

The Oregonian

County opens cooling center ahead of heat wave

By *Samantha Matsumoto*

July 31, 2017

You've probably heard: This week is going to be hot.

The National Weather Service has issued excessive heat warnings for the Portland area from Tuesday at noon through late Friday night. Forecasters expect the weather to get dangerously hot with highs that could reach 107 degrees.

To help people stay safe during the heat, Multnomah County will open three cooling centers for seniors and people with disabilities Tuesday through at least next Monday. The centers will be open from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays and 2 p.m. to 8 p.m. on weekends.

The three centers are located at:

- Multnomah County Walnut Park Building, 5325 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Portland
- Multnomah County East Building, 600 N.E. 8th St., Gresham
- Hollywood Senior Center, 1820 N.E. 40th Ave., Portland

Ride Connection provides free rides to the cooling centers. You can arrange a ride by calling 503-226-0700. Advance reservations are encouraged.

Fairview City Hall, at 1300 NE Village Street, will also open as a cooling center Tuesday through Friday. It will be open from 2 p.m. to 8 p.m.

Washington County released a list of places to beat the heat, including local YMCAs and libraries.

Clackamas County and Clark County will open several cooling centers. A full list can be found [here for Clackamas](#) and [here for Clark](#).

Portland police will check on people whose health may be impacted by the heat to ensure they know cooling center locations and have a way to get to the shelters.

To stay safe during the heat, police advise people travel with extra water and be prepared for traffic or public transit delays. They ask people to check on elderly neighbors and loved ones, as the elderly are more susceptible to heat exhaustion. Don't leave children and pets unattended in cars, they said.

Health officials say people should limit physical activity outdoors, stay in air-conditioned buildings and drink plenty of fluids.

The map below has local beaches, pools and fountains. Check the individual blips for more information and call locations before heading there -- the hours may have changed since this map was created.

The Portland Tribune

Southwest neighbors fight infill housing plan

By Jim Redden

August 1, 2017

City Council will decide Aug. 9 whether Everett Custom Homes can build 11 houses on rural Southwest lot

The future of a controversial residential infill project that pits neighbors against a prominent developer in outer Southwest Portland is scheduled to be decided by the City Council on Aug. 9.

The decision comes as the council is feeling pressure to allow more housing to be built to accommodate all income levels. Portland is expected to attract 260,000 more people by 2035.

Everett Homes is proposing to build 11 houses on a 2.3-acre privately owned parcel between two dead ends of Southwest Pendleton Avenue. A 90-year-old single-family home sits on one corner of the property. The rest is covered with trees and brush, including a wetland portion protected by an environmental conservation overlay zone.

"We're really excited by the project. Hayhurst is a great neighborhood with a lot of amenities, like good schools and nearby parks. We're glad to be able to give 11 families the opportunity to live there," says Everett owner Vic Remmers.

The Hayhurst Neighborhood Association that represents the area objects to much of Remmers' plan, saying it would result in the loss of too much habitat, including 100 trees, and that it would potentially flood adjacent properties. The association also says the additional traffic generated by the residents of the homes would threaten children who walk to and from the nearby Hayhurst Elementary School.

Big change for neighborhood

"The development will completely change the character of the neighborhood, which is quiet and rural, with small houses on large lots. It will be a lot more urban and the houses will be much more expensive," says Bryanna Hurwitz. She is chairwoman of the neighborhood association's land-use committee but was speaking on behalf of an opposition groups, Save Pendleton Creek Woods, named after a creek that originates on the property.

According to Remmers, each home would be between 2,500 and 3,500 square feet and sell for between \$700,000 and \$800,000 if they were on the market today. However, they could not be completed for another year at the soonest.

As part of the project, called the Everett Heights Subdivision, a new street connecting the two ends of Pendleton would be built, creating a through street that could be reached by Southwest 45th Avenue to the east and Southwest Cameron Road to the north. A slope on the site would be raised 17 feet in some areas. The house would be demolished but the portion of the wetland in the overlay zone would stay protected.

Remmers says that because of the size of the property, the project represents a rare opportunity to build a community of related homes within city limits. Although his company has built other homes in outer Southwest Portland in recent years, they have been infill projects of two houses at most.

Meets city codes

After the proposal was approved by the Bureau of Development Services, the neighborhood association filed an appeal, as allowed by state and city land-use policies. City hearings officer Joe Turner heard it on March 8. An Everett representative said the proposal complies with all city codes for such developments, including having a stormwater management system that meets city requirements. He said connecting Pendleton is a Portland Bureau of Transportation requirement for such projects, which would include planting new trees to compensate for those that will be cut.

