

The Oregonian

Oregon politicians take firm stance on immigration after President Donald Trump takes action to withhold federal funds

By Jessica Floum

January 25, 2017

Oregon's political leaders say they will continue to welcome immigrants to the state and to Portland, in opposition of executive orders signed by President Donald Trump on Wednesday that would ramp up immigration enforcement and withhold funding from "sanctuary cities."

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler said he and Gov. Kate Brown will hunker down and fight the new administration "vociferously."

"The City of Portland will remain a welcoming, safe place for all people regardless of immigration status," Wheeler said in a statement. "We will not compromise our values as a city or as Americans and will resist these policies."

Portland is among at least 37 sanctuary cities across the country that could miss out on federal grants after pledging to welcome immigrants and to oppose increased enforcement at the federal level.

About \$49 million worth of federal and state grants made up about 1.3 percent of Portland's budget last year, according to data from the city's Office of Management & Finance. Of that, more than \$16.7 million went to Portland's Bureau of Transportation and helps pay for road improvements and pedestrian safety upgrades. More than \$13 million went to the Portland Housing Bureau.

Political and civic leaders around Oregon also joined Portland in opposing Trump's policy.

The Beaverton City Council unanimously voted in January to become a sanctuary city knowing that the city could jeopardize \$1.6 million it receives in federal funding, said Beaverton City Councilor Lacey Beaty, who sponsored the resolution.

"The fact that all of us agree this is a priority should say something," Beaty said. "We believe in Beaverton's safety. We believe we are a warm, welcoming city."

People of color made up at least 30 percent of Beaverton's population in 2016, according to census data. More than 20 percent of Beaverton residents between 2011 and 2015 were born outside of the United States, the data showed.

"What I was witnessing in our clinics (and) what I was witnessing in the street told me this reflects the values of Beaverton," Beaty said.

Multnomah County also unanimously voted to make the county a sanctuary county last year. The county receives about \$85 million worth of federal grants, including grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that it spreads throughout the community.

"There's really no way to predict at this point what the actions that were taken today are going to look like," Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury said, "Yes, federal funds are

extremely important to the work that we do to provide services, but we can't just be bullied around by someone who wants to enforce rules and laws that we think are detrimental to the very fabric and core of who we are as a community."

In Portland, federal funding could be crucial to housing initiatives already in the works in a time when the mayor and the City Council are prioritizing affordable housing and homelessness. The City Council last year approved spending up to \$51 million on a northeast Portland affordable housing development, which could require up to \$10 million in repairs. The Portland Housing Bureau planned to apply for a federal housing loan to cover the repairs.

Trump on Wednesday signed the two executive orders to ramp up deportation of immigrants, restrict immigration and refugee intake and withhold federal funding to sanctuary cities.

"We're going to strip federal grant money from the states and cities that harbor illegal immigrants," said White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer."

Wheeler questioned why Trump would "go to battle" with large cities like Boston, New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Seattle and Portland by withholding funds that could help these communities' most vulnerable populations.

Federal grants help fund affordable housing and subsidies for those on the brink of homelessness, education for children and certain social service programs, Wheeler said.

The mayor urged Trump to go back to New York to read the Statue of Liberty and ask himself whether he's upholding the country's principles of welcoming immigrants and disadvantaged groups.

"I can't believe this president wants to go there over an issue that has been a bedrock to our country," Wheeler said.

The mayor questioned whether Trump's executive actions are even constitutional. Local governments cannot be coerced into federal action, Wheeler said. They are not required to spend local dollars to enforce federal laws.

"I don't think he is going to get away with it," Wheeler said. The city does not yet have a plan in place to address Trump's actions.

Oregon Senators Jeff Merkley and Ron Wyden argued that Trump's immigration plans will waste resources and risk public safety.

"It's a big mistake, and I stand with our cities determined not to make this mistake," Merkley said in a statement Wednesday.

Jeopardizing trust between federal, state and local law enforcement makes policing less effective, Wyden said in a statement.

Mayor Ted Wheeler pledges to work with protesters, fields questions outside City Hall

By Molly Harbarger

January 25, 2017

Standing across from City Hall to meet with protesters who earlier shut down a City Council meeting, Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler told protesters Wednesday that he "unequivocally" wants to work with them to help the city's homeless population.

He also fielded questions about police use of tear gas and pepper spray during the Inauguration Day protest last week, considering some new ideas but largely leaving their demands to remove Police Chief Mike Marshman unsatisfied.

Wheeler earlier recessed the weekly council meeting twice when leader Mimi German, and later others, talked over him. The meeting stretched on as activists used the public comment sections to lambast Wheeler, gentrification and his refusal to engage them during the council session.

Instead, he put a flannel and rain jacket over his dress shirt and tie and stood in the middle of a circle of about 40 people in Terry Schruck Plaza.

The protesters started the morning at 9 a.m. with speeches in front of City Hall, passing around a tiny white coffin adorned with flowers to symbolize a baby who was stillborn on the streets of Portland to a mother who police say suffered from severe mental illness.

