," she said. "We're just trying to deal with it quickly."

Now the programs leaders are turning their attention to selling group memberships, offered at discounted rates to companies, institutions or apartment buildings.

Portland also has reason to be diligent despite its apparent early success.

Seattle's Pronto bike-share system saw ridership and membership plunge after its first year. Many of its members didn't renew when their first year was up, and membership was halved by its second year of operation, The Seattle Times reported. The city had to buy the program, previously run by a nonprofit, for \$1.4 million to keep it afloat.

Portland has Nike's sponsorship, and unlike Pronto, Biketown didn't take out loans to buy equipment.

Still, the arrival of rain this fall and founding members' membership renewal period next summer could be the true test of the program's staying power.

"We hope we don't have too many people drop off," said Mitchell. "The winter will provide a great opportunity to really crunch the numbers and see if all our station locations are working the best, gear up, and think about what our marketing push will be next spring."

Lyon, who took her first ride several weeks ago, says she's sure she'll give it another try.

"I'm glad to be living in place that offers something like this. It makes me feel like I'm in a place that's progressive," she said. "I hope other people embrace it."

## **Portland mayor wants to extend 'housing emergency' by 3 years**

*By Brad Schmidt*

*August 25, 2016*

Portland Mayor Charlie Hales wants to extend the city's declared housing emergency for three more years – far longer than originally envisioned.

But, as has become the norm of late for some of Hales' more controversial plans, he lacks the votes to deliver.

Aides for all four city commissioners told The Oregonian/OregonLive on Thursday that three years is too long and a substitute proposal is likely to emerge before next week's City Council meeting.

Hales' office soon backtracked on the original timeframe, saying an extension of one year would be reasonable.

"The three-year timeframe was simply a ceiling to put out there," said Chad Stover, Hales' policy director for livability. "It's not something we're married to."

Homelessness and the city's insufficient supply of rent-restricted apartments have become a driving political theme in the past year. Last October, the City Council unanimously approved a one-year housing emergency.

Under terms of that decision, the City Council has the authority to extend the emergency -- but only in six-month increments.

Extending the emergency would enable the city to waive certain zoning regulations for temporary homeless shelters -- a major point of contention today as the City Council moves forward on a 400-bed facility proposed by prominent developer Homer Williams.

Williams wants to begin with a temporary shelter at the city-owned Terminal 1 location but has long-term aspirations of building a permanent homeless campus at the site, 2400 N.W. Front Ave.

Stover said Terminal 1 wasn't a factor in the proposed extension. Instead, he said, Hales hoped to provide stability for a slew of other shelter or camping efforts already underway -- calling attention to the Hazelnut Grove campsite in North Portland, which Hales' office previously said it was trying to relocate.

"It would not be possible without the declaration of emergency, as it is," Stover said of Hazelnut Grove's creation.

Word of Hales' proposal spread Thursday morning and was first reported by the Portland Mercury. Documents were publicly posted on the city's website before noon, but Hales' office wasn't available to comment until after 2 p.m.

In the interim, aides for every city commissioner panned the proposal. They said they knew Hales' office would propose an extension, but some said they had no idea he would pitch three years.

Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who oversees the city's Housing Bureau, thinks three years is "way too long," aide Matt Grumm said.

Commissioner Nick Fish won't support a three year extension, said Sonia Schmanski, his chief of staff.

Commissioner Steve Novick thinks three years seems long and instead plans to talk with Hales about a workable extension, said Chris Warner, his chief of staff.

And it appears "there's no way" Commissioner Amanda Fritz would support a three-year extension, said Tim Crail, her chief of staff.

Stover said Hales' office briefed all council offices on the proposal, including the three-year timeframe.

"There were some questions and we didn't really hear outright that three years was too long until recently," Stover said. "We're OK having those conversations now."

Mayor-elect Ted Wheeler, who takes office in January, wasn't briefed on the proposal. Wheeler said on Twitter he doesn't object to an extension but an aide declined to qualify whether that statement was about three years or any extension.

"I don't object to an extension of the emergency declaration, but more important than the declaration is its implementation," Wheeler said on Twitter.

Hales' extension proposal is just the latest pitch to be publicly presented without political support. In recent years, Hales has proposed a demolition tax, business-tax hike and street fee - all without having necessary votes from the City Council to move forward.

Stover said Hales' three-year proposal will be revised. Stover said Hales would prefer an extension longer than six months, adding that "one year is really reasonable."

The proposal heads to the City Council at 2 p.m. Wednesday, although a vote isn't slated until the following week.

Because the city's housing emergency is set to expire Oct. 7, the City Council needs to vote by its Sept. 7 meeting. That's because it takes 30 days for an ordinance to take effect.

Stover downplayed the City Council's reaction to Hales' original proposal.

"That's the open democratic process," he said. "It doesn't have to be choreographed."