The association disagreed, arguing PBOT can waive the street connection requirement because of the steep terrain and presence of so many trees. At the same time, it presented an alternative development plan that would allow six homes on the site.

Hurwitz also notes the site is in a landslide zone, and two properties within one-half mile have been damaged by slides in the past 21 years. In 1996, a landslide just west of Southwest 42nd on Southwest Cullen shut down a street that remains closed. The most recent one occurred on Nov. 24, 2016, damaging an apartment building at 4344 Fairvale Drive so heavily that it had to be evacuated. It was perched on a slope that is steeper than those in the area proposed for development, however.

Despite the objections, Turner ruled the proposal complies with city codes and approved the original 11-house plan following the hearing. The association appealed the decision to the council, as allowed by the land-use policies.

The council heard the appeal on June 22, with both sides repeating and amplifying on the points made to Turner. The council members asked many questions to better understand the complex zoning and code issues, including whether the water on the property comes from springs, seeps or aquifers.

"The council was very engaged," Hurwitz says.

On July 3, BDS sent each council member a packet of information on the potential development. It included existing and proposed drainage pattern maps, an aerial photograph of the vicinity, a map showing environmental zones and streams, and selected site plans.

The packet also included the most recent Safe Routes for Schools map for Hayhurst Elementary School, dated February 2017. Neighbors noted it did not include several routes from previous maps in the area of the proposed development. The Portland Bureau of Transportation, which puts the maps together with neighborhood input, told the council on July 11 that the new map was flawed. PBOT told the council to use the 2014 map that included the previous routes, including Southwest 48th Avenue.

After the council makes its decision, either side can challenge it before the state Land Use Board of Appeals.

Developer well-connected

Everett owner Vic Remmers is well known at City Hall. He is a member of the Residential Infill Project Stakeholders Advisory Group, which is working on the details of the so-called missing-middle housing policy approved by the council last year. He contributed to both Ted Wheeler and Jules Bailey when they ran against each other for mayor in 2016, and to former city Commissioner Steve Novick in 2014.

The fight is typical of residential infill disputes in outer Southwest Portland. While residents of inner neighborhoods routinely object to individual older homes being demolished and replaced

with larger ones, such projects in outer Southwest Portland frequently involve clusters of homes built on relatively large wooded parcels.

For example, Commissioner Nick Fish was criticized by Southwest Portland residents several years ago after the Portland Water Bureau, which he oversees, sold an unused surplus water storage tank to a different developer, who plans to build three homes on the site. A group called Livable PDX is also fighting a proposed 23-unit subdivision called Macadam Ridge in a wooded area near Southwest Hume and Ruby Terrace, west of the Riverview Abbey Mausoleum.

Many Southwest Portland residents also complained about a five-story apartment building being built in the small Multnomah Village retail district. And they have filed a legal challenge to the so-called missing-middle housing policy in the state-required Comprehensive Plan update approved by the council last year. That appeal is pending at the state Department of Land Conservation and Development, which must either approve the update or send it back to the council for more work.

Courting Kenton

*By Amanda Waldroupe
August 1, 2017*

How a North Portland neighborhood came to embrace an innovative tiny-house village for homeless women

Just to the south of the 31-foot-tall Paul Bunyan statue in Kenton, a gentrifying working-class neighborhood in North Portland, more than 200 area residents streamed into Disjecta, a nonprofit art gallery, on March 8.

Everyone was given a small, square piece of paper — a ballot. Kenton residents were participating in a highly unusual decision-making process: a neighborhood-wide vote to decide the fate of a city-backed proposal to site a temporary homeless village in their neighborhood.

"The city is basically saying, 'Hey, we're going to let you vote on this.' That just doesn't happen. I can't emphasize that enough," Tyler Roppe, the Kenton Neighborhood Association's chair and a supporter of the proposal, said that night.

Roppe had no idea how the vote would go.

Vahid Brown, Clackamas County's housing policy coordinator and a co-founder of the grassroots group Village Coalition, which had played a leading role in crafting the proposal, hadn't slept well for days. "I was on pins and needles," he recalled.

Hopes were high among the village's supporters. But like in other neighborhoods that have grappled with homelessness, some greeted the village proposal with hostility.

"Why Kenton?" one man, who did not give his name, asked at one point that night.

Without pause, a half-dozen people shot back, "Why not Kenton?"

Portland City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly then stood to speak.