About two dozen demonstrators took over the Portland City Council chambers Wednesday morning during the commissioners' meeting, saying Mayor Ted Wheeler and other city officials should have done more to prevent a stillborn baby from being delivered on the streets by a homeless woman earlier this month.

Four other people have died of exposure on Portland streets since Jan. 1 during a long stretch of below-freezing days and nights and nearly a foot of snow that caused city and county officials to go into overdrive. Wheeler said between government and nonprofit efforts, 600 shelter beds opened for the emergency. According to Multnomah County, nearly 750 people had a safe place to sleep on the busiest night of the storm.

Wheeler also personally helped outreach workers contact homeless people to encourage them to come inside.

But Mimi German, leader of the demonstration, said he could have done more. She said homeless people she talked to wanted shelter, but not in rooms packed with dozens of other people.

She and the three others also recalled occasions when each of them asked police during the storm to help homeless people but were refused.

"I expect people in the community, especially the people who draw a paycheck from the city, to be responsive," Wheeler said, repeating that he sees police, fire and City Hall workers as public servants. It's "unacceptable" if they don't help when they can, he said.

Star Stauffer, a member of the group, responded: "If you say that's unacceptable, I should never ever see a cop in the vicinity of someone asleep on the sidewalk who is homeless without walking over and checking in with them."

But when protesters tried to draw Wheeler into denouncing the police response to Friday's protests after President Donald Trump took office, he refused.

Police arrested five people and used tear gas, pepper spray and pepper spray balls at various times during a march of 8,000 to 10,000 people through downtown Portland. In response, protesters have called for Marshman's removal.

Later Wednesday, police arrested 11 people among several dozen protesters who gathered downtown and then on the east side of the Willamette River, some blocking traffic and others carrying a banner demanding Marshman's ouster.

Scattered protests could pop up in Portland on Wednesday as activists have said they plan on "shutting down" the city in objection to what they call unjust police force on Friday.

Wheeler maintained his position that he agrees with the police level of force. He encouraged people to file complaints with the city's Independent Police Review Division, saying 10 are already filed.

Jessie Sponberg, a Portland activist and former mayoral candidate, said that the division is a "paper tiger."

The mayor said he stayed at the city's emergency operations center until 10 p.m. Friday, where he could watch video feeds of the protests and it looked as if the use of force was justified.

"I do not yet have all the facts," Wheeler said. "As you all know, there is often more than one side to the story."

The meeting ended on a note of compromise.

A bone of contention has been the city's requirement for marchers to seek a parade permit.

The Friday marchers refused to pay for a permit, saying that civil disobedience is their constitutional right.

But Stauffer argued that the organizers of the Women's March, which drew up to 100,000 people to downtown Portland on Saturday, paid for the privilege of not being arrested through the city's permit fees. "They invested in a very expensive permit to not be beaten up on the streets," Stauffer said.

The group started chanting at Wheeler: "Ted buys the permit" as the mayor's aides tried to pull him away. But Wheeler paused.

He told them perhaps the city could waive fees on protest permits, as people yelled back that they might actually use them.

"I will look into it," Wheeler said.

As he walked back to City Hall, he added that he wants to hold more of these informal meetings.

Oregon officials defy Trump's vow to 'crack down' on sanctuary cities

By Casey Parks
January 25, 2017

President Donald Trump vowed to crack down on sanctuary cities Wednesday, signing an executive order that could strip federal funding from governments that say they won't help federal authorities enforce immigration law.

In Washington County, Forest Grove officials this week cited that threat as part of the reason they chose not to declare sanctuary.

But other Oregon officials say they aren't backing down. Here's a round-up of government leaders who say they're committed to remaining sanctuaries for undocumented immigrants.

Multnomah County Commissioner Jessica Vega Pederson

(Multnomah County receives about \$60 million in federal grants.)

"We know we are a nation of immigrants. Immigrants are part of the fabric of what makes America a thriving, vibrant nation. When we talk about immigrants, we are talking about our neighbors and our nannies, our contractors and our line cooks, our entrepreneurs and our in-laws. We are talking about families like mine who came to this country in pursuit of opportunity, just as millions had before them.

"I will not allow fear-mongering to tarnish the contribution that my family and I have made to this country. Both sides of my families have faced hostilities. My father is Irish. For many years in this country, the Irish were unwelcomed and belittled. On my mother's side, they came to this country from Mexico, seeking safety and opportunity for their family. To listen to the demonization of immigrants and the talk of building a wall on the Southern border angers me and belittles the contributions that families like mine have made.

"Since the November election, we've seen more pronounced discrimination against people and immigrants of color, which is no less short-sighted and no less immoral now than it was when our country feared an Italian mayor, a German supreme court justice or an Irish Catholic president. We are better than this. We will continue to welcome and value immigrants and refugees.

"To the immigrants and refugees struggling to understand what this means and wondering how they are welcome in this country, I want you to know, I value you. I welcome you. And I will fight to keep our community and our families together. Our inclusive community will not bend amid pressure from anyone. We will continue to work with our community groups and law enforcement agencies to uphold local and state laws and the US constitution to preserve the safety and dignity of all of our community."

