

The Oregonian

Work on Portland's homelessness shows success, but more is needed (Guest opinion)

By Guest Columnists: Deborah Kafoury and Ted Wheeler
06/25/2017

Two years ago, our community took a stand against a housing crisis that's still pushing thousands of neighbors onto our streets.

Portland, Multnomah County and Gresham joined with others to invest in A Home for Everyone, our region's first truly comprehensive plan to address homelessness.

The plan is ambitious. Alongside a pledge to double shelter capacity, Portland and Multnomah County promised to put more people back into housing while keeping more neighbors from losing their homes in the first place.

We're far from finished. But last week we saw real proof that our shared commitment is making a difference.

Multnomah County's latest "Point in Time" count, released Monday, found hundreds more people sleeping in shelters and fewer neighbors sleeping outside than in 2015. That's the case even though more people overall -- 4,177 -- were counted experiencing homelessness.

That's not a surprise, given our housing market. But that 10 percent increase was much smaller than in some other West Coast communities facing spiking rents and stagnant wages.

No one is celebrating. But these numbers would be significantly worse if we hadn't aggressively pursued the goals of A Home for Everyone.

We've placed more people into housing every year, from 2,967 in 2014 to a record 4,603 last year. That's a 55 percent increase. Just through the first nine months of this year, we've already housed 3,535 people, which is better than last year's pace.

We've also delivered on a promise to add more than 600 year-round shelter beds. That's helped us serve a record 6,800 people in shelter just through the first nine months of this year. That's 2,100 more neighbors than in all of 2015.

That progress is why we've invested more than ever -- \$54 million in our Joint Office of Homeless Services -- to not just sustain but also expand our work.

And let's be clear, work is exactly what it will take to keep moving the needle.

Since 2015, rent hikes have dramatically outpaced incomes. Homelessness remains painfully visible. More people on our streets are chronically homeless and report having a disability or addiction that makes housing that much harder to find.

Partners in A Home for Everyone have already begun planning how to better serve the longest-suffering people on our streets. We know we need more permanent housing with built in support services to help stabilize people who are now in shelter and cycling through our emergency rooms.

New projects will attack the roots of homelessness. One will link outreach workers with people facing eviction before it's too late. Another will offer long-term rent assistance for neighbors watching their fixed incomes fall short every month.

We're committed to continuing our search for new shelter options, even as we seek housing opportunities so our shelters don't turn into another dead end.

And we'll keep working with neighbors frustrated by the fallout from our crisis. The county's budget includes new investments in mental health resources. And the city, after enacting important tenant protections, will add more safeguards with the launch of its Office of Landlord-Tenant Affairs.

We're lucky to live in a community that's so willing to help when times are hard. We saw that this winter, when hundreds of you stepped up to care for neighbors at risk.

We need that spirit just as much today. We can't retreat. If we keep pushing together, someday we'll fulfill our vision of a community where homelessness, if it happens at all, is a rare, brief and one-time episode.

Portland police chief defends riot gear, clearing park during June 4 protests

By Maxine Bernstein

06/23/2017

Portland Police Chief Mike Marshman, in a letter to the mayor, defended the bureau's response to dueling downtown protests June 4, saying officers needed to wear riot-control gear for protection as demonstrators hurled bricks, fireworks and balloons filled with urine, feces and unknown chemicals.

The chief sought to explain why officers used flash-bang grenades, why they cleared Chapman Park and why they corralled a group of protesters and bystanders and then photographed personal IDs.

The letter responded to specific concerns and questions Mayor Ted Wheeler raised after the protests.

Police wear riot-control uniforms and gear when it's "necessary for officer safety," the chief wrote, though he noted that police prefer to staff parades, marches and demonstrations with officers in their standard uniforms.

The bureau's Rapid Response Teams were strategically placed between Terry Schruck Plaza, where a "Trump Free Speech" rally assembled, and Chapman Square, where counter-protesters gathered, to keep the groups separated and forestall confrontations, Marshman said.

Police were concerned about the potential for violence in the wake of the May 26 fatal stabbings aboard a MAX train that appeared to be motivated by racial or religious hatred, as well as recent "alt right" events in Portland, Berkeley and elsewhere, the chief said.