"I am hoping that Kenton will be the first neighborhood to step forward and embrace this incredible project and ... be a role model for the rest of the city," she said. "What you don't want, probably, are the kinds of camps that spontaneously emerge due to the fact that no one will say 'yes.' "

That night, Kenton did say yes, overwhelmingly, voting 178 to 75 in favor of Kenton Women's Village, which opened two months later. In doing so, Kenton residents set a precedent for neighborhood involvement and raised hopes among homeless advocates and policymakers that the model can be replicated to site future villages in other neighborhoods.

But it wasn't easy.

Looking for a test case

Despite significant increased funding since former Portland Mayor Charlie Hales declared a "housing and homelessness state of emergency" in 2015, housing and shelter options for homeless residents — a large portion of whom experience severe mental illness, physical disabilities and other obstacles to living-wage employment — lag far behind demand.

For homeless individuals and policymakers alike, homeless villages are viewed as one promising, if imperfect, alternative to camps. (See sidebar below.) Though the living conditions are primitive and quasi-legal, these communities are self-governed and rule-bound, beloved by village residents and met with increasingly open minds by policymakers.

As homeless villages gain wider visibility and acceptance, the movement faces obstacles as much political as philosophical: How do you persuade businesses, homeowners and apartment dwellers to accept a village within their neighborhood?

For the proponents of Kenton Women's Village, putting the decision in the hands of Kenton residents was a risky gamble. If neighbors rejected the proposal, it would throw cold water on future village proposals.

As camping along Portland's Springwater Creek Corridor swelled to record levels last summer, a group of activists made their move, forming the Village Coalition. It was composed of residents of Portland's then-three homeless villages, advocates and allies, including the City Repair Project, the Rebuilding Center, Portland State University's Center for Public Interest Design and the Portland Houseless Coalition.

The new coalition advocates for homeless villages and their residents, promulgating the view that villages are an inexpensive shelter alternative and a forward-thinking model for homeless self-empowerment: "an opportunity to have services for houseless people designed by houseless people," says steering committee chairman David Bikman, an administrator at Portland State University's Graduate School of Education.

The coalition's vision, according to Bikman, is a city with a homeless village in every neighborhood.

The Village Coalition launched the Partners on Dwelling (POD) initiative in October. Led by Todd Ferry, an architect and associate professor at Portland State University's Center for Public Interest Design, POD brought architects, designers and homeless advocates together to explore ways to create safe, beautiful small houses for homeless people. The POD team and a cadre of volunteers began building a set of 96-square-foot "sleeping pods" for a speculative homeless village.

In need of a site, Ferry approached then-Mayor Charlie Hales, who had identified homelessness as a priority for his last year in office.

"He was looking for a legacy of some kind, for sure," recalls Elspeth Tanguay-Koo, the Village Coalition's treasurer and steering committee member, who was homeless as a teenager. "He was aware of (other villages). It was enough information for him to understand that there was a high likelihood of success. I think he had nothing to lose."

Hales' office gave \$35,000 toward the project.

"We always had (villages) in the back of our mind," said Ben Mauro, who worked as a housing policy coordinator in Hales' office, recalling discussions last summer about whether villages could be another form of shelter.

"It's a broader definition of shelter," said Marc Jolin, director of the Joint Office of Homeless Services, noting that, like shelters, villages provide "basic safety, access to hygiene, shelter from inclement weather."

"The sense of urgency that came along with the emergency opened up the possibility to try things we haven't tried before," Jolin added.

Jolin secured an agreement from Catholic Charities to operate a village, which would serve homeless women and provide case management during a one-year pilot project.

Mauro scoured through a list of vacant city-owned properties. He pinpointed an acre-sized residential lot on North Argyle Street, slightly secluded by Kenton Park. Owned by the Portland Development Commission (the city's economic development agency, recently renamed Prosper Portland), the lot was pledged to an affordable housing development, but would remain vacant for at least a year.

The site was targeted as the future home of Kenton Women's Village.

No support? No project.

When city staff first met with the Kenton Neighborhood Association in November to propose Kenton Women's Village, they were met with concern and skepticism.

"The neighborhood felt like it was sprung on them," Roppe said. "There was not enough information."

Little detail was given regarding how the village would have electricity, water or sanitation, how the village's residents would be chosen, or what recourse would exist if any issues arose, Roppe and others said.

Susan Oliver, who lived 12 blocks away from the proposed site, attended the meeting wanting to be supportive, but left unpersuaded. "I had no assurance there was going to be any active concern for the community," Oliver said.

The city could have built the village without neighbors' permission, but never considered that option.

"We didn't want to (forge) a village that was unwelcome, that would be isolated in the neighborhood and be treated poorly," Ferry said.

In a Dec. 22 letter to Hales, the association indicated cautious support of the proposal "tempered by myriad unanswered questions." Recognizing a need to "build trust and remove fear," as Vahid Brown said, the village's proponents began working closer with the neighborhood association, developing a process unusual in two ways.