Beaverton City Councilor Lacey Beaty

(Beaty supported a resolution, which the Beaverton City Council passed unanimously this month, to become a sanctuary city)

"If you look at the demographics of Beaverton, one in four were born out of this country, one in three are a person of color. The community really brought (the resolution to declare sanctuary) forth to us.

"(Trump) was saying (he would cut federal funding) before the election. He was saying it after the election. It was part of our decision making process. At the end of the day, it didn't outweigh our ability to serve our community.

"We receive about \$1.6 million in federal money. That's less than 1 percent of our budget. A lot of what is funded are issues that Trump has said he won't be continuing funding anyway. It's (Environmental Protection Agency) funding, domestic violence money. A lot of that money likely won't come forward to us anyway, regardless of our sanctuary status.

"This decision wasn't made in isolation. We have a diversity advisory board, and a human rights board. We talked about what it would mean to be a sanctuary city. We met on a Saturday to write the language. At the council session, people came and filled the room. We have had overwhelming support from the community.

"This wasn't a decision the five of us made by ourselves. We are not a divisive council, but we don't always agree. The fact that all of us agree this is a priority should say something. We believe in Beaverton's safety. We believe we are a warm, welcoming city. We want to make sure community members felt safe accessing our police dept. If you've witnessed or experienced a crime, and you feel you can't come forward because of fear of being deported ... Our public safety depends on everyone being able to access our police department."

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler

"For more than 150 years, Portland has been a destination for those wanting to apply their hard work to the purpose of creating a better life for themselves and their families. My own family made the trek on the Oregon Trail. We are a city built on immigration.

"We are not going to run from that history. We will not be complicit in the deportation of our neighbors. Under my leadership as Mayor, the City of Portland will remain a welcoming, safe place for all people regardless of immigration status.

"This approach is consistent with the Oregon state law and the 4th and 10th Amendments of the United States Constitution. We will not compromise our values as a city or as Americans and will resist these policies."

U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley

"Trump's border wall will waste our scarce resources: a 21-foot ladder defeats a 20-foot wall. There are smarter strategies for border security and for infrastructure investment. Let's repair and expand our roads, bridges, jetties, transmission lines, rural broadband, and water infrastructure, to name just a few much better options.

"Moreover, Trump's plan to turn local police into immigration agents promotes crime by destroying the community policing strategies essential for effective law enforcement. It's a big mistake, and I stand with our cities determined not to make this mistake."

U.S. Senator Ron Wyden

"It's clear that effective policing requires trust between law enforcement and community members, and any action to remove essential funding from cities and counties choosing to not enforce certain federal immigration laws seriously threatens public safety. With that clear premise in mind, I will keep working to protect the priorities of Oregonians, including the choice by cities like Portland and counties in our state to welcome immigrants and refugees as neighbors."

Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury

"Today we are learning about new efforts to threaten immigrants and refugees and to undermine the core values that bind our county and our country together. We are not going to turn our backs on the most vulnerable people in our community because Donald Trump is threatening us. And it doesn't matter if those threats are being made on Twitter or with an executive order. We are here to tell members of our community that we will stand up for you.

"The Multnomah County Commission has been and will continue to be committed to the work of promoting community trust, safety and stability. We need to fight against hatred that aims to tear us apart and set us against each other. We need to persevere against violence, which ruins lives and scars our future. At Multnomah County, we believe that every resident should be able to live and thrive without fear. We will continue to provide the vital services and safety net that our community needs, regardless of race, gender, religious affiliation or immigration status. But I felt it was important for our community to know that Multnomah County will do what we have always done: Follow the Oregon constitution and the policy of directing local resources for local priorities.

"We cannot allay every fear, and we don't have all the answers. But we can affirm the commitment of our staff and the policies of this county that are and will be focused on supporting the health and well-being of our immigrant and refugee communities. So if Washington DC is going to become a swamp of fear and hate, it is up to us here in our community to bring people together to find real solutions that will inspire generations to come.

"There's really no way to predict at this point what the actions that were taken today are going to look like. I think it's incumbent upon all of us to stand up to bullying and threatening, to say we're not going to take it. Yes, federal funds are extremely important to the work that we do to provide services, but we can't just be bullied around by someone who wants to enforce rules and laws that we think are detrimental to the very fabric and core of who we are as a community."

Multnomah County Sheriff Mike Reese

"It is vital to our mission of community safety that members of this community feel comfortable calling 9-1-1 to report crimes without fear of local enforcement enforcing (Immigrations and Custom Enforcement) detainers. I believe we have a responsibility to nurture a relationship of trust with everyone in our community. When our community trusts

us, they share information about crime and victimization that they may not otherwise share. That makes us all safer.

"Multnomah County Sheriff's Office's mission does not include an enforcement role in federal immigration law. If we were to participate with (Immigrations and Custom Enforcement) in arresting or detaining people based solely on their immigration status, it would make our job of protecting and serving our community much harder. In all of its public safety roles, patrol investigations and operations of our jail facilities, Multnomah County Sheriff's Office follows state and federal law. As a result, we don't use our resources or personnel to enforce federal immigration law nor do we hold people pursuant to (Immigrations and Custom Enforcement) detainees. As sheriff, I am incredibly proud to stand with Multnomah County's elected leaders and our community leaders. Together, we will restore and build community trust.

