

## **The Oregonian**

# **Portland Mayor Ousts Housing Bureau Director Kurt Creager**

*By Jessica Floum  
December 7, 2017*

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler ousted his Housing Bureau director, Kurt Creager, Thursday, making Creager the sixth Portland bureau director to leave since Wheeler took office in January. Creager's last day will be Friday.

Kurt Creager has led the housing bureau since July 2015.

The decision is the latest major action Wheeler has taken since naming himself housing commissioner in January. He campaigned on a promise to increase Portland's affordable housing supply and to help house the city's growing homeless population, but came under fire in August for moving too slowly to deliver.

The mayor and Creager had clashed over how best to spend a \$258 million affordable housing bond passed by voters in November, three city hall officials told The Oregonian/OregonLive this summer. The mayor had concerns about the management and financial reporting related to the first affordable housing complex purchased using bond money.

Wheeler also had admonished Creager to prioritize the mayor's housing priorities over those of other city commissioners.

In August, the mayor moved Shannon Callahan, a long-time aide to commissioner Dan Saltzman, into an assistant director role at the housing bureau, sparking speculation in City Hall that Wheeler planned to replace Creager. Callahan will serve as interim housing bureau director, mayoral spokesman Michael Cox said.

"Kurt has been a tremendous asset as we work to add more affordable housing units in Portland and implement stronger protections for tenants," Wheeler said in a statement.

A long-time housing administrator and policy wonk, Creager has led the Portland Housing Bureau since July 2015, when then-housing commissioner Saltzman hired him.

"He certainly has an enormous grasp on all the complexities of doing housing in terms of putting together all streams of money to make things happen," Saltzman said. "He's had great vision and has been a good leader."

During Creager's tenure, the city council declared a housing state of emergency and established the Joint Office of Homeless Services with Multnomah County, which dedicated about \$25 million a year of city money and four city staffers to finding shelter and housing for people experiencing homelessness in Portland.

The declaration led to significantly increased spending on developing and preserving affordable housing. The council bumped urban renewal spending on affordable housing up by \$270 million, directed that money collected from short-term rental taxes go toward housing and funded a voucher program to help prevent evictions. The city council renewed the declared emergency in August.

In February, newcomer commissioner and former housing advocate Chloe Eudaly introduced a tenant protection policy, unanimously adopted by the city council, that requires landlords to pay

relocation expenses to tenants whom they evict without cause or who must move as a result of a rent increase of 10 percent or more.

Creager was charged with appointing a group of renters and landlords to iron out the details of the policy. He was also charged with setting up an office of renter-owner services and collecting countywide eviction data.

The city council also adopted and Creager implemented a preference policy that gives Portlanders displaced from North and Northeast Portland priority to rent certain housing in the area.

During Creager's two years as housing director, the Portland Housing Bureau increased the number of affordable homes from 700 to 2,000.

"It has been a great honor to serve as the director of the Portland Housing Bureau," Creager wrote in his resignation letter. "Bureau staff, management and I have worked tirelessly for the people of Portland."

The city will pay Creager \$96,715, or seven months' salary, to leave so long as Creager, 63, waives his right to sue the city or its employees for age discrimination or anything else, according to a severance agreement obtained by The Oregonian/OregonLive through a records request.

The city will pay up to six months of health insurance.

"It is expressly acknowledged that the decision to separate from city employment is not associated with individual characteristics or performance," the agreement said.

But a memo the mayor sent Creager in August, obtained by The Oregonian/OregonLive through a records request, suggests that he and Creager were at odds.

The memo said the mayor had concerns related to Creager's management of staff, failure to deliver a strategic plan, spending of the affordable housing bond and failure to prioritize the mayor's housing agenda over other commissioners'.

The memo criticized Creager for "micro-managing" Callahan, the housing bureau's new assistant director of policy and strategy. Callahan was copied on the August 31 memo.

In his memo, the mayor also requested weekly updates on how Creager planned to spend the housing bond. He emphasized the need to communicate better about The Ellington, an affordable housing complex with 263 apartments in Northeast Portland and the first major purchase using bond proceeds.

Creager wrote in a response to the mayor's office that communication within the bureau and with the mayor's office was "very good and improving." He noted, however, that the structure of the mayor's office meant the housing director would often have to talk to multiple mayoral staffers in order to understand the mayor's expectations.

At least three City Hall officials told The Oregonian in August that the Ellington purchase started Wheeler and Creager off on the wrong foot.

At the request of Saltzman, then the housing commissioner, the City Council unanimously approved spending bond money to buy the Ellington complex buildings last December.

The next month, in one of his first acts as mayor, Wheeler halted all housing bond spending.

The mayor, City Hall insiders said, thought the housing director should have waited to spend the bond proceeds, knowing that Wheeler planned to make affordable housing a top policy priority.

The mayor's memo also expressed concerns about the project's finances, though it did not mention specific problems. In his response, Creager wrote that the housing bureau changed the Ellington's management company and that "the issues of vacancy and timely financial statements had improved."

Creager declined to comment on his leaving.