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Harbor businesses to challenge Terminal 1 homeless shelter**

*By Jim Redden*

*August 28, 2016*

A group of businesses in the Portland Harbor plans to challenge the City Council's decision to open a homeless shelter at Terminal 1 before the state Land Use Board of Appeals.

The Working Waterfront Coalition filed the notice with LUBA on Friday by certified mail. It was submitted by Steven Pfeiffer, a lawyer with the Perkins Coie law firm in Portland.

The coalition successfully challenged an earlier council decision before LUBA to increase the amount of land to be set aside for environmental protection in the harbor.

Coalition members include the Greenbrier Companies, Kinder Morgan, Schnitzler Steel Industries, Union Pacific Railroad, and Vigor Industrial. They are joined in the filing by Portland architect Stuart Emmons at two nearby property owners and developers, Fore Property and project^.

The council voted 3 to 2 on Aug. 10 to lease Terminal 1 to the Portland Housing Bureau for up to 18 months to open a homeless shelter in a vacant warehouse on the 14-acre parcel in Northwest Portland. The land along the Willamette River in Northwest Portland is currently zoned industrial, which does not allow for mass shelters. LUBA was created by the Oregon Legislature to resolve land use disputes.

The ordinance authorizing the lease was submitted by Housing Commissioner Dan Saltzman. He did not immediately respond to a request for comment on the filing.

Terminal 1 is owned by the Bureau of Environmental Service, which is overseen by Commissioner Nick Fish, who voted against the ordinance.

Contacted by the Portland Tribune, Fish said that although he could not comment on the legal merit of the challenge because he has not seen it, "I am not surprised by the LUBA appeal. Terminal One is prime industrial land, and is not suitable for a 'mass shelter.'

"In the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan, the Council acknowledged the importance of protecting industrial land in order to grow family wage jobs.

"The action taken by a majority of the Council is inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan."

The ordinance approved by the council did not change the zoning at Terminal 1 to allow for a residential use. Saltzman has previously said that might be required if the council approves the permanent homeless multi-service center proposed for the property by developer Homer Williams.

The council declared a housing state of emergency last October intended in part to suspend zoning requirements to speed the siting of homeless shelters. That authority is being challenged before LUBA by businesses in the Central Eastside Industrial District opposed to the council's decision to relocate the Right 2 Dream Too homeless camp from Old Town to there. A ruling is expected any day.

The lease is also being challenged by attorney John DiLorenzo, who says the council has illegally set the monthly payments below the market rate value of the property. The council set the payments at \$10,000 a month plus BES's expenses for the property. DiLorenzo says the market rate is closer to \$100,000 a month, and must be paid because Terminal 1 was purchased with BES ratepayer funds.

DiLorenzo currently represents a number of BES and Portland Water Bureau ratepayers in a lawsuit charging the council has misspent such funds in the past. The judge has ruled ratepayer spending must be "reasonably related" to the primary missions of the bureaus.

## **Tensions growing ahead of Springwater Corridor homeless sweep**

*By KOIN 6 News  
August 28, 2016*

Tensions are rising in East Portland ahead of the Sept. 1 deadline for homeless campers to leave the Springwater Corridor that connects downtown to Gresham.

Some of the hundreds of people believed to be camping along the corridor say they have nowhere to go and a number of activists are encouraging civil disobedience.

"All we're asking for is a place to live to call our own," camper Tim Scott said at an Aug. 23 community meeting in Lents. It was called to discuss the sweep ordered by Mayor Charlie Hales in response to increasing public health and safety problems caused by some of the homeless.

At the same time, some residents in Lents, near where many of the homeless are camping, are worried they will only move into the surrounding business and residential areas.

“I think they’re going to move the troubles of the [Springwater Corridor] right into the heart of my neighborhood,” says Lents resident Maximilian Hollie.

And on Saturday, dozens of restaurants protested near a vacant city-owned property at Southeast Reedway and 104th Avenue that the city is preparing for between 50 and 100 of the displaced campers.

Some protesters say what bothers them at much as the plans for the outdoor shelter, is that the city never involved them in the conversation about it.

“We’ve shouldered the burden of the city’s homeless problem for so long that we’re feeling broken at this point,” resident Nicolas Manusos said at the Aug. 27 protest. “And for this to happen without any public involvement, without any neighborhood involvement is awful.”

## **Council balks at Hales' request to extend housing emergency three years**

*By Jim Redden*

*August 25, 2016*

Mayor Charlie Hales does not think the city’s affordable housing is going to end for another three year, despite the fact that the City Council has authorized tens of millions of additional dollar for affordable housing projects over the past year and places a \$258 million affordable housing bond measure on the November general election ballot.

Although the Multnomah County Commission has also committed an additional \$10 million to affordable housing project, Hales is asking the council to extend the one-year Housing State of Emergency it declared last October for another three years.