"There's a lot that's unknown in the statements that were made today. I can't predict what may occur at the federal level. Certainly I want to reinforce to people in our community: We're going to follow current state law. We are going to continue doing the things that we've been doing for a long time in building trust in our community, particularly with communities that have historically had difficult relationships with law enforcement. Maybe they come from countries where law enforcement is not to be trusted. Here, we want to reinforce that we work for everybody. We want to really establish a relationship of trust with everyone in our community. It makes us all safer."

Group shuts down Portland council meeting to protest baby's death

*By Molly Harbarger
January 25, 2017*

Updated at 11 a.m.

About two dozen demonstrators took over the Portland City Council chambers Wednesday morning during the commissioners' meeting, saying Mayor Ted Wheeler and other city officials should have done more to prevent a stillborn baby from being delivered on the streets by a homeless woman earlier this month.

The protesters gathered shortly before 9 a.m. outside City Hall to hold what they called a "memorial" for the baby. Some gave speeches critical of city policies they say led to the death.

About 9:30 a.m., the group walked into chambers during its weekly Wednesday morning council meeting, prompting Wheeler to begin reading instructions on what the group should do if members wanted to make comments. But protest leader Mimi German went to the front and started talking.

Wheeler responded, "If you're disrupting this meeting then you're treading on other people's ability to speak." But German started talking over Wheeler, prompting the council to get up and leave.

Lights in the room were turned down. Those attending the meeting to make presentations moved to the waiting area as commissioners went to their chambers.

Protesters remained in council chambers and decided to "hold their own meeting." They began discussing homelessness and how the city could do a better job.

Security guards were present and discussed the option of clearing the chambers.

Wheeler returned about 10 a.m. to speak with the protesters. He said he would meet with them after the meeting and said they would need to leave within five minutes.

That prompted most of the protesters to leave. Some stayed behind and planned to watch when the meeting resumed.

As the larger group left, a group of about two dozen police officers walked past the front of City Hall and walked around back. The officers entered the building but appeared to be there to monitor the situation rather than intervene.

The building was put on lockdown for a short period, but that was lifted before 10:30 a.m., and the public was allowed to enter -- provided individuals had no masks, signs or bullhorns. The council resumed its meeting.

About 11 a.m., however, tensions had risen again to the point of shutting down the meeting. The lights in the chambers were turned down and the meeting went into another recess. Council members again returned to their chambers.

Upset protesters responded with calls of, "Yeah, go to your room ... this is ridiculous."

The baby was delivered stillborn on Jan. 9. Police officers responded to Southeast 91st Avenue and Powell Boulevard where they found the baby boy. The state medical examiner later confirmed the child died in a stillborn birth and not of exposure to the freezing temperatures.

Women living on the streets are especially vulnerable to sexual assault and harassment, so the center is a place where women find community and connections to social services.

A medical examiner said she found no air in the baby's lungs or in his stomach when an X-ray on the infant was performed. Because the death was ruled a stillborn death, Police Bureau Chief Mike Marshman told The Oregonian/OregonLive the bureau will not assign a detective from the homicide division to the case.

Marshman said he wants officers from the bureau's Behavioral Health Unit to investigate whether the homeless woman had any contact with social service agencies or police in the past.

German says the group is made up of people who do outreach with homeless in their neighborhoods and that they encounter on the street.

She said the emergency shelter model where many people are housed in a few rooms isn't good enough, because many homeless people would rather be outside than cooped up.

The group also takes issue with Wheelers claim that the city opened 600 additional emergency shelter beds and offered community centers in neighborhoods for people to get warm during the day, she said, adding that group members didn't see that where they live.

Danielle James said she is part of Don't Shoot Portland. When Wheeler re-entered the chamber to tell protesters he would meet with them after the council meeting, she moved from the back of the group to the front and yelled over him, saying they didn't want to be given time after. They wanted time now and would continue to interrupt these meetings until they are heard.

Later, she said she doesn't want to seem like her voice is more important than anyone else's.

"At the end of the day, I don't want to be rude, but we have deaths. Lives lost," James said. "And at the end of the day, that's more important than squirrels being fed," which is what she said the council was discussing when they marched in.

This story will be updated as developments occur.

Proposed housing policy would require landlords to pay certain renters relocation assistance

By Jessica Floum

January 24, 2017

Portland landlords could be required to help pay the moving costs of low-income families who they evict without cause until at least 2017. The relocation assistance requirement is part of the new City Council's first two housing proposals, submitted by Commissioner Chloe Eudaly and Mayor Ted Wheeler Tuesday.

If adopted, the proposed ordinance would require landlords to pay renters moving costs within 14 days of sending them an eviction notice. Landlords would also have to provide relocation assistance to tenants if they raise their rent by 10 percent or more in one year. The details of the plan were first reported by Willamette Week.