First, nearly a dozen meetings were scheduled to allow neighbors a chance to voice their opinion. A neighborhood association subcommittee met five times between December and March, an aggressive meeting schedule even in a city obsessed with meetings and process.

Second, the partners agreed that the neighborhood association would have final say on the village. A neighborhood-wide vote was scheduled for March 8.

"We were clear from the beginning," Jolin said. "If you don't support it, it's not going forward."

Overcoming fears

The neighborhood association spread news of the vote in its monthly newsletter hand-delivered to every Kenton home, social media, the association's website and emails.

In addition to the subcommittee meetings, neighbors also participated in two architectural charrettes, hosted by POD members and PSU architectural students. Charrettes, common in the architecture community, allow all stakeholders to discuss a project together, proposing various ideas and resolving any conflicts.

The first charrette, on Jan. 28, began with a walking tour of the Argyle site. The group noted the lot's physical characteristics and the neighborhood surroundings. They discussed safety issues and how the village could be supplied with water and electricity. At nearby Kenton Firehouse, they sat at round tables, examining scale models of the sleeping pods, and playing with different ideas.

What would the village be like if all the pods were clustered together in one group versus smaller clusters throughout the lot? How would either design affect the villagers' relationships with one another?

Residents drew their ideas on copies of the site map, sketching in where a community garden might grow, where a grassy berm could be situated to divide private and community space, where a staircase from the top of the hill at North Argyle into the village could be constructed.

"We drew a lot of pictures," Tanguay-Koo said. "We generated a lot of questions, a lot of observation. We all shared different ideas."

PSU architecture students incorporated neighbors' ideas into the village design, presented at a second charrette on Feb. 15.

The intensive involvement process helped neighbors overcome their "fear of the unknown," Mauro said. "When you break it down and say that these are 14 women who are coming off the street and escaping a tormenter, or just looking for a safe place in the community to grow in — it's hard to argue against that."

The process made a difference for resident Val Parks.

"I was totally opposed to it at first," Parks said. "As I've learned more and seen the dedication behind making this work, it has brought me around and made me more open to it."

The vote

By the time of the vote, the mood among neighbors was "positive and celebratory," Tanguay-Koo said.

Still, at the March 8 meeting, there were detractors. Residents shouted questions about how the location was chosen, how trash would be cleaned up, and if the residents could be evicted. Most of all, they wanted assurance that the village would not become permanent.

Larry Mills, who said that he has lived in Kenton for 37 years, read from a letter he wrote before the meeting. "The current condition of our neighborhood and Portland is embarrassing," he said. He called Hazelnut Grove, a nearby unsanctioned homeless village, a "shantytown" and described the homeless camps throughout Kenton "a disaster."

Jessie Burke, owner of Posies Bakery & Cafe and a 15-year resident of Kenton, urged her neighbors to support the village and its organizers.

"Give them a few tries to figure out a really tough problem. Government doesn't work without citizen participation," Burke said.

Burke's argument prevailed, and the Kenton Women's Village opened to residents on June 10.

Among some, Eudaly included, there are hopes that the village will serve as a blueprint for opening similar villages in other neighborhoods.

"We are going to begin to facilitate these types of conversations across the whole city," Eudaly said during the vote. "No neighborhood is going to be exempt. This is a problem for all of us to solve."

Other neighborhood associations and churches throughout Portland already have approached the Village Coalition, Brown said.

"It was such a positive process," Brown said, adding that the experience in Kenton sends a message to other neighborhoods that "if you step forward as a community, then you are in the driver's seat."

This story is part of Giving Ground, an investigative series produced by the Open: Housing Journalism Collaborative, a joint project of Open: Housing, Pamplin Media Group and KGW. Look for other stories in this and related series at OpenHousing.net.

A Change of Heart

Sheila Mason opposed Kenton Women's Village, then became one of the village's biggest supporter

Sheila Mason is one of Kenton Women's Villages biggest proponents. But she started out as one of its biggest detractors.

Mason, who has lived in the Kenton neighborhood for 10 years, arrived at a neighborhood meeting in January with a list of tough questions for members of a village-planning subcommittee. An engineer at Intel, Mason describes herself as left-brained and analytical, naturally drawn to understanding the world through data, statistics and facts. She wanted to know how the village would deal with trash, what safety precautions were being taken for the women, and how criminal activity would be dealt with.

But listening to herself as she spoke, she realized she was judging Kenton Women's Village despite knowing little about the project.

"Listening to my own voice asking my questions...I actually could hear my bias coming through," she said.