There is not enough support on the council to pass it, however. Staff members for commissioners Nick Fish, Amanda Fritz, Steve Novick and Dan Saltzman all say their bosses do not support a three-year extension. Most if not all support some extension, however, so negotiations are likely under.

The current state of emergency expires on Oct. 7. Hales has submitted an ordinance to extend it to Oct. 7, 2019, for the council to consider next week. It says the number of homeless people in Portland appear to be increasing, in large part because of increasing housing costs.

“In the context of this crisis, we are seeing the expected indications that the rate of new people becoming homeless is on the rise. In just the past year, we saw a 42% increase in the number of people who used our emergency shelters, and the percentage of people who reported being homeless less than six months increased by 5% between the 2013 and 2015 point in time counts. There are also growing reports of entire rental housing complexes of low-income people receiving evictions and many of those households are becoming homeless,” reads in impact statement submitted with the ordinance.

Under the state of emergency, the council has suspended zoning and others restrictions to the quick creation of homeless shelters and other services. The council's decision to relocate the Right 2 Dream Too homeless camp from Old Town to industrial land in Southeast Portland is being challenged before the state Land use Board of Appeals, however. That ruling, which is expected by the end of August, could limit the council's powers during the emergency.

## **Willamette Week**

### **Portland's Organized Homeless Camps Will Take More Than 30 People From Springwater Corridor**

*By Rachel Monahan  
August 27, 2016*

Portland's organized homeless camps are offering to take in more than 30 "refugees" from the Springwater Corridor.

Mayor Charlie Hales announced plans in July to clear what was among the largest homeless camps in the country. The sweep is slated for Sept. 1.

Of the estimated 250 people still living along the bike trail and nature area, Right 2 Dream Too has space for 10 veterans, disabled or elderly people or pregnant women.

Forgotten Realms in North Portland will take 10 tents. Hazelnut Grove, also in North Portland, will take five people. Dignity Village, near the airport, will take four people.

"The four organized villages are an example of what works in Portland right now," says Vahid Brown, a housing advocate with the Village Coalition, an organization of the four villages, outreach organizations and others.

"They're led by houseless people finding shelter solutions for themselves. They've stepped up to take more than 30 people into their villages as refugees in the near term."

The mayor's office estimates that there were 250 people as of Aug. 18 along the Springwater Corridor.

Clarification: This post has been updated to reflect that Forgotten Realms moved locations.

### **Mayor Charlie Hales' Bold Plan for a Homeless Navigation Center Lasted 84 Days**

*By Rachel Monahan  
August 25, 2016*

In March, Portland Mayor Charlie Hales used his final State of the City address to announce a bold step in addressing homelessness: a new, innovative type of shelter called the Navigation Center.

Planned for the former Washington High School campus in Southeast Portland's Buckman neighborhood, it was to provide shelter to 100 people a night, with an array of social services in one location, including, if the city followed San Francisco's model closely, health clinics and counseling.

But less than three months later, the Navigation Center died a quiet death behind closed doors, in an email where the mayor's chief of staff described it as "too complicated."

The death of the Navigation Center is the latest setback for a city that cannot seem to stick to a single plan long enough to address a critical shortage of shelter beds.

Here's the lifespan of the project.

### **March 25, 2016**

**Hales delivers his State of the City address.** "The City is partnering with Portland Public Schools to use a now-empty building for...an innovation in how shelters operate in a way that builds on people's inherent dignity. A Navigation Center will help us provide people a path away from trauma, off the streets, and into a successful life."

### **June 17, 2016**

**Hales' chief of staff, Josh Alpert, emails the school district.** "We are not going to move further on the site—it's too expensive, too complicated, and in the end, not worth it for our purposes."

Lifespan of the Navigation Center: **84 days**

Lifespan of Gov. John Kitzhaber's fourth term: **37 days**

Lifespan of the Malheur occupation: **41 days**

Lifespan of a dragonfly: **120 days**

## **The Portland Mercury**

### **Developers and Businesses Are Planning to Fight A Terminal 1 Homeless Shelter At the State Level**

*By Dirk VanderHart*

*August 29, 2016*

As a shelter at Terminal 1 plods forward, a handful of development and business entities are falling back on a standby for stymying new homeless facilities: Appealing to state land use officials.

Three groups and a Portland architect have announced [PDF] their intentions to fight Portland City Council's recent decision to force the Bureau of Environmental Services to rent Terminal 1 to another city bureau for use as a homeless shelter. The terms of a lease over the 14.5-acre industrial property, 2400 NW Front, are being worked up, and are expected at some point in October.

In the meantime, the Working Waterfront Coalition, development firms Project and Fore Property Company, and Portland architect and recent city council candidate Stuart Emmons are preparing to ask the state's Land Use Board of Appeals to invalidate the council vote.