"We thought we needed to take swift action to protect renters in our housing emergency," Eudaly said. "This is intended to protect tenants, not take rights away from landlords."

Those renting studios would receive \$2,900, one-bedroom renters would get \$3,300 and those renting a unit with three or more bedrooms would receive \$4,500.

The relocation requirement would apply only during Portland's housing emergency, set to last through October 2017. The City Council declared the emergency in October 2015.

Wheeler also submitted a resolution to waive development fees for certain affordable housing developments during the city's housing emergency.

"We are trying to create a broad set of tools that will protect the rights of renters and seek to reduce the time and cost of bringing workforce and lower-income housing online," Wheeler said.

The proposals will not impact just-cause evictions nor leases, Wheeler said.

Portland City Council declared a housing emergency in October 2015 and amended city code to require landlords to give 90 days' notice before evicting a tenant without cause.

At least 45 percent of Portland residents are renters, the ordinance said. More than half of the renters pay more than 30 percent of their monthly income, the proposed ordinance said. For those tenants, a rent increase of 10 percent or more often forces them to leave their homes.

"The most important thing right now is that people who are in the highest risk of being priced out and moved out are able to stay in their current housing situation," Wheeler said.

Airbnb to block Portland users from listing multiple properties

By Elliot Njus

January 26, 2017

Airbnb told Portland officials Tuesday that it would block local users from listing multiple properties in violation of city rules.

The website, which allows homeowners to rent their private residence to vacationers, said its new "one host, one home" policy would help protect Portland's housing stock from being converted into vacation rentals and adding to the squeeze on renters in the city.

The company previously introduced the policy in New York and San Francisco.

It would limit hosts to advertising rentals at a single address. That's intended to prevent someone from buying up multiple homes for the purpose of listing them as vacation rentals on Airbnb.

The city allows only Portlanders to advertise vacation rentals in homes that serve as their primary residence for at least nine months of the year.

There are some allowable exceptions, including commercial hotels and permitted rentals operated out of apartment buildings, that advertise on Airbnb. Those could be approved manually by Airbnb employees.

The company said it would also exempt users who manage a listing for a friend.

The new policy comes as Airbnb seeks less rigorous regulation of its business.

The company said its users find the city's requirements arduous. Airbnb hosts are required to undergo a city inspection to receive a permit, as well as secure a business license and a tax certificate. The company said it would like the city to streamline those rules.

The city, however, has found that its rules aren't enough to keep Airbnb hosts in line. Last year, it proposed to increase fines on illegal short-term rentals to \$1,000 to \$5,000 per day of violation and to do away with a 30-day grace period.

The Portland Tribune

Affordable home backers lay out lobbying plans

By Jim Redden

January 26, 2017

By coincidence, the council adopted state and federal legislative agendas that prioritized those issues on the same day that leaders of six affordable housing advocacy organizations appeared on a panel in downtown Portland to discuss them. Reducing homelessness and increasing affordable housing were the No. 1 priorities on both of the council's agendas.

Affordable housing issues will take center stage at the Portland City Council and Oregon Legislature this year. Advocates for low-income renters and potential home buyers will be pressing for local rent control measures, a ban on no-cause evictions, more multifamily housing in single-family neighborhoods, and more money for government subsidized housing projects.

And in addition to working on such issues, the council will be joining the advocates in Salem.

By coincidence, the council adopted state and federal legislative agendas that prioritized those issues on the same day that leaders of six affordable housing advocacy organizations appeared on a panel in downtown Portland to discuss them. Reducing homelessness and increasing affordable housing were the No. 1 priorities on both of the council's agendas.

"The City of Portland and communities across the state are experiencing an unprecedented housing affordability crisis," read the description of the problem in the state agenda approved last Thursday. Home prices jumped 13.8 percent in 2016, while rents increased 6.8 percent from a year earlier, according to the Zillow real estate research firm.

At the panel discussion, the advocates were joined by state Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer, D-Portland, who urged those attending to lobby Salem lawmakers to include more funding for rent subsidies and affordable housing projects in the next state budget. The co-chairs of the legislative Ways and Means Committee released a proposed budget earlier in the day that significantly reduced such funding to eliminate a projected \$1.8 million budget shortfall.

"There's nothing in the budget, nothing. Everyone needs to come to Salem to say that's not acceptable," said Keny-Guyer, who admitted the proposal was a "shock budget" meant to spark a public discussion about the state's financial situation following the defeat of the corporate sales tax measure at the November 2016 general election that would have raised \$3 billion a year.

The discussion at the First Unitarian Church was hosted by the Oregon Opportunity Network, a coalition of dozens of homeless, affordable housing, social justice and land-use advocacy organizations. Executive Director Jerome Brooks said the affordable housing crisis has been building for a long time, but became a priority for public officials after Portland and Oregon experienced some of the highest rent and home price increases in the country in recent years.

Only one panelist, Madeline Kovacs, program director for Portland for Everyone, said her focus was purely local. The organization is a project of the statewide 1000 Friends of Oregon land-use watchdog organization that works to restrict the urban growth boundaries where new development can occur. Among other things, Kovacs said she will spend the coming year

working to ensure the Residential Infill Project concept plan approved by the council in 2016 allows new multifamily housing projects in existing single-family neighborhoods.