The election of Donald Trump rattled Mason; she cites national politics as a major reason for getting involved with Kenton Women's Village. She remembers feeling helpless after the inauguration, wanting to "root down and work on something that I can control."

"Something I can control is what kind of neighbor I am to my fellow neighbors," she says.

That made her think: what does it mean to be a good neighbor?

Living in a house doesn't necessarily make a person a good neighbor, she realized: housed people may leave trash in the street, hoard car parts in their yards, or deal drugs from their homes. Living in a house doesn't make a person immune to problems, such as addiction and mental illness, that many homeless people face.

So, maybe the lack of a house didn't mean trouble.

Mason made a conscious effort to think about the Kenton Women's Village proposal from a different perspective. She still wanted to know the facts and data about homeless villages. How does a village's self-governance model work, she wondered, without becoming "a big, dramatic mess?"

She attended one of Hazelnut Grove's General Assembly Meetings, held in the village's dining area. Village residents are required to attend the weekly meeting, when chores and other duties such as kitchen and security detail are decided upon.

"They have a humongous investment in where they live," Mason said. "They have it all worked out. Everybody has to pull an equal load."

She also became more confident of the proposed village's likelihood of success when she learned that Catholic Charities, which acts as a property manager for hundreds of units across Portland, would manage Kenton Women's Village.

Property managers know how to deal with trash, sanitation and other issues, Mason said. "That's huge."

Then there's the statistic that Mason says leveled her.

Earlier this year, Home Forward, the Portland metropolitan area's federal housing authority, opened its waiting list for Section 8 housing, federally subsidized housing that caps a person's rent contribution at 30 percent of their income.

Over five days, 16,000 households applied before Home Forward closed the list again.

"I thought, wow," Mason said. "This is how serious this is. That started changing my mind. I didn't fully understand the scope of how homelessness (was increasing) due to rent rising."

Mason encouraged her neighbors to approve Kenton Women's Village at a neighborhood-wide vote held in March, making the point that many of the women selected to live in the village were "already here."

"They are our neighbors," Mason said.

— Amanda Waldroupe

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Creative alternatives

With limited funds and an affordable housing shortage, policymakers have come up with creative alternatives to get homeless people off the streets.

- Ease camping restrictions: Former Mayor Charlie Hales instituted a Safe Sleep policy last summer, retracted in August 2016 after camping in parks and public-use areas grew to unforeseeable numbers.
- Make shelters more hospitable: Last year, the city and county began allowing homeless individuals to bring the "3 Ps" into shelter with them: their pets, partners and possessions.
- The Ticket Home program: In 2016, the Joint Office of Homeless Services began giving bus, plane or train tickets to homeless people who were from other cities and could move back in with family or friends.

- "A Place for You": Earlier this year, Multnomah County floated a pilot project idea of paying for a handful of accessory dwelling units on the property of homeowners for free, if they made them available, rent free, to homeless families for five years.
- Car camping: In 2010, the city attempted to start a car-camping program, modeled after a successful program in Eugene, that would allow homeless people to sleep in their cars, which would be parked in church parking lots. The idea failed when the Westmoreland neighborhood association vociferously opposed the concept.

Are homeless villages legal?

The declaration of a housing and homeless state of emergency, in October 2015, allowed the city of Portland to temporarily waive some zoning requirements to site shelters and respond more nimbly to the housing crisis.

Some of those changes are now permanent. Portland's zoning code was changed in 2016 to include homeless villages, which are designated as short-term group homes, defined as having 15 units or less, in medium-density neighborhoods (R1 zoning) with a central kitchen and bathrooms. Accessory dwelling units, or ADUs, on the other hand, are defined in part as including a private kitchen or toilet.

Wheeler's big decision

*By Nick Budnick
August 1, 2017*

Mayor will soon decide whether to keep Police Chief Mike Marshman or replace him with someone from outside the bureau

About a month ago, Portland Police Chief Mike Marshman marked his one-year anniversary as Portland's top cop — with no clue whether he will keep the job.

As early as this week, Mayor Ted Wheeler will choose between Marshman and three other finalists to be chief following a national search that drew 33 candidates.

It's the kind of decision that makes politicians squirm. In Marshman, Wheeler has a known quantity who, despite becoming a focal point of criticism for police critics, is well liked by his troops and in the business community, and hasn't made the sort of glaring missteps that have led to other chiefs being replaced.

Against that safer pick, Wheeler must weigh other candidates who, while potentially more appealing, are believed to have never proven their chops as chief of a law enforcement agency.

Only one of those three challengers has been confirmed: Larry Sciroto, 44, who became an assistant chief of the Pittsburgh police just a year ago.

