

The Oregonian

Homeowners Caught Up in Portland Sidewalk Infill Measure Aimed at Developers

*By Elliot Njus
December 6, 2017*

Mavis Willford had taken out a loan to replace her manufactured home, which had mold and rot issues, with a new one.

But when Willford, a cook for the David Douglas school district, applied for a permit to install the new home, she was told she would be charged \$54,000 for sidewalks, nearly half of what she'll pay for the new home.

"We don't even have sidewalks in this part of the city," she said. "It was like they were holding my property hostage."

The unexpected bill was a Local Transportation Infrastructure Charge, created in 2016 to help fill out the city's patchy sidewalk grid.

It requires property owners who build on a street without curbs or sidewalks to either build the street improvements themselves or pay \$600 per linear foot of street frontage. The idea was that developers would pick up the tab for filling in gaps in areas built without sidewalks or stormwater drainage.

The problem, according to City Ombudsman Margie Sollinger and equity office Director Dante James, is that the policy treats all property owners the same. That means not just developers, but also low-income homeowners seeking to rebuild or replace their own home, get eye-popping bills when they go in for permits.

The Portland City Council on Wednesday will consider how to spend the money it's collected since the policy took effect in 2016. Sollinger and James are asking them to also consider measures that would mitigate the impact on homeowners, such as exempting low-income residents or making financing available.

"Simply stated, a policy that treats everyone equally does not result in equity," they wrote.

Willford was offered the choice to build sidewalks and curbs herself that would end at her property line, or to pay into a fund to build sidewalks -- most likely somewhere else.

Willford plead her case to city officials, Gov. Kate Brown's office, and eventually to Sollinger, the ombudsman. Sollinger talked to the city transportation bureau, which waived the fee under a limited exemption.

But, Sollinger said, that exemption likely wouldn't be available to most homeowners.

The ordinance the city council will discuss Wednesday would limit the charges to \$30,000 in the most common residential zones, an attempt to rein in extra-high fees charged to corner lots and other unusual properties.

Portland Police Officer Fired After Woman Alleges He Sexually Assaulted Her at Off-Duty Party

*By Maxine Bernstein
December 5, 2017*

An unidentified Portland police officer was fired last year after a woman reported to authorities that he sexually assaulted her during a party at his home while off-duty, according to a vague discipline report released by police.

Internal affairs initiated an investigation in 2015 after the woman complained to an unidentified police agency that the officer forced her to have oral sex and intercourse while she was intoxicated and unable to consent, according to records from the Portland Police Review Board.

The woman complained to a local police agency and had a forensic sexual assault exam done at a hospital the next day, according to a bureau summary.

The Police Review Board, made up of police supervisors and a citizen volunteer, did not sustain an allegation that the officer had sex with the woman while she was unable to consent. Review Board members cited conflicting witness statements for their decision.

But then-Chief Mike Marshman did not accept the board's recommendation and sustained the allegation.

The board and Marshman agreed on the second allegation, that the officer acted unprofessionally, in a manner "tending to bring reproach or discredit to the Police Bureau and the City by having sexual contact with complainant after complainant had consumed alcohol."

Board members found that "any officer who has responded to domestic violence and date rape calls while on duty should have acted prudently and asked additional questions before engaging in any sexual activity."

Board members also noted that "issues of sexual assault can easily move from the private to public realm and result in reproach toward the City," according to a bureau summary released.

The board reviewed the allegations on June 13, 2016.

The board, the Police Bureau nor the Portland Police Association would identify the officer or what local agency investigated the criminal allegation.

Officer Daryl Turner, president of the Portland Police Association, said he can't talk about the case, only noting, "It's an ongoing case." He would not say who is investigating.

A summary of the reported sexual assault involving an off-duty officer was among 10 misconduct cases reviewed between February 2016 and June 2017 by the review board. The bureau's report doesn't identify the officers by name.

The review board is an advisory panel that looks at police internal investigations, issues findings on police misconduct and recommends discipline.

The report was quietly posted on the Police Bureau's website on Nov. 29, but the police watchdog group Portland Copwatch on Tuesday sent out a press release about it and a letter to the bureau with its own analysis of the cases mentioned.

Dan Handelman of Portland Copwatch urged the city and Police Bureau to allow the complainants, media and public to attend Police Review Board meetings, considering "the extraordinary power that police hold over the lives and well being of community members."

"Opening the hearings would help build the trust the Bureau keeps seeking to gain," Handelman wrote to the bureau Tuesday.

Among the other cases summarized in the report:

- Washington County Sheriff's Office alerted Portland police that a woman had filed a domestic violence report, contending an officer assaulted her, splitting her chin open around August 2015. Two other allegations were that the officer put his hands around her throat, bruising her, and slapped her in the face. The unidentified officer admitted his role in the domestic violence "but failed to take responsibility for his actions," and suggested that the victim "provoked" the violence, according to a board summary. The board unanimously recommended the officer's termination, but the officer, again, not identified by the Police Bureau, resigned. It's unclear from the Police Bureau's report whether any criminal charges were ever lodged in the case.
- An officer was found to have kicked a suspect who was handcuffed and on the ground. The officer kicked the suspect in the side before pulling the suspect up on his or her feet. The officer didn't complete a required use of force report to document the kick, and the officer's incident report on the suspect taken into custody didn't accurately reflect what had occurred, the review board found. Three of the five voting review board members recommended termination for the officer who used excessive force on a person who was handcuffed and controlled. Marshman agreed with the recommendation, but the officer, again unidentified, was allowed to retire, according to the review board's report.
- An officer caught on video punching a man in the head at least a half a dozen times during an arrest for alleged drunken driving while several officers had the man pinned to the ground was found to have used excessive force. A jury in 2014 awarded the man, Jason Matthew Cox, \$562,000, finding police knocked him face-down to the ground and repeatedly pummeled and zapped him with a Taser on June 28, 2011. Internal affairs initially declined to open a case on the matter, but then after the civil liability finding in court, the case was assigned to an internal affairs investigator in March 2016, as required under the city's settlement agreement with the U.S. Department of Justice. Since Officer Robert Bruders was no longer an officer with the bureau when the police review board got the case, it didn't recommend discipline. It's unclear if Bruders retired or resigned.

Portland Art Museum will try again to get approval for Rothko Pavilion

*By Amy Wang and Jessica Floum
December 5, 2017*

After public backlash to a Portland Art Museum plan to construct a three-story glass structure between its two buildings in the South Park Blocks, the museum has revised its plan to emphasize public accessibility and keep a \$50 million capital campaign viable.