The exact details of the legal argument aren't clear—a message has been left for the group's attorney—but Emmons tells the Mercury he worries Portland's going to "warehouse" the homeless in the large shelter, and thinks the city should be preserving Terminal 1 as a piece of industrial property.

"We have spent three years putting together a comprehensive plan—figuring out where industrial land goes and making sure we have enough of it," Emmons says, referring to the long-term growth plan the city just updated. "On industrial land, group living is not allowed. You have to get a zoning change for that."

That's true, but under the housing "state of emergency" city council passed last year (and may well extend very soon), such zoning designations can be suspended.

The emergency designation is a cornerstone of Portland's strategy to build a temporary shelter for up to 400 people at Terminal 1. Officials are also going to spend hundreds of thousands studying how suitable the site might be for an enormous campus for the homeless, featuring both housing and shelter space.

Emmons says his interest in appealing is primarily concern for the homeless. That's probably not the case for Project, which put in an \$8.25 million bid for Terminal 1 in order to develop it into a headquarters for another company. Washington, DC-based Fore Property Company—which the Portland Business Journal calls a "big-deal" developer—has developed at least three apartment buildings in the immediate vicinity of Terminal 1. The Working Waterfront Coalition is a business group promoting jobs along the river.

As we noted above, the LUBA appeal has been a go-to strategy of late when business groups disapprove of homeless facilities being moved into their neighborhoods. For instance, the Central Eastside Industrial Council and other groups are currently trying to convince the board that Portland officials overstepped when voting to site homeless rest area Right 2 Dream Too at a city-owned plot near SE 3rd and Harrison.

## **The Portland Business Journal**

### **Portland's new homeless shelter exemplifies authentic city innovation**

*By Aimee Sukol  
August 26, 2016*

On August 10, the city of Portland made me a proud Portland resident when it voted for Terminal 1 as a homeless shelter. The council's decision is a breath of fresh air. By looking after the city's homeless, the city of Portland is truly looking after everyone.

First, opponents to T1 hypothesized that a "good paying" employer could have purchased the property at market value with proceeds vis-à-vis the landlord (Bureau of Environmental

Services) applied to utility fee reductions/control. Utility rates are a non-issue. I doubt the city's decision will affect utility rates for average residents. Big utility consumers may not get a fee reduction, but the issue is hardly burning for the general public.

Selling our land to another big business isn't a cogent option either. Software tech has vetted privileged, tech-minded transplants who've increased the cost of living and a low wage big box retailer would only exacerbate our housing shortage and traffic congestion. Lastly, T1 could be developed into affordable housing, but present incentives for building affordable units are weak and adequate oversight remains lacking.

Portland isn't facing a utility rate crisis or substantial unemployment. Rather, Portland is in the midst of a massive housing/homeless crisis. I live in Northwest Portland where \$2,000+/month developments are popping up to serve an influx of wealthy transplants while Northwest streets are lined with the homeless. Housing costs have a tremendous impact on disposable income, and homeless proliferation is a red flag that signals an economic disaster. Without disposable income, the working class can't afford to buy anything. Blue collar flight emerges, which then harms small businesses that pay modest wages to remain open. The result is a San Francisco mess. San Francisco fell over itself to vet software companies that ultimately drove out economic and ethnic diversity, artists, and indie businesses and left the city with a colossal homeless problem. Rejecting San Francisco style decay, Portland chose to focus on local services over illusory gains.

Not In My Backyard opposition doesn't help. NIMBYs fight density, homeless shelters and anything else that challenges their personal comfort zones at the expense of everyone else. Opponents simultaneously demand answers to homelessness while fighting shelter proposals. As to safety I ask, is it safer to have potentially dangerous homeless outside your doorstep or on industrial property outfitted to address their needs? Though few supporters received media attention, many support the city's decision. My neighbors all support this shelter, as we're already inundated with homelessness so why not offer the destitute a bathroom, shower, bed and a place to escape 19- or 100-degree weather? T1 is also the first step to addressing long-term homelessness with wraparound services – services Portland is severely lacking.

The city reviewed 120 sites and T1 is perfect. T1 is large, industrial, near mass transit and available. With this project, the city can set a precedent for urban planning. Rather than curry tech or big box retailers at the expense of small businesses and local residents, the city chose the road less traveled by voting to provide for the least powerful among us. T1 is a viable and potentially brilliant opportunity, and I commend everyone on the city council for their vote, including Commissioners Fish and Fritz for their dissent. I hope Fish and Fritz's doubt translates into developer and stakeholder accountability, not costly challenges. I strongly believe the city's decision reflects the best of Portland's values, and I hope our commissioners collaborate to ensure T1's success as an exceptional hub for those in need and, in doing so, serve as a model for civic innovation.