"We need to end the exclusionary gated communities without gates in Portland," Kovacs said.

The other panelists were: Katrina Holland, executive director of the statewide Community Alliance of Tenants; Lauren Macbeth, assistant director of ROSE Community Development; Amanda Manjarrez, advocacy director of the Coalition of Communities of Color; and Travis Phillips, director of housing and development for Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives. All said renters should not be evicted without reason and urged the 2017 Oregon Legislature to repeal the statewide ban on local rent control measures.

Holland objected to the term "rent control," saying local "rent stabilization" policies would be flexible and tailored to the needs of local communities. They will be opposed at the state Capitol by organizations representing landlords and multifamily business owners, who are expected to argue that any form of rent control will discourage the creation of more rental properties.

Keny-Guyer also said she supports reducing or repealing the existing mortgage income tax deduction that allows homeowners to deduct interest payments from the state taxes. She said the state was "desperate" for more revenue and the additional money could be dedicated to affordable housing projects.

"It would be the perfect place if we could do it," Keny-Guyer said.

The advocates are launching their lobbying efforts with a rally and party titled House the People on Jan. 27, four days before the Legislature convenes in Salem. "Kick-Off to Kick Ass in 2017," reads the flier announcing it.

City Hall, activists collide as groups urge more help for homeless

*By Lyndsey Hewitt
January 25, 2017*

Mayor Ted Wheeler, target of a council meeting protest, talks ideas and solutions with protesters.

Issues of police conduct and homelessness collided at Portland City Hall Wednesday morning when Don't Shoot Portland activists and homeless advocates interrupted a council meeting for an impromptu memorial service for a stillborn infant.

About 50 people organized a procession into council chambers, forcing council members to twice recess the Jan. 25 meeting, with a warning from Mayor Ted Wheeler of arrest if people failed to leave.

Wheeler agreed to meet activists after the meeting, and kept his promise, talking Wednesday afternoon with a crowd of about four dozen people in Terry Schunk Plaza, across Southwest Fourth Avenue from City Hall.

The child was born Jan. 9 to a 34-year-old mother who police said was homeless and mentally ill. Protestors used a small, empty casket to symbolize what they believe to be a failure by local government to have a system in place to prevent such tragedies.

They also used the platform to voice disdain for Wheeler's approach to handling protests in the city. During Friday's J20 protest in Pioneer Courthouse Square, police used pepper spray and projectiles to disperse a small crowd that lingered into the evening after the original rally and march. Five people were arrested. During the evening, Matthew McGaugh and his fiancée Amanda Cameron, say they were struck by rubber bullets when they tried to walk past the protest Friday night.

Activists repeatedly pointed to a statement released Jan. 25 by the American Civil Liberties Union, which calls the approach "militarized and heavy handed," "expensive and dangerous" and a threat to democracy, as backup.

"The ACLU has said we are wrong," Wheeler, who has already deemed police action as appropriate, told activists. "That's not the court."

Activists also questioned the city's response to issues of homelessness over the winter period. Some said they had a hard time getting help from police officers, or were stonewalled when attempting to use emergency services to help homeless people.

During December and January's frigid weather, five homeless people died after exposure to the elements, including the infant, who was born at a bus stop on Southeast Powell Boulevard.

'We have to plan for this'

Activist Mimi German, a message therapist from St. Johns who organized the rally that started the day's events, was critical of Wheeler's response to the winter storm and homelessness.

"Unfortunately when he came into office, we've had the winter we've had so far," German said. "We have to plan for this."

She claims to have had issues accessing the 211 telephone number when getting help for people during the severe weather. She also questioned why more community centers weren't open during severe weather, and why more churches didn't open their doors.

Wheeler told the crowd that government could not solve all problems in the community, and that "We don't have many safe and humane alternatives during an ice storm."

Wheeler said he went out during the winter storms to talk to people and make sure they weren't freezing. City officials also encouraged the community and private sector to offer any empty space that they had for emergency shelter.

During Wednesday afternoon's gathering in the park, Wheeler urged people in the crowd to get appropriate permits for future protests. Wheeler said the city would consider buying protest permits for groups that could not afford them.

Homeless outreach work

According to the city-county Joint Office of Homeless Services/A Home For Everyone, during the winter storms:

- More than 6,600 people accessed publicly funded shelter services in fiscal year 2016. Not only has the county nearly doubled public shelter beds in the past year, adding 550 beds from

November 2015 to November 2016, but that expansion has included shelter specifically for women that's both lower barrier and accommodates people who might otherwise choose to sleep outside. This includes the 90-bed Gresham Women's Shelter; the Willamette Center Shelter, which offers 120 beds for couples and single women, and added family shelter capacity to help more 200 people in families a night. The Joint Office has also expanded year-round shelter capacity for domestic violence victims.

