

The Oregonian

'Sanctuary city' means Portland will remain welcoming to all (Opinion)

By Guest Columnist Ted Wheeler

January 29, 2017

For centuries, America 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. We are a nation built on immigration.

The inscription at the foot of the Statue of Liberty reads, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me, I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Our welcoming attitude toward immigrants is a core component of our national identity. We are not going to run from that history. Under my leadership as mayor, the City of Portland will remain a welcoming, safe place for all people.

Some people refer to Portland and other cities who share these values as "sanctuary cities," but there is confusion about what that actually means in practice.

Some have stated that by virtue of living in a sanctuary city, undocumented residents are not subject to federal immigration laws and enforcement. This is simply not the case. Immigration and Customs Enforcement is responsible for enforcing federal immigration law, much like it is the responsibility of the Internal Revenue Service to enforce federal tax policy. Immigration enforcement is a federal responsibility.

State and local law enforcement can make their own decisions about whether to spend local resources to help the federal government enforce immigration laws. This division of responsibility is clearly stated in the 10th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. In fact, Rudy Giuliani - a top advisor to President Trump - went to court to defend New York's status as a sanctuary city on these very grounds. Further, Oregon state law dating back to 1987 prohibits state and local police from enforcing federal immigration law if a person is not involved in criminal activity.

Immigration and Customs Enforcement requests that local jurisdictions hold those who have been arrested for an additional 48 hours after they are to be released custody. Again, legal precedent prevents us from doing so. The 11th Circuit Court of Appeals, a federal court, ruled that Clackamas County had violated a woman's constitutional rights by holding her at the request of immigrations officials.

I want to be clear: our status as a sanctuary city does not mean undocumented immigrants are immune from justice should they commit criminal acts. Crimes over which we have jurisdiction - including murder, rape, and robbery - continue to be prosecuted to the full extent of the law.

We do not harbor criminals, but we will not aid in the deportation of our neighbors whose only offense is being undocumented. Contrary to hyperbolized myth, the majority of studies - including a landmark report by the conservative Cato Institute - find that immigrants, both documented and undocumented, have lower crime rates.

Residents, regardless of immigration status, should not be afraid go to the police with information on crimes for fear that they might be deported. They should not be afraid to access critical services or seek refuge from domestic abuse and homeless services. They should not be afraid to bring their children to school.

Unfortunately, many fear our new president will marginalize them or rip their families apart by deporting them. Already we have seen an increase in hate crimes across the country and, troublingly, here in Oregon.

Portland is a thriving city because we have a growing population from a wide range of backgrounds who contribute positively to the fabric of our community. Our people are what make Portland such a wonderful city to live in. As mayor, I will ensure our city continues to embrace this identity.

The Portland Tribune

Council to consider requiring landlords to pay tenant relocation costs

*By Jim Redden
January 29, 2017*

The City Council will consider requiring landlords to pay relocation assistance ranging from \$2,900 to \$4,500 to tenants who are evicted without cause on Thursday.

The payments would also be required to tenants who chose to move if their rent is increased 10 percent or more over 12 months.

The ordinance to amend the City Code was introduced by Mayor Ted Wheeler and Commissioner Chloe Eudaly in response to the city's affordable housing crisis. It is expected to be supported by affordable housing advocates and opposed by landlords and organizations representing them.

Attorney John DiLorenzo, who had represented landlords in the past, has said the new requirement violates the statewide ban on local rent control measures. The 2017 Oregon Legislature is expected to consider repealing the ban. An opinion issued last year by the Legislative Counsel says local governments can already require tenants to pay relocation assistance, however.

The ordinance says annual Portland rents have increased more than 5 percent over the each of the past four years, with the average rent increasing nearly 30 percent since 2012. It also says that 42 percent of Portlanders are renters, with over 52 percent considered "cost burdened" because they pay more than 30 percent of their monthly income for rent. In fact, according to the ordinance, the average renter pays between 45 and 49 percent of their monthly income in rent.

The relocation assistance is intended to cover such charges as deposits, double rents, and moving costs. They were determined by averaging the range of rental rates of similarly sized units across the city. The payments would be \$2,900 for a studio or single room occupancy unit,

\$3,300 for a one-bedroom unit, \$4,200 for a two-bedroom unit, and \$4,500 for a three-bedroom or larger dwelling unit.