At a 2 p.m. Portland City Council hearing Thursday, the museum will ask the council to amend an ordinance to allow construction of the structure, which has been the target of objections from neighbors, bicyclists and advocates for people with disabilities who feared reduced access to a heavily used shortcut.

The museum announced last fall the campaign to fund the structure, called the Rothko Pavilion. It would house a collection of paintings by the abstract artist Mark Rothko, who grew up in

Portland, and serve as a new museum entrance. But conceptual designs showed that the structure, which has a ground-floor footprint of 5,323 square feet, would enclose more than a third of a 75-foot-long, 8-foot-wide pedestrian easement that runs between the museum's two buildings - a public right-of-way that's been in place since 1968.

Under the proposed amendment, the easement will be open 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily. Under the museum's original proposal, the easement would have been open only during museum hours: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. Thursdays and Fridays. That schedule would have complicated access to the nearby Portland Streetcar line.

The backlash was swift, igniting a community discussion about accessibility.

"I cannot stress enough how important the ... walkway is to my life and independence," a museum neighbor, Judith Marks, told City Council at an April hearing on the museum's plan. Marks, one of more than 20 people who testified against the plan, said she has chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, which makes breathing difficult, and said restricted access to the walkway could limit her outings.

Matthew Denney, a staff attorney for Disability Rights Oregon who has spoken with museum officials on disability issues, said, "I'm not opposed to a structure in principle." But initial Rothko Pavilion designs "looked like they were cutting off public access to the area" without taking into consideration its connection to the nearby Portland Streetcar line for seniors and low-income residents in the neighborhood.

Rithy Khut, chairman of the city's Bicycle Advisory Committee, said that while he understands why the museum wants to build the Rothko Pavilion, enclosing the easement would make it look as if it's not public space and could set the wrong precedent: "At what point does PAM come back and say, 'In reality, we just want the whole space, we want to just make it ours?'"

Khut also said his committee is concerned about "who gets to make the decisions on who gets to be in that space," saying that a proposal to have the museum handle security for the area will result in security guards who are more concerned about museum property than about public access.

Even some longtime museum donors criticized the plan, and others may have held back on donating because of the kerfuffle. The museum has collected about \$30.5 million in pledges so far toward its capital campaign.

Museum director Brian Ferriso said he takes all the concerns seriously.

Since the April hearing, "we've spent some time listening to the community," he said. "And one of the things we heard was, access throughout and expanded hours was really important."

In addition to the revised hours, the museum plans to bear the responsibility of securing and maintaining the area and to put up signs "clearly inviting the community to pass through the pavilion," said museum spokesman Ian Gillingham.

Bicyclists and those with pets will be allowed to walk through the space, Ferriso said.

Commissioners Chloe Eudaly, Nick Fish and Dan Saltzman have all signaled support for the revised plan.

"That was a big concession on the museum's part," Saltzman said. "I sponsored (the proposal) and am bringing it forward because I think we have a great art museum and we shouldn't stand in the way of a \$50 million investment designed to connect the two buildings in a way that I think will really enhance the experience for residents and visitors alike."

Fish said he had "real concerns" about accessibility, but the museum's decision to keep the easement open daily inspired his support. He also noted that the Rothko Pavilion will increase access to museum exhibits. Currently, museumgoers must find their way to an underground gallery to move between the museum buildings.

"The fact that this very awkward marriage between these two buildings could be transformed to arguably one of the most accessible museums on the West Coast was huge," Fish said.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz said she will wait until Thursday's hearing before she decides whether to support the proposed amendment.

Portland Disability Coordinator Nickole Cheron said she was impressed by Ferriso's openness in discussing how to increase access not just to the museum but also to the arts. "I found him amazingly committed to creating a museum that was accessible to people at many different levels," Cheron said. Museum officials are scheduled to meet with the Portland Commission on Disability on Friday, the day after the council votes on the easement amendment.

A yes vote from the council would give the museum permission to enclose the easement but would be only the first step for the Rothko Pavilion project. The project designs will undergo a months-long review by the city's building permit bureau, transportation bureau, parks department and utilities. The public will have the opportunity to weigh in on design during this process.

Eudaly has also asked the Portland Commission on Disability to review the project design.

The easement's history dates to 1968, when the city council agreed to vacate part of Southwest Madison Street, ceding it to the two adjacent property owners: what was then known as the Portland Art Association, and the Portland Masonic Temple. The museum was embarking at the time on a two-year expansion that was to include an outdoor sculpture court.

The council approved an ordinance vacating Southwest Madison between Southwest 10th and Park avenues, with conditions including that the museum and temple maintain "a permanent 8-foot wide pedestrian easement," that "said easement not be blocked in any manner" and that the vacated area "not be used for any purpose other than an open mall." It became home to the sculpture court.

Vandalism to sculptures prompted the museum to ask in 1984 for an amended ordinance allowing closure of the area between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. The council agreed, saying the closure "would not adversely affect the public interest."

In 1994, the museum purchased the Masonic Temple and over the next decade converted it into the Mark Building, making it home to the six-floor Jubitz Center for Modern and Contemporary Art. Now the museum stretched over two blocks, but much of the public continued defining it primarily by its 1932 Pietro Belluschi building. Museum studies have shown that half of museum visitors never enter the Mark Building.

The disconnect frustrated museum officials. In 2015, Ferriso asked Chicago architecture firm Vinci Hamp, which he'd worked with at three previous museums, to create a design linking the buildings, said architect Phil Hamp.

Hamp said it was logical for the museum to proceed with a conceptual design and fundraising before receiving official city approval.

"We knew that the hours of access and so forth needed to be ironed out before a final green light," he said. "You would want the green light from the planning authority and also obviously for donors. And for the whole idea to go ahead, you want to have a good idea that's sound and works. You need both."

Regarding accessibility concerns, Hamp said, "I think the building will be accessible and I know there's concessions or at least accommodation for bicycles and people coming through with animals. It all has to be balanced with the needs of the museum and curatorial security. I think it can be done."

Cheron emphasized the need for the city council to solidify any accessibility commitments and decisions into policy and code.

"I want to make sure this commitment ... stands the test of time," Cheron said.

Tim Boyle of Columbia Sportswear: Businesses Can Do More on Homelessness

*By Allan Brettman
December 5, 2017*

Columbia Sportswear president and chief executive Tim Boyle says he has offered to help find remedies for Portland's homeless crisis and is willing to tap other businesses to do the same.