The mayor had asked federal authorities to revoke the permit for the free speech rally in the aftermath of the train attack that left two good Samaritans dead and another seriously injured. The three men intervened when they heard a man spewing slurs at two teenage girls, including one wearing a hijab. The U.S. General Services Administration, which oversees the plaza, declined, saying organizers had legally obtained the permit.

While Marshman said he's aware that full riot-control uniforms can be "perceived negatively by some members of the public," they were necessary in this case.

He sent the mayor a photo of one officer's bruise from a brick, suggesting his injuries would have been worse had he been in his standard patrol uniform.

The chief noted that some in the crowd in Chapman Square were launching large fireworks, smoke bombs and "gopher gassers," what he described as "small rodent poison gas devices."

He said police would prefer not to use any crowd-control devices but did use flash-bang grenades to clear the park when they saw bricks, bottles, rocks, ball bearings, marbles, urine balloons, feces balloons, chemical balloons and small explosives thrown or slung at officers and the public using slingshots.

He acknowledged police photographed the identifications of people who police temporarily corralled at one point at Southwest Fourth and Morrison Street. The decision to detain the group came after consulting with the city attorney's office and the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office, the chief wrote.

They were part of a crowd that had left Chapman Square and started marching in the street. Police wanted to separate them from the free speech rally that they were protesting against, Marshman said.

"The decision to photograph identification was made to speed up the process. Writing down each person's information would have taken much longer," he wrote.

He said police were investigating disorderly conduct and more serious crimes from earlier violence in Chapman Square. Police uploaded photos from the IDs to a database for detectives to use. "Any photographs not used in a criminal investigation will be purged pursuant to PPB policy," he wrote.

Police arrested 14 people that day and seized knives, bricks, sticks and other weapons.

The U.S. Attorney's Office is reviewing why a man doing security for the free speech rally helped tackle and handcuff a black-clad protester.

Marshman said the bureau would discourage members of the public -- including organizers of permitted events -- from physically assisting in arrests.

Yet he added in a footnote that Oregon law makes it an offense to "unreasonably refuse to assist a police officer in effecting an arrest or preventing the commission of a crime."

Nonetheless, he wrote, the bureau "would not seek the assistance of members of the public in making arrests and in fact would strongly discourage members of the public -- including organizers of permitted events -- from physically assisting in an arrest."

Portland's Independent Police Review Division announced earlier this month that it would conduct a policy review of the police response to the protests that day. The division, part of the city auditor's office, received about 10 complaints about the police response.

The Portland Tribune

Crypto treatment options for Bull Run to be discussed Tuesday

By Jim Redden
06/26/2017

City Council has to decide how much to spend to treat potentially deadly parasite in the primary water supply for the city and suburban residential and business customers

Portland Water Bureau officials will ask the City Council to consider spending between \$105 million and \$500 million to treat a potentially deadly parasite in the Bull Run watershed on Tuesday.

"We will explain how we got here and go over the options," says Gabriel Solmer, the bureau's deputy director.

The work session was scheduled after the Oregon Health Authority announced it will revoke the city's variance from federal rules requiring treatment for cryptosporidium on Sept. 22. Portland owns and operates the only large municipal water system in the country that does not currently treat for the parasite.

Bureau officials will testify that the city could build a plant that treats crypto — as it is commonly called — with ultraviolet light for \$105 million. Such a plant would not treat or filter any other contaminant out of water in the Bull Run reservoir, the city's primary source of water that is also sold to suburban customers.

A filtration plant could be built for between \$300 million and \$500 million. In addition to removing crypto from the water, such a plant could also filter out contaminants that might be prohibited by the federal government in the future. Although none are currently under discussion, regulations have changed many times in previous years.

The vast majority of U.S. cities have built filtration plants to comply with the requirement.

Such a plant could also filter sediments out of the reservoir, such as dirt and mud that enters the reservoir because of landslides triggered by an earthquake. It could also filter ash deposited by a catastrophic wildfire in the watershed. Although fires in the watershed are usually small and infrequent, a catastrophic one is thought to occur once every 350 years. It is not known when the last one occurred.

The City Council fought complying with the rule adopted by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency for many years, because Bull Run water has historically been so clean. It is currently only treated with chlorine and ammonia. The EPA granted a variance in March 2012, provided the city regularly test for crypto and report its findings. None was found after that — until earlier this year, after heavy winter storms may have washed it into the reservoir.