Wheeler is keeping the other two candidates' names a secret at their request, having reversed his office's earlier pledge of advance public vetting of potential chiefs.

Speculation among those following the process centers on two candidates, however: Danielle Outlaw, a 41-year-old deputy chief in Oakland, and Perry Tarrant, a 58-year-old assistant chief in Seattle.

The well-publicized search has put the mayor in a tough spot —as whatever happens under his pick, he owns it.

"Wheeler will be blamed whatever the politics are," if anything bad happens with the police bureau in upcoming years, said Jim Moore, a Pacific University government professor who heads the Tom McCall Center for Innovation in Government.

In contrast, without a search, Marshman would have given Wheeler a convenient fall guy if, say, a controversial officer-involved shooting took place.

Unusual search

It's not typical to conduct a national search to fill a job that's already occupied — unless that person is widely unpopular or an interim. And it was an unusual set of events that brought Wheeler to this place.

Last year, when Wheeler pledged to hold a national search in the midst of his mayoral run, the chief was Larry O'Dea, a man who seemed uncomfortable both in the public limelight as well as with his own troops. Sightings were so scarce outside the chief's office that behind his back, police managers called O'Dea "Sasquatch."

Then, when O'Dea imploded over coverage of his questionable handling of an off-duty camping incident in which he shot his friend, Robert Dempsey, Marshman was named to succeed O'Dea.

Though he had scant management experience, Marshman was well liked in the community and was well-versed in police accountability, as the liaison to the federal Department of Justice in efforts to comply with a legal settlement reached in 2014 over the bureau's treatment of the mentally ill.

Marshman, however, promptly was outed for an incident years before in which he was investigated for choking his 16-year-old stepson, leaving neck bruises that looked like "hickeys," as his ex-wife told investigators. Marshman said he regretted it, and that he acted in self-defense. But the news, first reported by the Portland Tribune, became a rallying cry for a small but determined group of police activists who turn out regular marches on City Hall.

Upon taking office, Wheeler vowed to proceed with a national search, saying he needed to make sure the police chief best shared his values.

Minority relations a factor

The job announcement posted in May said "the successful candidate must demonstrate the capacity and commitment to expand on existing strategies to improve relationships with and service provision to Portland's communities of color, ensuring that equity is a bedrock of policing in Portland."

On the face of things, Outlaw and Tarrant, both African-American, would seem to have that capacity more than Sciroto, who is Caucasian. Outlaw and Tarrant both have compelling personal stories, and have been vocal about the need to improve police relations with minority communities.

Jo Ann Hardesty, the Portland NAACP leader, said that whoever is picked, it shouldn't be the incumbent.

"Marshman," she said, "is a status quo appointment and not able to implement a reform agenda."

Nkenge Harmon Johnson, president and CEO of the Urban League, sat on the mayor's search panel. She declined to confirm the finalists' names, but said, "The mayor is going to have a good group of folks to choose from."

The pool will have risks, however.

Tarrant spent the bulk of his police career in Tucson. Arizona does not have collective bargaining, meaning his experience in Oregon-style union relations is limited.

Despite her reputation as somewhat of a whistleblower on bad police behavior in Oakland, Outlaw might be considered young to become chief of a mid-size force of more than 900 sworn officers.

Few give Marshman much of a chance of surviving.

While one year ago Marshman was the candidate of change, he now "has become the status quo choice," said Moore, the Pacific University professor. "And so if change in policing is what the electorate wants, then ... Marshman will be a bad choice politically."

That said, Moore added he's not sure voters are that fired up about the situation.

Jason Renaud, of the Mental Health Association of Portland, said the chief pick "is a decision that should be made on their experience as an individual and their credibility as a leader for the community. I would hope that Wheeler would not make this a political decision."

Deadlines for affordable housing initiatives shift

By Jim Redden

August 1, 2017

More meetings set on framework for Spending of bond funds, proposed missing middle City Code changes delayed

As rents continue to rise in Portland, deadlines to finalize two initiatives to increase the supply of affordable housing have been pushed back with little public notice.

After falling in February, rents in Portland have increased for the past five months and are now more expensive than most large cities in the country, according to the most recent report from the Apartment List rental company. Portland's median two-bedroom rent of \$1,370 also is above the national average of \$1,160, the report says.

Despite that, two more meetings of the Portland Affordable Housing Bond Stakeholder Advisory Group recently were announced on its city website. Although the committee originally was scheduled to complete its work July 31, it now will meet again on Aug. 8 and 14.