Boyle issued a statement Monday about the homeless, two days after protesters blocked the entrance and caused the closing Saturday of Columbia's downtown retail store. The protesters contended that Portland police were enforcing the city's no-sit policy because of Boyle's complaint to Mayor Ted Wheeler about the safety of the city's downtown streets.

Boyle's statement does not mention that protest, but talks about his company's previous actions to address homelessness.

He noted that an opinion piece in *The Oregonian* – which was one of the catalysts for Saturday's protest – did not include the word homelessness "because the concerns about safety are not tied solely to that issue."

But businesses can do more to find solutions to homelessness, Boyle writes: "In meetings with local and state leaders in recent months I have offered to contribute personally to genuine solutions -- not policing – and I have reiterated my belief that others in the business community should join this effort. I am glad to call business leaders personally to ask them to contribute."

The full statement:

A couple of weeks ago, Columbia Sportswear Company delivered a truckload of coats to Transition Projects, an important nonprofit that assists homeless individuals in Portland, and our team participated in TV interviews stressing the importance of providing support for communities in need.

The same day, I published an opinion piece in *The Oregonian* urging city leaders to address urgent safety issues in downtown Portland in part by providing resources for community policing. My opinion piece in *The Oregonian* did not address homelessness generally. The word does not appear in the article, because the concerns about safety are not tied solely to that issue. The call for community policing resources got far more attention, but the spotlight needs to be much broader.

You would be hard-pressed to name all the agencies and enterprises who are involved in some way in these inter-related issues. There are issues that touch the state, the city, the county, and there are no doubt resources being spent by public bodies that no one thinks of in connection with homelessness.

At times Portlanders seem to be talking past each other, choosing one side or another to what is inherently a multi-sided issue. We can and should – and We do – show compassion to support individuals in need. At the same time, we can and should provide resources for law enforcement to provide greater safety for all.

While this a challenging situation, I refuse to give up, and I would encourage all Oregonians to devote time, attention, and, yes, resources to address the complex issues surrounding homelessness. In meetings with local and state leaders in recent months I have offered to contribute personally to genuine solutions -- not policing – and I have reiterated my belief that others in the business community should join this effort. I am glad to call business leaders personally to ask them to contribute.

We cannot solve all problems, and we will likely never address all the needs related to homelessness, but as Oregonians we can make meaningful progress if our leaders (business, government, nonprofits and others) have the will to do so.

The statement concludes with a list of organizations that Columbia has supported with cash and product donations since 2016: Beaverton School District, Boys and Girls Club of Portland Metro, Christmas for Kids (Holiday event that provides clothes and other items to needy kids in PDX), Doernbecher Children's Hospital Foundation, Hillsboro School District, Council for the Homeless, De Paul Treatment Centers, Friends of Children, Girl Scouts of Oregon and SW Washington, Girls Inc. NW, Habitat for Humanity - Portland Metro East, Helensview High School, Janus Youth Programs Inc., Junior Achievement of Oregon and SW Washington, Lake Oswego Schools Foundation, Liberty High School Athletics and Youth Programs, LifeWorks NW, Metropolitan Family Service, NW Outward Bound, Oregon Food Bank, Portland Children's Museum, Portland Public Schools, Special Olympics of Oregon, Sunshine Division, Transition Projects.

The Portland Tribune

Survey: Downtown Businesses, Employment, Wages Growing

*By Jim Redden
December 5, 2017*

Annual Clean & Safe report documents increase in concern about cleanliness, however.

Despite the recent controversy over whether homeless people are bad for downtown businesses, a recently released annual survey found employment is up in the urban core and most retailers say they feel safe.

A growing percent say cleanliness is a problem that needs to be addressed, however.

The annual survey was conducted and released by Downtown Clean & Safe, an affiliate of the Portland Business Alliance that works to improve downtown livability. Among other things, the survey found downtown employment increased by 2 percent between 2015 and 2016.

The 2016 Downtown Business Census & Survey also found wages in the downtown area increased 6 percent and the number of downtown businesses increased 4 percent.

"The continued growth in jobs and wages is great news for downtown Portland," said Peter Andrews, chair of the Downtown Clean & Safe board and a broker at Melvin Mark Companies.

"Similar to past years, we saw employment increase in the technology sector, a booming industry in Portland."

Columbia Sportswear CEO Tim Boyle and other business owners have recently complained that their employees have been harassed by homeless people. Boyle even threatened to move his company's Sorel store out of downtown, prompting Mayor Ted Wheeler to designate a high-pedestrian zone around it — commonly called a no-sit zone. That prompted a protest in front of Columbia Sportswear's nearby flagship store on Saturday.

But when asked about safety in downtown, 95 percent of respondents said they feel downtown is safe. Despite that, Andrews praised Wheeler for his response.

"While this progress indicates that employment in downtown is thriving, we continue to work on Portland's livability issues. It is encouraging that Mayor Wheeler is addressing these concerns by announcing the city will implement additional tools to impact Portland's livability issues, such as high-pedestrian zones and expanded police walking patrols," Andrews said.

At the same time, when asked about cleanliness downtown, half of respondents said it needs improvement. The need for improved cleanliness has increased from 29 percent in 2014 to 50 percent in 2016.

Andrews said the Clean & Safe program is responding to those concerns.

"The Clean & Safe board recently made a number of investments to immediately address downtown cleanliness, including a 30 percent increase in staffing for mobile cleaning units, which are staffed by formerly homeless individuals contracted through Central City Concern's employment programs. Also, by summer 2018, we will have installed more garbage cans downtown, with the city providing more frequent collection. We look forward to continuing our work with the mayor and other elected leaders to ensure downtown is welcoming for business owners, employees and visitors alike," Andrews said.

Other key report findings include:

Employment in the downtown area grew from 97,281 to 99,031 jobs between 2015 and 2016.

Total wages increased from \$6,843,920,476 to \$7,251,758,831.6 from 2015 to 2016.

Businesses in downtown increased from 4,770 to 4,958 between 2015 and 2016.

Sectors with the most notable employee increases include Finance and Insurance, Professional Scientific and Technical Services, as well as Educational Services, and Accommodation and Food Services.

Sectors with the most notable increase in the number of businesses downtown include Information, as well as Professional Scientific and Technical Services.

Top factors influencing businesses locating or staying in downtown include: 1) central location; 2) proximity to other businesses; and 3) access to public transportation.

Areas identified that need to be addressed include 1) transients, 2) panhandlers, and 3) parking.