Once the city realized it could no longer comply with the variance, it notified the health authority, which enforces the variance for the EPA. The health authority announced the revocation on May 11. It has given the city until Aug. 11 to submit a plan with measurable mileposts for complying with the rule by treating Bull Run water for crypto.

Planning for a UV plant is much farther along than planning for a filtration plant. When the council decided to pursue the variance, it also directed the bureau to draw up plans for a UV plant. They are approximately 30 percent complete, so construction could be completed in five years. Planning for a filtration plant would have to start at scratch and construction could take 10 to 12 years, the Water Bureau says.

There are no estimates yet on the impact of either project on potential water rate increases.

The City Council is not expected to make a decision on Tuesday. Water Bureau officials hope it will give them enough direction to draft a response to the Oregon Health Authority. If not, the officials will draft a resolution summarizing the discussion for the council to consider in the near future.

Crypto is transmitted through animal feces. It can cause cryptosporidiosis, a respiratory and gastrointestinal illness, which killed 104 people and sickened thousands of others in 1993 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. That outbreak prompted the EPA to adopt its treatment rule.

Police chief defends response to downtown protests

By Jim Redden

06/23/2017

Chief responds to questions from mayor about tactics used to keep peace between competing sides on June 4 around City Hall

Portland Police Chief Mike Marshman defended his bureau's response to dueling downtown protests on June 4 in a letter released Friday afternoon.

The letter was written in response to one from Mayor Ted Wheeler on June 13 that questioned several tactical decisions of the response that he otherwise supported. The protests were staged by supporters and opponents of President Donald Trump. The fear of violence was heightened by a fatal stabbing on a MAX train by a reported right-wing extremist and three men trying to protect two African-American girls from him a few days earlier.

Among the most controversial tactics discussed in the letters, police detained marchers forced out of Chapman Square on Southwest 4th Avenue and would not released them until they were photographed with their identification. Marshman said the "temporary detention of these persons was done after consultation with the City Attorney's Office and the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office" to identify those who had previously violated the law. A Portland Tribune reporter and photographer were among those detained.

"The brief detention (which ranged from a few minutes to about under an hour depending on the speed with which the person was processed) also served to deescalate the threat of violence between groups," Marshman wrote.

According to the Mayor's Office, Wheeler is attending the 85th Annual US Conference of Mayors and unable to respond until next week.

You can read Marshman's letter [here](#).

Willamette Week

Portland Police Chief Says Antifa Protesters Used Slingshot to Launch Urine and Feces-Filled Balloons at Riot Cops

Chief Mike Marshman's allegations come in a response to questions from Mayor Wheeler about police response to protests.

*By Katie Shepherd
06/23/2017*

Portland Police Chief Mike Marshman said today that riot cops pushed antifascist and anarchist protesters out of downtown parks June 4 after the protesters used slingshots to launch balloons filled with urine, feces and unknown chemicals into police ranks.

Marshman also told Mayor Ted Wheeler in an open letter that much of the smoke seen as officers cleared Chapman Square wasn't released by police but by the left-wing protesters themselves. He says protesters "may have been using 'gopher gassers,' small rodent poison gas devices."

Marshman's allegations come in a response to Wheeler's June 13 list of five questions that demanded an accounting for police tactics at the dueling June 4 protests in downtown Portland.

Wheeler's questions followed criticism from protesters and the American Civil Liberties Union that the Portland police use of crowd-control weapons was out of proportion to the behavior of a handful of antifa protesters. (The "alt-right" protesters whose rally agitated both antifa and City Hall were hugely outnumbered, and they mostly contented themselves with taunting political

enemies from behind police lines.)

In the response he provided to Wheeler today, Marshman defended police decisions on several fronts. He said the decision to corral 345 people in downtown streets prevented violent confrontations between right-wing and left-wing protesters. He said photographing the detained protesters' IDs sped up their release. And he said sending police into the streets wearing riot gear was necessary because of credible reports of protesters bringing weapons—reports he says proved true.

The chief's letter says police decided to remove left-wing protesters from Chapman Square after officers were hit by objects launched by protesters from slingshots.

"These objects included urine and feces filled balloons, balloons with unknown chemicals, marbles, bricks and rocks," Marshman writes. "Police observed people in Chapman Square climbing atop the brick restroom structure at the south end of the park, with bricks. PPB knew that objects were already being thrown and slung and that bricks were being prepared to be thrown."