Because the ordinance was submitted by two of the five council members, only one more vote is required to pass it.

You can read the proposed ordinance at www.portlandoregon.gov/auditor/article/626044.

Wheeler drowned out at anti-Trump protest

*By KOIN 6 News
January 19, 2017*

Mayor Ted Wheeler was shut down at an anti-Trump protest at the Portland International Airport on Sunday afternoon.

Wheeler showed up and tried to speak at the second day of protests at the airport against President Trump's immigration ban, but was drowned out by demonstrators who spoke out against him. Still upset at his response to anti-Trump inauguration protests in downtown Portland, they asked him where his permit was and accused him of grandstanding.

"Everyone is welcome here, no hate, no fear," protesters chanted after Wheeler stopped speaking.

Also attending were Democratic Oregon U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley and Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici.

On Saturday, Jan. 28, protesters gathered at the airport against the Friday executive order to ban immigration from seven Muslim-majority nations. The order forced airlines to turn away passengers, and hundreds to be detained at airports across the United States. The order was signed on Friday, Jan. 27.

A federal judge in New York temporarily restrained the order on Saturday evening, Jan. 28. The ruling barred the United States from deporting people from nations subject to Trump's travel ban.

Sunday's event calls for demonstrators to "show solidarity against racist and ethnic travel bans." A short time later, Gov. Kate Brown issued a statement denouncing that and other orders signed by Trump, saying the state would not "retreat" in the face of the executive orders.

"In Oregon, where thousands have fought for and demanded equality, we can not and will not retreat," Brown said in the statement. "As governor, I will uphold the civil and human rights of all who call Oregon home. My staff is studying the recent executive orders to determine what effects they may have on Oregonians, and I will explore options to keep Oregon a safe place for everyone. I am also in contact with the Port of Portland and local authorities and am prepared to assist if necessary.

"Now, more than ever, we must stand together, guided by the enduring belief in freedom, liberty, and justice for all, and make our voices heard."

Daily Journal of Commerce

Portland officials aiming to improve permitting process

By Chuck Slothower

January 27, 2017

Developers often complain that the city of Portland takes too long and charges too much to process permits. This time, city officials agree.

Mayor Ted Wheeler and Commissioner Chloe Eudaly are co-sponsoring a resolution that would direct city bureaus to accelerate the permitting process and evaluate ways to cut fee amounts for projects that include affordable units.

The proposed resolution is due to be considered at the City Council's meeting on Thursday. It would direct bureaus involved with permitting – Development Services, Transportation, Fire, Water, Environmental Services and Parks – to examine existing permitting fees and formulate a plan to reduce or waive some in order to promote affordable housing construction.

Wheeler wants to reduce the cost, time and burden placed on affordable housing developers in Portland, spokesman Michael Cox said.

When asked if the fees and charges would be reduced, Cox answered, "Absolutely."

The changes would apply only to developments that include affordable or workplace units, according to the city's definitions.

Tim O'Brien, president of Urban Asset Advisors, said high development fees can pose an obstacle to development. His firm typically budgets about \$19,000 per apartment unit in city fees and system development charges. Actual costs are coming in slightly lower, he said.

Charges were about \$15,000 per unit when Urban Asset Advisors built the Lower Burnside Lofts, O'Brien said. The 63-unit Southeast Portland building was completed in June 2015.

"We'd love to find a way to reduce permit and SDC costs," he said.

Meanwhile, inclusionary zoning rules will take effect Wednesday, requiring developers to dedicate 15 percent of apartments as affordable units. Many projects will no longer make financial sense, O'Brien said.

"Right now, we can't make projects work in an (inclusionary zoning) zone with the cost and the reduction in income," he said. "We just passed on a deal yesterday that we couldn't make work – a prime location."

Cox said the resolution is an attempt to improve coordination among the city bureaus – which he said can be "siloed" in their work.

Each city bureau charges its own fees, and the bureaus typically do not harmonize when they raise fees or impose new costs.

"We need those bureaus to work together," Cox said.

The measure is a companion to an ordinance that is also co-sponsored by Wheeler and Eudaly; it would require landlords who issue no-cause evictions to pay moving costs. The emergency ordinance would take effect immediately, but it requires a unanimous vote with at least four commissioners present.