The number of people taking public transportation continues to drop, while driving alone is rising; currently 53 percent of downtown workers drive.

The number of bike commuters remains unchanged from 2015 at 5 percent.

The Downtown Clean & Safe District conducts the Business Census & Survey each year, surveying employers within the I-405/I-5 loop. The district partners with Prosper Portland on

employment data provided by the state of Oregon. Other survey data is collected using mailed questionnaires, personal follow-up and block-by-block canvassing to obtain a statistically significant survey sample. Survey data was gathered from October 2015 to October 2016.

Visit the Downtown Portland Clean & Safe District website to read complete results of the survey.

Willamette Week

These 6 Cities Are Smarter Than Portland About Housing

By Rachel Monahan

December 6, 2017

If Portland wants to fix its housing crisis, these towns show the way.

In Portland, housing costs are like the weather: Everybody complains, but nobody does anything about it.

Nearly a year ago, Mayor Ted Wheeler and City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly entered City Hall on platforms promising to tackle Portland's affordable housing shortage. Soon, the City Council will wade into its latest plan.

It looks like treating a heart attack with a Band-Aid.

The program, called the "residential infill project," will receive public hearings next year. Wheeler wants to allow duplexes and granny flats in city neighborhoods set aside for single-family homes. His plan has infuriated neighborhood associations and historic preservationists.

Even if successful, the infill project would barely address Portland's housing shortfall. The city Planning Bureau projects the program would add 4,700 duplexes and triplexes by 2035.

That's a fraction of the 120,000 new units of housing Portland will need over 25 years, according to a 2015 analysis by the regional planning agency Metro.

Wheeler and Eudaly have done other things: They passed a requirement that landlords pay tenants' moving expenses after rent hikes and "no-cause" evictions. They've also tried to speed up the process for issuing construction permits, and they've legalized tiny homes and allowed RVs to park in people's driveways.

But even the mayor acknowledges his latest plan is insufficient.

"As a stand-alone [plan to increase housing], it wouldn't make a difference," Wheeler says. "It's a small number. It will not solve the problem."

Portland has to do more—and observers who have watched the crisis deepen say this is no time for half measures.

"In light of our city having declared a housing state of emergency over two years ago, City Hall could be moving a lot faster," says Madeline Kovacs, who coordinates Portland for Everyone, a group advocating land-use reforms and more affordable housing.

"We continue to expect big things out of the mayor, especially since he ran his campaign with the idea of solving the homeless crisis and making housing his No. 1 priority," says Israel Bayer, departing executive director of Street Roots.

If Wheeler wants to do big things, he'll have to look outside Portland. In fact, he'll have to look beyond the West Coast. From Los Angeles to Seattle, housing supply has failed to keep pace with new residents flocking to desirable cities.

"All of our West Coast cities confront severe housing shortages," says Alan Durning, executive director of the Sightline Institute, a Seattle-based think tank. "All of our West Coast cities have political debates that ignore real lessons. The current dialogue ignores places that have built abundant [housing] supplies and do not have rising costs."

Six cities around the globe have tried solutions on a far more ambitious scale. Some are bold, some are small, some are dubious, and others may be impractical. But each of them has demonstrated the kind of outside-the-box thinking that Portland badly needs.

Here they are.

Montreal

The big idea: Allow more row houses.

Imagine the side-by-side walk-ups you see on Sesame Street. Such buildings flourish in East Coast cities: brownstones in Brooklyn, row houses in Philadelphia, townhouses in Washington, D.C. Houses with shared walls cost less to build and are a more efficient use of space.

In Montreal, row houses abound. "People are much more comfortable living in apartments," says urbanist blogger Simon Vallee, a Quebec native who lives in Montreal. "Montreal is a city of low-rise apartment buildings. They're much cheaper to build than high-rise apartments. You can build it fast, and you can build it cheap."

Montreal is now the second-most densely populated large city in Canada. And average monthly rent last year in the city of Montreal was \$658 U.S., according to the latest Canadian census data. The average in the city of Portland is \$1,347, according to the city's 2016 State of Housing report.

How it works:

Percentage of Montreal's housing units in townhouses or apartment buildings that are four stories or less: 75

Percentage of Portland's housing units in townhouses or apartment buildings that are 19 units or less: 25

Would it work in Portland?

Allowing row houses on the scale of Montreal would require massive rezoning. There is no current plan by the City Council to do that.

In Portland neighborhoods, the backlash to residential infill has long been intense.

In the 1980s, developer Phil Morford began tearing down old houses in Northwest Portland and replacing them with row houses. The "Morford houses" were greeted with protests and arson.

Opposition today is nonviolent but no less passionate. The Laurelhurst and Eastmoreland neighborhoods are pursuing federal historic designations to block cottage clusters and garden apartments in single-family neighborhoods. "We believe [infill] does nothing to address our near complete lack affordable housing, which has risen to the level of humanitarian crisis," reads an online petition from the Multnomah Neighborhood Association.

Imagine the complaints about parking if row houses were to go in next door.

Wheeler says: "No. No. I wouldn't advocate that for neighborhoods, because we don't have to do that yet. Fifty years from now, it might be a different story."

Tokyo

The big idea: Massively increase building heights downtown.

In Tokyo, government officials place much fewer restrictions on developers and homeowners. And Tokyo has been able to keep housing prices in check. It costs 4.7 years of the median annual salary to purchase the average home in Tokyo. In Portland, that number is 5.5 years, according to the Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey.

For decades, Tokyo was a low-slung city, much like Portland. But unlike Portland, property owners can tear down old houses as they please. And in recent decades, Tokyo has eased its rules in some trendy downtown districts to allow for much taller skyscrapers.

"Tokyo is fascinating place," says Daniel Kaven, a Portland architect. "They're really vertically developed. You can go into a tall building, go up 10 floors and there's a restaurant."

How it works:

Tallest residential towers currently planned for Tokyo: Two 770-foot-tall, 65-story apartment buildings in Shinjuku's business district. They'll replace 1,000 housing units with 3,200 new apartments on a 12-acre lot.

The height of Portland's biggest planned residential development: 400 feet at the U.S. Post Office site, where 2,400 apartments are planned on 24 acres.

Would it work in Portland?

The maximum height limit in Portland is 460 feet. That's a lower height limit than in any other major West Coast city. Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles all have buildings in the works that will rise higher than 1,000 feet.

Because the Portland area, unlike most other parts of the U.S., limits sprawl—the urban growth boundary restricts development outside the boundary—one might think that if you can't grow outwardly, you should grow upward.