- The office has funded an "in-reach" team that, among other things, takes housing placement services to people staying in shelters and organized camps, like Right 2 Dream Too and Dignity Village. The office is reviewing proposals to add up to five mobile workers dedicated to helping women in shelters and camps obtain permanent housing.
- For two years, the office had a mental-health-focused team doing intensive street engagement. That joins another mental health outreach team also run by Cascadia Behavioral Health.
- During the winter's severe weather, the city, Multnomah County and the joint office opened emergency shelter space for hundreds of people, with hundreds of volunteers and public safety workers and others ensuring no one who wanted refuge would be turned away.
- On the busiest night, nearly 750 people had a safe place to sleep. The office also added dozens more winter beds at the Columbia Shelter downtown.
- Last fiscal year, A Home for Everyone placed 4,603 people into permanent housing, exceeding its goal of 3,725. That goes beyond shelter. That lifts people out of the system and into new opportunities.
- But 9,360 people — more than twice the number placed into housing — avoided homelessness altogether through prevention programs such as short term rent assistance. That work saves money, in the short term but also over many years, by sparing families, children and neighbors from the trauma that comes with even a brief experience with homelessness.

Denis Theriault, A Home for Everyone/Joint Office of Homeless Services spokesman, said the agency's Peace 2 and Columbia shelters would be taken out of service in May, since they are temporary winter shelters at about 100 beds each.

"Those are part of our contingent of winter-only shelters, which traditionally run during the six months of the year when the weather demands it and the need is highest," Theriault said. "They're above and beyond the year-round capacity that we've worked to roughly double since the state of emergency around housing was formally declared in October 2015. And the severe weather capacity is above and beyond that space."

He said that because the weather is turning chilly again, Clackamas County has put out a call for volunteers to staff its severe weather shelters.

Find out more: www.clackamasdems.org/volunteers-needed-for-county-warming-shelters/

ACLU presses protest confrontation case, wants City Hall documents

By Pamplin Media Group

January 25, 2017

Police use of crowd-control devices at heart of issue for J20 inauguration day rally and march.

Oregon's American Civil Liberties Union is asking the city of Portland for a pile of documents related to Friday night's inauguration day protests that ended with five arrests and a flash of police projectiles fired at marchers in Pioneer Courthouse Square.

Mat dos Santos, Oregon ACLU legal director, wrote in a Wednesday, Jan. 25, public records request that the city should provide information on how Portland police and other law enforcement officers handled the crowds that night. The request also seeks a laundry list of information about tactics, equipment used and types of training provided to officers who were expected to control rowdy crowds.

"Protesters, journalists, bystanders and our own ACLU legal observers have shared disturbing reports and video that show the chilling presence of hundreds of officers in riot-gear, many of whom were only recently trained, directing the crowd with confusing, and at times contradictory, orders and force," dos Santos wrote in a Jan. 25 post on the ACLU website.

"Finally, in what is becoming an all too common occurrence, the protest was ended through the deployment of so-called 'crowd control devices,' resulting not just in the silencing of First Amendment activities, but also causing serious injuries to the public. No matter what others have said, this was a failure."

City officials can take several weeks if necessary to review and respond to the records request. The city also can charge the ACLU a reasonable fee to provide the documents.

Use of force was appropriate

Hundreds of people gathered in Pioneer Courthouse Square Friday afternoon, Jan. 20, to protest the inauguration of President Donald J. Trump. The J20 protest included about an hour of speeches and a march through downtown.

Portland police said the rally and march did not have a permit, and marchers would not be allowed to block major roads, freeways, bridges or public transit.

Many of the marchers complained days after the protest that police indiscriminately used projectile grenades, pepper spray and rubber bullets to push back crowds. When the march stretched into the evening, police blocked the square, told marchers the square was closed for the night and then tossed projectile grenades toward protesters to clear the area.

Organizers of the protest on Monday, Jan. 23, demanded that Mayor Ted Wheeler fire Police Chief Mike Marshman because of the police response. The demand included a threat that if the mayor did not take action, protesters would shut down traffic on Wednesday, Jan. 25.

A handful of people tried to block transit and street traffic Wednesday afternoon around Pioneer Courthouse Square, but riot-gear police quickly moved protesters out of the streets.

On Monday, Wheeler responded to criticism of the tactics by emphasizing his support for police. "Early indications are that their use on Friday night was appropriate," Wheeler said,

urging people to file complaints with the city's Independent Police Review Board. "I will of course review post-action reports to make sure that was the case."

Robust tradition of protest

Dos Santos wrote that the ACLU public records request was filed to "better understand the scope of Portland's response."