The committee is charged with drafting a framework for spending the \$258.4 million in bond funds approved by Portland voters at the November 2016 election. It currently is considering specific production, location and community goals for bond-funded projects. The council is expected to take up the proposed framework this fall.

Although Mayor Ted Wheeler previously had said the council would begin spending the money in July, the schedule already had been pushed back to the fall when the group was first appointed in March.

In addition, the schedule for the Residential Infill Project to present its proposed City Code amendments to the council has been delayed from the end of this year until late 2018. The new schedule recently was posted on the project's website.

The project was created by former Mayor Charlie Hales and is charged with proposing how smaller homes, such as duplexes and garden apartments, can be added to existing single-family neighborhoods.

The council added the so-called missing-middle concept to the Comprehensive Plan update it approved late last year. The update is intended to guide growth in the city through 2035. At the time, the council assumed that such smaller homes would be more affordable than the large houses that now are allowed to replace older homes in such neighborhoods.

The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, which is staffing the project, currently is drafting the amendments to the City Code to enact the concept. The council originally was expected to begin considering them this fall. But the staff now says the proposed amendments will not even be released for public review and comment until late September.

The outreach process is expected to take a year. After that, they must be considered by the Planning and Sustainability Commission, which oversees the bureau, before being forwarded to the council. Both sets of hearings now are not expected to begin until winter 2018.

The Portland Mercury

As Portland Considers Two New Water Treatment Plants, Some Worry About "Rushed Process"

*By Dirk VanderHart
July 31, 2017*

As Portland City Council nears a vote that could result in not one but two brand new water treatment plants, some wonder what the rush is.

In a move that **surprised no one**, the Portland Water Bureau last week filed a **resolution** for council consideration that, if approved, would lay the groundwork for building a \$105 million plant that uses ultraviolet light to clear the water of a potentially problematic—and rare—parasite called cryptosporidium. At the same time, the council would also begin socking away money so that 25 years or so after that UV plant goes live, officials can potentially replace it with a more extensive filtration plant for hundreds of millions more (the current estimate is that a filtration plant would cost up to \$500 million). The water bureau is putting forth this hybrid option, as opposed to proposals that would simply build one plant or the other.

The plans, which will mean higher water rates, aren't coming out of the blue. As we've **reported** at length, the rainy winter resulted in 19 detections of cryptosporidium in three months—enough that the Portland Water Bureau announced it wouldn't be able to meet criteria that allowed us to avoid treating the water. The Oregon Health Authority, which regulates Portland's water supply, agreed. Now we've got to figure out what to do about it by August 11.

But as council moves toward a decision, at least two entities with an interest in the matter are pushing for more discussion. The Portland Utility Board, a group that's charged with making recommendations in the interest of water customers, issued a letter [**PDF**] on July 27 asking the water bureau to ask the OHA for more time.

"This is a complex and very costly decision for the residents of the City and the City should not be forced into a rushed process," it read. "The PUB feels strongly that the City must commit to treat its water, but requests an extension through the end of the year."

It continues: "There were serious concerns raised by members of the PUB that the current decision schedule hasn't allowed for adequate public engagement or education to provide customers with enough information to support one treatment technology over another."

If council insists on making a decision right away, the board believes, it should build only the more-expensive filtration facility, which officials have said would better prepare Portland to address new regulations down the line (but which some beer brewers fear could negatively impact the water they rely on).

The PUB has company. Last week, the Rockwood Water People's Utility District—a PWB customer based in East Portland—also suggested that the bureau request "an extension of time to develop the most cost effective and regional approach to this issue."

UPDATE, 4:27 pm: Also chiming in is the Oregon Citizens' Utility Board (CUB), which scrutinizes the water bureau's spending decisions on behalf of ratepayers.

CUB issued a memo on Friday, and an accompanying revision it believes council should make to the resolution it's taking up Wednesday. The organization says it believes that a filtration plant is the wisest choice, but the amendment it's pushing would delay a final decision until next year, while the city better studies such a move.

In the memo, CUB chides officials for not allowing it "more meaningful input" at a work session on the treatment plant proposal in late June.

"To have only one City Council public hearing is also troubling given the scope of the required investment and history of interest in this topic," the document reads. CUB also raises concerns that, among other things, money put down for a treatment plant to be built in future decades could be plundered by a future council for other purposes.

Original post:

The Portland Business Alliance has voiced support for the hybrid plan that council will take up Wednesday. Since that item is a resolution, it could be passed the same day, without the "second reading" that ordinances require before passage.

It's unclear whether the OHA would consent to extend Portland's timeline for solving its water puzzle, but to ask wouldn't require a vote of council. Still, the bureau says it's waiting for council guidance.