(WW reporters on the scene confirmed the use of slingshots, and also saw protesters toss red-stained tampons at police. Our reporters did not see bricks thrown.)

Marshman sent the mayor's office photos of weapons seized—mostly hammers, scissors, other small tools and bricks—along with a picture of an officer's bruises sustained while he was wearing riot gear, which Marshman calls "personal protective equipment," or PPE.

"We are also attaching a photograph of bruising suffered by one officer on June 4 who was struck by a brick while wearing full PPE," writes Marshman (the italics are his). "We believe his injuries would have been far more severe had he been wearing a standard patrol uniform."

The chief's letter confirms the bureau's strategy for detaining 345 people—including about a dozen journalists—was based on fears the antifa protesters would confront the alt-right group as it headed home from its rally.

"Beyond the usual concerns with traffic safety and public inconvenience," Marshman writes, "there were additional threats posed by this behavior, primarily the risk that the marchers would come into physical conduct [sic] with the group they were protesting against, resulting in threats to both groups' physical safety."

Marshman's reasoning for the forced photographing of IDs? Speed.

He says that writing down the names and addresses of each of the people being detained would have taken considerably longer than photographing them. Snapping a photo allowed officers to release all of the detained protesters within about an hour.

He also says that PPB consulted both the City Attorney's Office and the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office before deciding to detain the protesters in order to deescalate the threat of violence—but the decision to photograph the IDs was made on the spot, to speed up the process of taking down their information.

The letter says that PPB will "purge" the photos and that officers won't use them in a criminal investigation, following bureau policy.

The Portland Mercury

No Indictment for Portland Police Officer Who Killed Terrell Johnson

By Doug Brown

06/23/2017

A Multnomah County grand jury declined to indict Portland police officer Samson Ajir, who shot and killed 24-year-old Terrell Johnson in May.

"The grand jury determined that the use of deadly force against Mr. Johnson was a lawful exercise of self-defense under the criminal law," the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office announced this morning. The grand jury cleared him yesterday.

Ajir, a Portland Police Bureau (PPB) officer assigned to the Transit Division, killed Johnson on May 10 after a call about a man allegedly threatening people with blade at a MAX station in Southeast Portland. As we reported earlier:

According to police, someone called 911 on May 10 to report that Johnson was threatening people at the transit stop near Southeast Foster and 92nd. A West Linn officer assigned to the Transit Division arrived and spoke with Johnson, but the man was noncompliant, police say. When Portland Officer Samson Ajir and his partner—a Clackamas County deputy who is also Ajir's brother—arrived on the scene, police say Johnson ran from them, ending up on a MAX bridge over Johnson Creek. What happened next remains unclear. Police have said that Johnson "displayed" a "utility knife" near Ajir.

"Officer Ajir was in close proximity to Johnson when Johnson displayed a utility knife prompting Officer Ajir to fire his handgun multiple times, striking Johnson," a police press release said shortly after the shooting.

The details of the shooting are still scant—TriMet told us the shooting happened out of view of security cameras. But more should be known when the grand jury testimony transcripts are released, as is custom for police shootings in the county. The prosecutor's office says the transcripts should be public in July.

The *Mercury* noted in a story earlier this month, Johnson, a Portland-native, was well-loved by friends and family, but also struggled with mental health issues and addiction:

"You were happy when you were with him," says Jesse Howell, who met Johnson when they were teenagers attending the same church youth group in Portland. He describes Johnson as one of the most genuine people he has ever known, "even when he was going through his shit."

Johnson was born and raised in Portland, along with his brother Tobias, by a large, loving, and deeply religious family. He loved his faith, music, skateboarding, basketball, and football. He attended Cleveland High School until his junior year, when he dropped out and eventually earned his GED. Johnson spent about four years living in the Midwest before returning to Portland last summer.

The Mercury spoke to friends from high school and the multiple Christian churches he attended, family acquaintances, and religious leaders who all knew Johnson well. It quickly became clear that he was immensely loved, and had a large army of people rooting for him.

Johnson also struggled with addiction to various drugs. He started using cannabis when he was 12 or 13, and then ecstasy and prescription drugs in his later teens. It has not been revealed what substances—if any—were present in Johnson’s system the evening of his death, but it is believed that addiction played a role in the altercation.

Despite those struggles, Johnson remained dedicated to his church and family throughout his life. “He is not what the media made him out to be,” Howell emphasizes. “They ran his mugshot like 50 times. He is not that guy. He is not his mistakes.”