But height has long been a delicate subject in Portland. Residents get agitated at the thought of apartment buildings blocking their view of Mount Hood.

"Portland is known for its historic vistas, most of which disappear in this plan," said West End resident Wendy Rahm, objecting to Portland's central city plan in September at City Hall.

In the Pearl District, residents oppose an apartment building that could block views of the Fremont Bridge.

"It's an eyesore, and it's problematic for a lot of people," said board member Ed O'Rourke of the Pearl District Neighborhood Association in the NW Examiner. "I'm in the north end of the Pearl for one reason, and that's the view."

Kaven, the architect, recently floated constructing the West Coast's tallest building at the Post Office site in the Pearl. The idea wasn't taken seriously at City Hall—because it would be 50 stories taller than the cap allows.

But pressure to go higher is getting some traction in Portland. In October, developers proposed a 400-foot tower along the South Waterfront, designed with help from internationally renowned Japanese architect Kengo Kuma. The project's investors, Portland-based NBP Capital, have asked City Hall to raise the height limit along the waterfront.

Related: A Portland developer dangles the prospect of 500 affordable apartments—in exchange for the right to build high.

Wheeler says: "If price is your only consideration, height is a great strategy." Wheeler has said he favors height increases along transit corridors and in the central city, but said he'd take a wait-and-see approach to the Post Office site.

He has no appetite for eliminating all height caps: "You could put it under livability. We get feedback from everything from view corridors to shadows on public spaces and appropriate levels of density."

Pittsburgh

The big idea: Tax land to spur development.

As a general matter, property taxes are based on the value of land and the buildings on it, in equal measure. But in Pittsburgh, one of the early and few American cities to adopt a "land value tax," property taxes were heavily weighted toward the value of the land over the improvements on the land. This taxing system nudges owners of vacant lots or underdeveloped property to build and build sooner.

In short, a vacant property became a tax burden: It produces no revenue (or, in the case of a parking lot, little revenue) but is taxed as if it did. So the owner is spurred to build or sell.

"It incentivizes more intense development and takes pressure off the urban growth boundary," says Tom Gihring of Common Ground OR-WA, which has long advocated a land value tax.

In one of the most definitive studies of the subject, a 1997 article in the National Tax Journal, Pittsburgh, which ultimately repealed its citywide land value tax in 2000, saw a 70 percent increase in building permits in the decade following the adoption of the land value tax as a vast majority of similar Rust Belt cities without such a tax saw dramatic declines in permits.

How it works:

Property tax paid by the owners of a 10,000-square-foot vacant lot on Portland's Northeast Alberta Street: \$469

Estimated tax the owners would pay under a system like Pittsburgh's: Upwards of \$25,000

Urban Cities City Pittsburgh Pennsylvania Pnc Park (Max Pixel) Urban Cities City Pittsburgh Pennsylvania Pnc Park (Max Pixel)

Would it work in Portland?

If there's anything Portland hates more than skyscrapers, it's a wasteland of parking.

Portland could call this plan the Goodman tax. The Goodman family is among the largest land owners in the central city. Roughly 5 of their acres consist mostly of parking lots, which they have just begun to develop.

"It's flipping the script on how the property tax works," says Joshua Vincent of the Philadelphia-based Center for the Study of Economics, noting that regular tax structures have perverse incentives. "If you do the right thing, if you build affordable housing, you are putting a lot of

money and providing housing, you're going to be punished by really high taxes. We reward the vacant lots."

Wheeler says: "It's really interesting what [Pittsburgh] is trying to do—put the tax on the land, not on the construction. You want to discourage large landholdings in your central core that don't have housing. It makes really good sense from the logic perspective.

"Now the reality check: I've been advocating for property tax reform for how long? The chances of a complete radical reframe of the property tax system in Oregon is somewhere between zero and zero."

New Orleans

The big idea: Ban Airbnb, at least in some neighborhoods.

In 2016, New Orleans legalized the short-term rental marketplace Airbnb, just like Portland did two years previously. But New Orleans kept a ban on short-term rentals in one part of the city, the French Quarter, where the city wanted to retain the historic character and longtime residents in its most iconic neighborhood. Before then, short-term rentals had flourished illegally in the French Quarter.

"They've done a great job of enforcing the ban in the French Quarter," says Meg Lousteau of Vieux Carré Property Owners, Residents and Associates. "The impact of the ban has been hundreds of housing units are being returned to the market as actual units. Those are options for people who live here."

New Orleans has a powerful hotel industry, which lobbied for the Airbnb crackdown. But it is also keenly aware of how hard it is to pay rent in a city where median incomes are in decline.

And it isn't the only city to place restrictions on Airbnb. New York City has simply banned renting out entire apartments in large buildings.

How it works:

Area of New Orleans where Airbnb is banned: Most of the French Quarter, roughly 423 acres.

That's roughly the size of Laurelhurst or the King neighborhood.

Would it work in Portland?

A recent estimate shows short-term rentals remove up to 1,391 units from the city's housing market, according to June 2017 data from Inside Airbnb, an industry watchdog.

Portland has struggled to regulate Airbnb. The city has rules for short-term rentals, but Airbnb hasn't agreed to ban scofflaws from its website or hand over addresses of homes being rented out.

Portland doesn't have one particular tourist destination where Airbnb is wreaking outsized havoc. But New Orleans provides a useful model of what might happen if Portland took enforcement seriously: More apartments would go back on the market.

Airbnb spokeswoman Laura Rillos says the company has voluntarily removed 500 illicit listings—but is open to further discussions with City Hall about reforms.

Wheeler says: "I'm not prepared to do that. But as Airbnb grows, we reserve the right to regulate."

Singapore

The big idea: Increase public housing dramatically.

This is Portland—a leftist hotbed. What if we bypassed capitalism altogether?

In Singapore, 80 percent of the housing is developed by the government.

The small, autocratic nation-state builds the housing and sets the prices, sells homes and condos to citizens, and places heavy restrictions to limit real estate speculation.

"On average, buyers can expect to use less than a quarter of their monthly household income to pay for the mortgage installment of their first flat, a figure lower than the international benchmarks for affordable housing," says the Singapore government's Housing and Development Board.

The price of an average home is 4.8 times the average annual income, according to the Demographia International Housing Affordability Survey. That's in line with Tokyo, and cheaper than Portland.

How it works:

Percentage of Singapore residents who live in public housing: 80 percent

Percentage of Portland residents who lived in some kind of public housing or publicly subsidized housing in 2015: 8 percent

Would it work in Portland?