"The decision about requesting an extension lies with Council," says PWB spokesperson Jaymee Cuti. "We expect they will discuss it on Wednesday."

The Daily Journal of Commerce

Portland looking to aid brownfield cleanups

*By Chuck Slothower
July 31, 2017*

The city of Portland is moving toward offering tax incentives to developers of brownfield properties.

The City Council has directed staff members to come up with a package of property tax breaks to encourage development of Portland's approximately 910 acres of environmentally contaminated brownfield properties.

Commissioner Nick Fish, who sponsored the directive, said the tax breaks could be used for industrial or residential projects.

“The focus will be on job creation and affordable housing,” Fish said in an interview. “We anticipate the tax incentive will be structured so the tax incentive is greater if you give a greater public benefit.”

For example, a developer would be eligible for a 50 percent property tax abatement for building market-rate apartments, with a bonus for affordable units and a further bonus for “deeply affordable” units.

“When the incentive plan is up and running, it will be another tool in our kit to put these brownfields to productive use,” Fish said.

Fish said he expects the program to be running within a year.

Local governments in Oregon were authorized to offer brownfield incentives by state legislation in 2016. The **Oregon Brownfield Coalition** – including the city of Portland, environmental groups and business organizations – lobbied for its passage. Cities, counties and ports such as the Port of Portland are able to offer incentives for brownfield development.

The city of Portland is the first municipality to move forward with brownfield subsidies.

In practice, the city of Portland would use tax breaks as the major incentive for brownfield development.

“A significant piece of our comprehensive plan is a big push to put brownfields to productive use,” Fish said. “We’re running out of land, so the next best thing is redeveloping brownfields for a productive use. Put this land back on the tax rolls and drive the jobs agenda.”

Fish pointed to an ongoing success story: the brownfield reclamation of a Port of Portland-owned parcel in **Troutdale Reynolds Industrial Park** that is now set to be a major Amazon fulfillment center.

BRIDGE Housing, a nonprofit organization, is familiar with brownfield projects and the costs involved.

“We’ve done quite a bit of development on brownfield sites,” said Cynthia Parker, president and chief executive. “As land becomes more elusive, it’s important to be able to reclaim some of these properties that have been polluted.”

Several major construction firms, or their subcontractors, are capable of performing the necessary remediation work, she said.

“We have to remediate to the very highest standard because it’s for residential use,” she said. “We’re not afraid of it. It just costs money.”

The **U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development** also runs a grant program to help cities pay for brownfield cleanup.

OPB

Oregon Public Pension Debt Officially Rises By \$2.4 Billion

By Jeff Mapes

July 28, 2017

The official estimate of the deficit for Oregon's public pension system climbed by \$2.4 billion Friday.

As a result, state and local agencies and school districts face even higher pension costs over the next two decades than they had earlier expected.

And the new deficit figure continues to fuel controversy over what the governor and state Legislature should do to ease those rate increases.

The new debt figure is the result of a unanimous vote by the board that oversees the Oregon Public Employees Retirement System. They chose Friday to reduce an estimate of how much PERS expects to earn on its investments from 7.5 percent a year to 7.2 percent.

That has the impact of raising the official estimate of the system's debt from \$21.8 billion to just over \$24 billion.

Some PERS observers had argued that the board should even more aggressively cut its assumed rate of return, saying that it remains overly rosy.

John Thomas, a retirement financial planner from Eugene who chairs the PERS board, said he understands the arguments for dropping the rate much further.

"You have an element of pragmatism here," he said after the vote. "If we went down to a rate of 6 percent, the contribution by the [public] employer would pretty much preclude them being able to do anything It would just totally blow up the system."

Thomas warned, however, that the board could revisit its decision in future years if it appears lower rates are warranted.

Public employers are already facing big rate shocks. In the 2017-19 budget cycle, rates on average have already crested 20 percent of payroll. That will force public agencies to pay nearly \$900 million more than they did in the last two years.

Before Friday's decision, PERS actuaries had estimated employer rates would rise to a high of 31 percent by 2023 and then roughly stay there for the rest of the decade.

Now, Thomas said, those rates could peak at 33 to 34 percent.

The state's political leaders "need to deal with it sooner rather than later," said Thomas. "It is a problem that can't be avoided and it can't be kicked down the road."

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown has formed a task force charged with finding \$5 billion in asset and property sales and other financial maneuvers to help pay down the PERS debt.

Chris Pair, the governor's communications director, said she had no comment for now on Friday's decision.

A statewide business group, Brighter Oregon, said in a statement from spokesman Pat McCormick that the action was an "important first step toward unmasking the severity of the problem."