The request seeks:

- The number of officers deployed and their units.
- A list of all law enforcement agencies deployed.
- The chain of command or interagency coordinating rules or policies.
- All communications from or to PPB with other law enforcement agencies preparing for the event.
- All communications from or to PPB with other law enforcement agencies during the event.
- All commands given from command center to units engaged with the public.
- All determinations to redirect or block protesters from accessing certain streets, bridges and parks.
- Communications between the mayor, including the mayor's staff, and PPB regarding the protests.
- Communications regarding the length of time the city of Portland would allow the protest to continue.
- Contracts or agreements with any law enforcement agency in preparation for this event.
- Estimate of the amount of money spent preparing for, and executing police activities during, the event.
- Estimate of the amount of overtime paid to officers during the event.
- The use of any airplanes, drones or other manned or unmanned aircraft.
- Any social media monitoring.
- Use of facial recognition or matching technology.
- Use of any FLIR cameras or other thermal-imaging cameras.
- Use of Stingray or other cell simulating technology.
- A complete list of all technology provided to individual officers, for example, body cameras.
- Policies and procedures governing the retention of any recording by any officer.
- A complete list of all equipment provided to officers.
- A complete list of all weapons, both lethal and less-than-lethal, provided to officers.
- Number of munitions deployed, location where they were deployed, and type.
- A complete list of all vehicles deployed.

"Peaceful protest is at the heart of our democracy and builds the solidarity of our community," dos Santos wrote in the four-page request. "There is a grave public interest in transparency in the manner in which law enforcement responds to our protests. Regardless of the message or viewpoint of those who speak out, the rights of all members of the public are at stake when a law enforcement agency responds to a protest. This is especially true in Portland where there is a robust tradition of protest."

Willamette Week

President Trump's Immigration Crackdown Threatens \$49 Million Of Portland City Budget

It's not chump change—but it's only about 1.3 percent of the city's annual budget.

*By Corey Pein
January 25, 2017*

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler declared Wednesday that Portland would refuse to comply with President Donald Trump's demands to cooperate with the deportation of undocumented immigrants—even if Trump followed through on his threat to yank federal grant funding to the city.

"We will not be complicit in the deportation of our neighbors," Wheeler said.

The good news for Wheeler is the city's budget could likely survive this particular Trumpist assault on so-called "sanctuary cities" like Portland.

City Office of Management and Finance spokeswoman Jen Clodius tells WW that \$49 million may be at risk in the event the federal government pulled its support for the city.

Sure, \$49 million is not chump change—but it's only about 1.3 percent of the city's annual budget.

The official figure—\$48,923,517.28 to be precise—includes state grants, because some of the state grants are backed by federal funds.

Clodius notes that the \$49 million figure, derived from the 2015-2016 fiscal year, was higher than it would have been in most previous years, because FEMA kicked in an extra \$9 million after then-Mayor Charlie Hales declared a housing emergency.

Fun fact: If crowd estimates of 100,000 marchers are correct, the city could replace the federal money by getting each person at the Women's March on Portland to contribute \$490.

A 100 Percent Rent Hike at a Northeast Portland Apartment Building Could Force 26 Rigler Elementary School Students to Move

That's more than 5 percent of the school's student body.

*By Rachel Monahan
January 25, 2017*

Correction, 11 am Wednesday, Feb. 25: *The principal of Rigler Elementary School, TJ Fuller, now says only 26 students live in the Normandy Apartments, not 40. That amounts to more than 5 percent of the student body, not 8 percent. The story has been corrected with that factual change.*

A rent increase at an 18-unit apartment complex in Northeast Portland could force an unwanted move for more than 5 percent of the student body at a nearby elementary school.

Residents at the Normandy Apartments on Northeast Killingsworth Street are facing rent increases of more than 100 percent after the building was sold late last year.

The rent increase—from \$600 to \$1,250, according to one notice shared with *WW*—is substantial on its own, but its impacts will be felt far wider than the families forced to move.

In all, 26 students at Rigler Elementary School live at the Normandy Apartments, says school principal TJ Fuller. The 26 students represent more than 8 percent of the student body.

The result will be felt around the school. There will be budget cuts amounting to two fewer teachers next fall, Fuller says. (In education, funding generally follows students.)

"My feeling is that it's an eviction not just from their home but also from Portland," says Fuller, saying about 15 other Rigler students have been forced to move so far this school year.

Rigler has a dual-language Spanish program, and most of the families affected are Hispanic or Latino, Fuller says.

"The dual-language program best suits their needs and honors their culture," he says. "It's one of the most vulnerable communities."

Teachers and administrators wanted to help the families, so Fuller wrote the Portland Housing Bureau about the rent increases. He was under the impression that laws limited how much landlords could hike the rent.

The response from the city was dispiriting.

"I am truly sorry to hear of this all-too-common situation," wrote Karl Dinkelspiel, senior program manager. "Currently, landlords/property managers are free to raise rents up to whatever amount the market will bear."

State law, in fact, prohibits any kind of limits on rent increases. Rent control is illegal in Oregon, although that ban is expected to be the subject of heated debate in this year's legislative session.

An official with the property management company, First Class Property Management, declined to discuss the specifics of the rent increase, but defended the decision.

"We're trying to be compassionate to the people who live there," says Tom Minnaert. "Our goal is to rehab all the units, because they're not in very good shape. Our intention is to get them up to a decent, livable condition. We want to keep as many people as we can there, but the owner would also like to get market rent for the property."

Minnaert noted that some families have asked to stay.

But the rent increase set off alarm bells in the Cully neighborhood, not just for the families involved.

"It's part of a very disturbing trends of rents going through the roofs and investors buying up properties with the intention of pushing out people who live here now," says Cameron Herrington of Living Cully.