There's certainly political will for some public housing: Portlanders passed a \$258 million housing bond last November to subsidize apartments for people who can't pay market rates.

And to be sure, affordable housing advocates are fans. "We cannot begin to climb out of this crisis without securing large-scale investments in deeply affordable housing," says Kari Lyons, director of the Welcome Home Coalition, which advocated for the housing bond.

"Public housing is an infrastructure that we should think about just like our roads and bridges and our parks to have a healthy society," says Street Roots' Bayer.

That said, public housing represents 8 percent of the living units in the city right now. It's hard to imagine that number growing by more than a few percentage points.

Wheeler says: "It's a completely different form of government. They built

tall and they built dense, and that's what we're trying to do in the central city. We should be building more public housing."

Chicago

The big idea: Cut red tape.

By speeding up the permitting process, it takes Chicago as little as 90 days to approve building permits for high-rises, according to city figures. Part of Chicago's process is overseen by private contractors. In Portland, it's at least seven months. Neither figure takes into account the design review process, which is far less onerous in Chicago—as little as two months, according to a consultant.

Greater central Chicago grew the number of housing units by 50 percent between 2000 and 2010, according to Daniel Kay Hertz, senior policy analyst at the Chicago's Center for Tax and Budget

Accountability, and in one neighborhood, South Loop, condo prices didn't keep pace with inflation.

How it works:

Standard time for a high-rise building to be permitted in Chicago: 5+ months

Standard time for a high-rise building to go through design review and permitting in Portland: 12 to 18 months

Would it work in Portland?

Everyone agrees Portland's permit system is slow: politicians, architects and, of course, developers.

Jeff Smith, founder of J.T. Smith Companies, told the Portland Tribune last month he would no longer build in the city. The reason: He's waited more than two years for various city bureaus to approve new lot lines in East Portland. (Bureau of Development Services officials say some delays are J.T. Smith's fault.)

"It takes less time to change the Oregon state constitution," says another builder.

BDS director Rebecca Esau says Portland differs from Chicago because state law gives neighborhood a say on design. "That does add time to the process," says Esau, "but it also helps enrich the process."

If no one disagrees the system is broken, they can't agree why: whether it's finding qualified employees in the midst of a housing boom or years of bureau mismanagement. Eudaly, who now oversees the bureau, says she's made some reforms and is trying to get city bureaus to work together. "Unfortunately, our form of city government doesn't encourage cooperation," she adds.

Wheeler says: He wants reforms. "Time is money for developers. The longer their permit stays hung up in the bureaucracy, the more risk there is the project will never be started."

Murmurs: Rothko Pavilion Nears Portland City Council Approval

*By WW Staff
December 6, 2017*

In other news: Attempt to sandbag a new state lawmaker fails.

Rothko Pavilion Nears City Approval

A planned \$50 million Rothko Pavilion at the Portland Art Museum looks like a done deal, despite criticism of closing a bicycle and walking path. WW reported the museum had raised \$27 million for the expansion without securing the permission of the City Council to take over the city-owned right of way. But on Dec. 7, the council is expected to approve the pavilion, after the museum promised people would be able to walk through the building where the walkway currently sits. "What sealed it for me was, they have a chance to be one of the most accessible art museums on the West Coast," says City Commissioner Nick Fish.

Attempt to Block New State Lawmaker Fails

Oregon's newest state legislator, Rep. Jeff Helfrich (R-Hood River), will be sworn into office this week, despite the best efforts of unknown forces inside Multnomah County to block him from

taking a seat that Democrats hope to win in next year's election. Helfrich was one of three candidates to replace Rep. Mark Johnson (R-Hood River), who resigned for another job. But somebody at Multnomah County—the county attorney's office will not say who—asked for a last-minute legal opinion on whether Helfrich could serve as both a sheriff's deputy and a lawmaker. "I believe a deputy sheriff is likely...barred from serving as a state legislator," wrote senior assistant county attorney Carlos J. Calandriello. That opinion is not binding and flies in the face of recent precedents—including former state Rep. Randy Leonard (D-Portland), who served as a lawmaker while a city firefighter.

Businesses Ask City to Give Up Trademark Battles

Business owners in Old Town are urging Mayor Ted Wheeler to abandon a city effort to trademark the "Portland Oregon" sign. The city's federal trademark applications have been denied in the past for use on beer and alcohol because a local brewery, Old Town Brewing, already owns a confusingly similar trademark for the leaping stag image. "Tell your city staffers to stop filing trademark application after trademark application for an image that the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office has repeatedly determined is confusing," Dan Lenzen, president of the Old Town Hospitality Group, wrote to the mayor last week. "It is wrong and an abuse of power to attempt to bury Old Town Brewing in legal fees." Wheeler's office says the city is working toward a solution to the trademark dispute that is "mutually agreeable" to both the city and the brewery.

Give!Guide Tops \$1 Million in Donations

WW's annual Give!Guide is live and accepting donations at giveguide.org. Giving has topped \$1.2 million. If attendees make a donation at this week's happy hour (Siren and the Sea, 6:30 pm at White Owl Social Club), they'll have a chance to win a Poler tent, \$75 to Mississippi Studios or a case of Brew Dr. Kombucha.

The Portland Mercury

A Portland Cop Was Fired For Sexual Assault Last Year. A Discipline Board Originally Cleared Them

*By Doug Brown
December 5, 2017*

A Portland Police Bureau cop was fired last year after accusations that they raped a person who was too drunk to consent to sex in 2015.

Records show that the internal PPB discipline board unanimously voted to clear the accused cop of wrongdoing for the off-duty rape allegation—there were "conflicting witnesses statements," it says—while also suspending the cop for one week based on the same encounter for having "sexual contact" with a person after the person had been drinking at a party the cop hosted. Specifically, the Police Review Board said the cop wasn't in violation of PPB rules requiring professional conduct for the rape allegation (implying what happened wasn't rape), but did act unprofessionally by having sex with a person who was drinking when they didn't "ask additional questions before engaging in sexual contact."

Then-Chief Mike Marshman overruled the PRB on the rape allegation and fired the cop, records show. He agreed with the board it was unprofessional to have sex with a person who was

drinking. The cop, the report says, regularly responded to "domestic violence and date rape calls while on duty," and should have known better, records say.

The revelations are a part of a twice-yearly summary of investigations ruled on by the PRB, the internal PPB discipline board. The maddeningly vague reports do not reveal cops' names, ranks, genders, or any other information about who an accused cop could be. In this specific case, we also don't know in which jurisdiction the alleged rape happened, the status of any criminal investigation into the rape, or the gender of the person who reported the rape.