Johnson was the second person killed and the third person shot by a Portland police officer in 2017. Police officer Andrew Hearst, who shot and killed 17-year-old Quanice Hayes in February, was also cleared by a grand jury, as were the two police officers who shot (but didn't kill) 56-year-old Don Perkins.

The Daily Journal of Commerce

OP-ED: Proposed metal skin would not be right for Portland Building

By: Peter Meijer
06/23/2017

As part of the current design/build team, Peter Meijer Architect PC (PMA) would like to comment on the proposed alterations to the Portland Building per the Type III Historic Resource Review to be presented to the Historic Landmarks Commission on Monday.

Our city is investing a lot in the concept to hide the Portland Building’s problems under a new metal skin. The most troubling aspect is that the Portland Building’s new facade would not even meet the intended redesign goals. The proposed “solution” is overly expensive, does not increase daylight, does not improve the work environment, does not meet the standards of preservation, and falls short of improving the urban environment. The solution would solve a single problem: keeping the rain off the original structure.

There are several reasons why covering the Portland Building is highly problematic. Primarily it’s the cost. There is a long-term, watertight solution that costs substantially less money to build and has been vetted by three to four professional firms, including PMA, that agree on the approach. A new metal skin will provide a warranty. A warranty will not keep water out and a warranty does not mean repairs are free. The dollars saved from not wrapping the façade in metal could potentially be invested in other city properties. It is fiscally irresponsible to waste money on a single structure.

Secondly, the window openings would actually deepen due to the application of the over-cladding, so daylighting would not be improved inside the building. This issue is the number one complaint of people who work in the building. And the new solution does not improve this

condition even with the proposed new window glazing. You cannot get more daylight into the same size window by making the depth of the window larger. A professional approach would be to provide a full daylight study and software analysis focused on improving the working environment with improved daylight.

Also, in order to maximize the dollars spent, more workstations are being added to each floor. This would manifest into smaller, open workstations in the same amount of space that larger workstations occupy currently. The proposed design misses the opportunity to include implementation of new concepts for work space, new office environments, or accommodations for the changing demographics of the workforce.

Finally, the idea of adding a new exterior skin to a landmark building is disingenuous. City Council has consistently denied private developers the opportunity to demolish or significantly modify historic buildings because those developers were not meeting the intent of the preservation zoning code. When completed, the proposed solution will result in automatic removal of the building from the National Register of Historic Places – akin to demolishing the structure. Why is it OK for the city to support the proposed destruction of a landmark and disregard basic preservation zoning code?

There is widespread acknowledgment that the ground-floor atrium and parking garage entry do not work well in Portland's urban street realm. Equally, there is widespread agreement that enclosing the atrium, removing the garage door "hole," and improving the street façade would be an acceptable change to the Portland Building. The project does not provide enough response to the Urban Design Committee's comments on improving the structure. In another disregard to the city's own rules, an encroachment on the public realm is being requested. A request by a private developer to encroach on the public realm is routinely and emphatically denied. Why is it OK for an encroachment to be requested for this project?

In an attempt to bolster the misguided solution, our city has secured a current design partner of the original design firm, Michael Graves Architecture & Design, to provide written support on behalf of the sheet metal wrapped proposal. It is a known fact that the late Michael Graves loved the Portland Building, and it is troubling that our city would seek to counter Mr. Graves' opinion after his death with the opinion of a lesser-known young partner seeking to carry forward the firm. And why is it OK for our city to decide the current colors are wrong and there is a need to refresh the building with new colors?

The proposed new building would no longer be an icon of our collective architectural history. As Karrie Jacobs noted in a 2014 ARCHITECT article on the Portland Building, "it's a bad idea to do something irreversible when your judgment is clouded by disdain. Not to mention that Portland, despite its reputation as a bastion of alternative everything, is a city where strong regulation tends to prevent anything too flamboyant from being built. It would be foolish for the city to discard a work of architecture stranger than anything that it will probably ever build again."

There is a way to make the Portland Building work. But in its current form, what is being proposed by the design team, with city support, is a building that will fall far short of the city goals, not improve key interior environments, and cause the potential loss of the most prominent example of postmodern architecture that many visitors from around the world come to

experience or admire. Portland does not want to be regarded as a poor steward of the Portland Building. Wrapping the building in metal is the wrong solution.