PPB spokesman Sgt. Chris Burley refused to elaborate on the details of the case. The Mercury has filed a public records request for documents from the case.

In the PRB report, the cop is known as "Employee #1" and the person alleging rape is known as "complainant." The summary of the complaint (emphasis mine):

Complainant alleged Employee #1, while off duty, had oral sex and intercourse with complainant while complainant was unable to consent during a party at a party at Employee #1's home. Complainant went to the hospital to have a sexual assault examination the following day and reported the incident to the local jurisdiction. Detectives from the local jurisdiction conducted an investigation.

Again, we don't know what jurisdiction this happened in—it's implied that it's not in Portland—or the status of any criminal case. We just know that a person promptly went to a hospital to get a sexual assault examination and reported to the local authorities what happened.

The PRB ruled there wasn't enough evidence to prove the first allegation—"While off-duty, Employee #1 had oral sex and sexual intercourse while complainant was unable to consent due to complainant's level of intoxication." The PRB's reasoning:

The PRB unanimously recommended a finding of not sustained based on the preponderance of the evidence from the record. The record highlighted conflicting results.

But the reasoning for why four of five PRB members voted to suspend him for a week for the second allegation—that the cop "acted unprofessionally and in a manner tending to bring reproach or discredit to the Police Bureau and the City by having sexual contact with complainant after complainant had consumed alcohol"—implies they knew the encounter wasn't consensual. It also implies that some of the discipline was because the allegation can become public "and result in reproach toward the city."

Here's the summary of the majority opinion on the second allegation (emphasis mine):

Four members of the Board recommend a finding of sustained saying Employee #1's decision-making was poor, as evidenced by Employee #1's own statements. They said any officer, including Employee #1, who has responded to domestic violence and date rape calls while on duty should have acted prudently and asked additional questions before engaging in any sexual contact. Members also said there was a nexus with the Bureau because issues of sexual assault can easily move from the private to public realm and result in reproach toward the City. Two members agreed that the issues of honesty and integrity apply regardless of whether they are on or off duty and it affects decision-making. The two members said Employee #1's behavior did not meet the standard of reasonable rules of good conduct and Employee #1 did not seem to recognize this during the internal affairs investigation.

One PRB member voted to not punish the cop for the second allegation as well because, they said, the "investigation left many questions unanswered" and it's "unknown what exactly happened." It's unclear what investigation the person was referring to: the criminal investigation

by the local law enforcement, or the internal affairs investigation. The PRB member also said both the accused rapist and the alleged rape victim "have credibility issues."

To summarize: The PRB unanimously said there wasn't enough evidence that the cop had non-consensual sex, but, in the same encounter, four out of five of them said there was enough evidence to prove the cop had sex with a person who was drinking and didn't ask enough questions ahead of time.

They voted to suspend him for a week, "due to aggravating factors, including previous policy violations resulting from poor decision-making on duty and poor decision-making in this off-duty case which could have resulted in harm."

Then-Chief Marshman, "disagreed with the PRB's recommended finding for Allegation 1 and found the allegation sustained," the PRB summary says, meaning he believes the evidence more likely than not pointed to sexual assault. He fired the cop, it says.

Portland's Got a New Tribal Liaison—After Losing the Last One in a Muddle

*By Dirk VanderHart
December 5, 2017*

A year after the position got lost in the shuffle of Mayor Ted Wheeler's transition to power, Portland has a new tribal liaison.

Wheeler's office has announced the hiring of Laura John, who's been tapped to act as the city's central liaison to nearby tribal governments and to assist Portlanders of Native American descent. She'll also be tasked with creating a Portland Native American Policy Commission.

After years of urging, then-Mayor Charlie Hales tapped the city's first-ever tribal liaison last year, an attorney and former tribal judge named Patricia Gibson. But as the Mercury has reported, Gibson's position didn't last long. She told the Mercury she wasn't contacted by Wheeler's transition team, and resigned before she could be let go. The position has been vacant since December 28 of last year.

Wheeler's office told us earlier this year they'd be conducting a recruitment to fill the position, which they clearly have. According to a press release, John is a descendent of the Blackfeet and Seneca nations with a long history of working with Native communities. Her LinkedIn profile lists her as being employed at Education Northwest.

Unlike Gibson, John won't be a part of Wheeler's staff. The tribal liaison position has been moved to the city's Office of Government Relations. John began her new job November 29, and will make \$80,080 a year, plus benefits.

Hit the jump for the full release.

PORTLAND, OR – Laura John, a descendent of the Blackfeet and Seneca Nations, began work as the City of Portland's Tribal Liaison. John will act as the primary representative of the Mayor, elected City Council and all bureaus and offices in relationships with sovereign Tribal governments and the urban Native American community.

"I am humbled to be selected for this position," John shared. "It is truly a privilege to serve the community that I grew up in. I look forward to elevating the voice of the Portland Native community through outreach, inclusion, and representation."

John has worked in American Indian Communities for the past 20 years; she was previously a researcher and program evaluator for the National Indian Child Welfare Association, an early career scientist for the Native American Research Center of Health, and coordinated a child abuse prevention program for the Native American Rehabilitation Association in Portland, Oregon.

John was a State Policy Fellow with the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, during which time she served as the State-Tribal Policy Analyst for the Montana Budget & Policy Center and worked closely with Native American state legislators and elected tribal leaders in Montana. She holds undergraduate degrees in Portland State University and Haskell Indian Nations University, and graduate degrees Washington State University and the University of Montana.

"I heard from the robust and diverse Native communities in Portland about the critical importance of the Tribal Liaison position. Laura has a history of being a strong advocate for American Indian and Alaska Native communities," said Mayor Ted Wheeler. "Her experience and existing close ties with the Portland Native American community will help us form more meaningful relationships and work together to create solutions."

Rep. Tawna Sanchez (HD 43 - North and Northeast Portland) and Director of Family Services at the Native American Youth and Family Center commented, "I am thrilled to hear that Laura has been selected to serve as the Tribal Liaison for the City of Portland. I have known her for many years and see her new position as a wonderful opportunity to develop partnerships with Portland's Native community and tribes."

The Tribal Liaison assists the City Council and all City bureaus in strengthening relationships and coordinating overall policy development with Tribal Governments and the American Indian/Alaska Native community in Portland. The position acts as a primary point of contact for City Council and all city bureaus and offices and is charged with establishing the Portland Native American Advisory Commission.

The Tribal Liaison will report to the Director of Government Relations and hold a full-time position within the Office of Government Relations.

A New 200-Bed Shelter in Old Town Is Inching Forward

*By Dirk VanderHart
December 5, 2017*

Plans to create what could be Portland's largest permanent homeless shelter are pressing forward, despite neighborhood opposition and a city commitment to not expand social services in Old Town.

On November 20, architects representing Multnomah County filed an application [PDF] with the city's code-enforcement office, asking for early assistance as the county works toward building a 200-bed shelter in an abandoned warehouse at 320 NW Hoyt.

The application, filed by Carleton Hart Architecture, is essentially a request for the city to answer detailed zoning questions before the project moves forward. Included are queries about whether portions of the zoning code can be waived under Portland's ongoing housing emergency declaration, and what type of review is required.

But the county also has a more interesting question, too: It wants assurances from the city that the new 200-bed shelter won't run afoul of the city's planning goals.

As the Mercury reported in September, the city has for decades committed to a "no-net gain" policy in Old Town. Though the commitment has taken different forms, its central tenet has remained the same: Portland officials have said they will not meaningfully increase social services offerings in Old Town, which has long held more than its fair share of shelters, single-room occupancy buildings, and meal services for the destitute.

Current language in the city's Central City Plan states that the city will "limit the significant expansion of these services and do not locate additional major social services in the district." Obviously, the addition of 200 new shelter beds could compromise that commitment. County officials are arguing it shouldn't.

Picking up a line of reasoning voiced earlier this year by Mayor Ted Wheeler's office, the county says the recent relocation of homeless services in the district has created room. Earlier this year self-managed homeless rest area Right 2 Dream Too, which took in roughly 70 people a night, relocated across the river. Meanwhile the Royal Palm Hotel, comprised of roughly 50 beds of transitional housing and dormitory living, has closed.

Now Multnomah County is including another Old Town social service in the deal. According to the documents filed with the city, a 75-bed women's shelter in the neighborhood, known as the Safety Off the Streets shelter, would be closed, and its beds would be folded into the new Hoyt Street facility.

"The new shelter will compensate for the loss of shelter beds in the neighborhood and will not significantly expand social service and shelter functions in the district," the county's application says. "Can you confirm or comment on these assumptions?"

Even if the city okay's the county's reasoning, it's unlikely Old Town stakeholders will. The Old Town Chinatown Community Association sent a letter to city and county officials in September, arguing a new shelter would hurt the neighborhood businesses, make it less safe, and run afoul of the city's promises.

"Locating the City's largest permanent shelter in Old Town Chinatown will have a long-term, detrimental economic impact to the neighborhood," part of the letter read, "and counteract efforts by the City and private entities to revitalize the district."

It's unclear when—or even if—the new shelter might spring up in Old Town. Though the county's Joint Office of Homeless Services (JOHS) has not been shy about insisting a new facility is necessary and could be beneficial to the neighborhood, the county's been wrapped up in negotiations over leasing the property for months. "Part of the reason to go for the pre-app now is: Before we go for anything down the road, let's see what the city is going to require. Let's get the bad things out of the way."

"This is moving; this is going down the road," says JOHS spokesperson Denis Theriault.

The Skanner

City Announces Laura John as Tribal Liason

December 5, 2017

Mayor Ted Wheeler's office announced the hiring of new tribal liason Laura John, a descendent of the Blackfeet and Seneca Nations.

John, who has worked in American Indian communities for the past 20 years, was previously a researcher and program evaluator for the National Indian Child Welfare Association.

In keeping with her broad history of community engagement, she was also an early career scientist for the Native American Research Center of Health, and coordinated a child abuse prevention program for the Native American Rehabilitation Association in Portland.

“I am humbled to be selected for this position,” John said. “It is truly a privilege to serve the community that I grew up in.”

As the city's tribal liaison, she will assist the city council and all city bureaus in strengthening relationships and coordinating overall policy development with tribal governments and the American Indian/Alaska Native community in Portland. Additionally, she'll be tasked with establishing a Portland Native American Advisory Commission.

"Laura has a history of being a strong advocate for American Indian and Alaska Native communities," said Mayor Ted Wheeler. "Her experience and existing close ties with the Portland Native American community will help us form more meaningful relationships and work together to create solutions."

The tribal liaison reports to the Director of Government Relations and hold a full-time position within the Office of Government Relations.

OPB

In Lieu Of Paris Agreement, Mayor Wheeler Joins Other Cities In Signing Climate Charter

*By Ericka Cruz Guevarra
December 5, 2017*

In lieu of the nation's withdrawal from an international agreement on climate change, 50 municipal leaders from around the country, including Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler, signed a charter Tuesday committing their cities to emissions reductions.

Leaders attending the North American Climate Summit in Chicago this week signed a charter aligning with the commitments of the Paris Climate Agreement, despite President Donald Trump's withdrawal from the accords earlier this year.

“I'm proud to represent the people of Portland's commitment to the challenge of climate change and sign the #ChicagoCharter with my fellow @c40cities' Mayors. #cities4climate #wearestillin,” Wheeler tweeted.

Portland joins a list of cities and states across the country that are acting in direct contrast — and even independence from — the Trump administration on federal matters like climate change.

“Donald Trump and his administration are attempting to take us backwards on climate change,” Wheeler said. “By signing the Chicago Climate Charter, Portland is standing up for our values and making progress despite our backwards president.”

In June, Trump announced the U.S' withdrawal from the historic global climate agreement reached in 2015, joining only two countries, Syria and Nicaragua, in rejecting the deal. The Paris accords set targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and limiting the rise in average global temperatures.

Trump called the agreement a “draconian” international deal.

The Chicago Climate Charter, signed Tuesday, commits cities to carbon emissions reductions in line with the Paris accords. In signing the charter, cities also commit to tracking and publicly reporting city emissions.

“This Charter is a great example of how cities are working together and encouraging one another to aim higher, and it will add momentum to America’s progress fighting climate change,” said America’s Pledge Co-Chair Michael R. Bloomberg and former mayor of New York City.

“All the U.S. cities signing the charter are making commitments in support of America’s Pledge, which sends a strong signal to the world that we will keep moving forward toward our Paris goal, with or without Washington.”

Former President Barack Obama was invited to the summit and addressed the mayors, which included Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo and San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee.

Wheeler’s office said more initiatives that utilize technology to achieve carbon emissions reductions in Portland should be expected in the coming months and years.