"I wish Kurt all the best as he moves on from his time with the city," Wheeler said in a statement.

## **Portland's Office of Equity and Human Rights Director Dante James Leaving**

*By Jessica Floum  
December 7, 2017*

Portland's Office of Equity and Human Rights director is leaving, the mayor announced in a press release Thursday. Dante James's last day will be December 15.

James decided to leave the city so that he could pursue options in Denver, where his wife and son are, the director told The Oregonian/OregonLive Thursday. He turned in his notice at the end of last month.

"It was always my desire to lay the foundations and institutionalize this work, but Portland was never my next long-term home," James said.

Created in 2011, the equity office works with other city bureaus to create policies and best practices to break down systemic barriers for people of color and people with disabilities around the city and within the city's own workforce.

Former Mayor Sam Adams and Commissioner Amanda Fritz hired James in 2012.

James said his accomplishments at the city were not always quantifiable or policy-related. He's most proud, he said, of the dialogue that's been started.

"The conversation around racial equity and disability equity is now just a part of the norm," James said. "It's in the lexicon of how the city talks and evaluates everything that it does."

James will be the seventh bureau director to leave since Mayor Ted Wheeler took office in January. The mayor's office announced his departure in the same press release in which staffers disclosed that Portland Housing Bureau Director Kurt Creager is leaving.

"Dante's work was instrumental in creating the budget equity tool, and our plan to enhance equitable workforce development in city construction projects through the Community Equity and Inclusion Plan, which was unanimously adopted by (the) city council this year, among many accomplishments," Wheeler said in a statement. "His leadership at the helm of (the equity office) will be missed."

Koffi "Jean-Pierre" Dessou will serve as interim bureau director. Currently a program manager at the equity office, Dessou has worked for 23 years for public and private organizations, including for the U.S. Department of State at the American Embassy in Togo for 16 years.

"The office will be in good stead and continue to do its work under his leadership quite well," James said.

# Seven Portland Leaders Leave in One Year, Three Pushed Out by Mayor Ted Wheeler

*By Jessica Floum  
December 8, 2017*

The faces of Portland government leadership are changing. Since Mayor Ted Wheeler started his term in January, seven of the city's bureau directors have left or announced plans to leave.

The mayor axed three of them himself. Freshman Commissioner Chloe Eudaly also ousted the directors of her two bureaus.

Altogether, the city paid upwards of \$700,000 in total severance this year to get rid of a fifth of the city's 27 bureau directors.

Keep scrolling to see which bureau directors are out.

## **Lisa Turley**

Bureau of Emergency Communications

Time in role: 11 years

Last day: March 31, 2017

In March, the long-time director of the city's 911 call center, Lisa Turley, retired. Her departure followed much controversy after a city ombudsman reported that more than 18,000 calls to 911 fell through the cracks. The bureau also struggled to retain employees. In June, the city ombudsman reported that Turley knowingly reported falsely rosy data on wait times to the city council. Turley did not get severance pay from Portland, but the city paid her as much as \$40,000 to stay on an extra three months.

## **Amalia Alarcon de Morris**

Office of Neighborhood Involvement

Time in role: 11 years

Last day: March 20, 2017

In on one of her first major bureau management acts, Commissioner Chloe Eudaly in March ousted Amalia Alarcon de Morris, the long-time director of the Office of Neighborhood Involvement. The city paid Alarcon de Morris \$144,000 to quietly resign after a scathing November 2016 audit found the bureau lacked leadership and spent funding unequally.

## **Paul Scarlett**

Bureau of Development Services

Time in role: 12 years

Last day: April 14, 2017

Eudaly ousted her second bureau director in April. Bureau of Development Services Director Paul Scarlett got paid \$183,000 to leave after running the building permit office for almost 12 years. His departure followed a City Budget Office report criticizing the bureau for causing delays in the permitting and inspection process. The bureau had also had years of unfilled job

vacancies, low staff morale, poor customer service and a boondoggle of a technology project that cost the city at least \$8 million.

### **Mike Marshman**

Portland Police Bureau

Time in role: 1 year

Last day: August 7, 2017

Wheeler campaigned on a promise to conduct a national search to find a police chief who would change the culture of the Portland Police Bureau and help restore public trust in law enforcement, especially among African Americans. Wheeler made good on that promise in August, when he hired Danielle Outlaw, an African American woman from the Oakland Police Department. Wheeler offered then-Police Chief Mike Marshman an opportunity to stay on in a lesser role, but he turned it down. Marshman's ouster followed a year of tension between protesters and the police, during which police used tear gas and rubber bullets to control crowds.

### **Anna Kanwit**

Bureau of Human Resources

Time in role: 5 ½ years

Last day: November 30, 2017

Anna Kanwit abruptly announced her retirement in November. Wheeler's Chief Administrative Officer Tom Rinehart said in a statement that his office had intentionally hired Serilda Summers-McGee to replace Kanwit. The city paid Kanwit \$195,000 to step down.

### **Kurt Creager**

Portland Housing Bureau

Time in role: 2 years

Last day: December 8, 2017

The mayor on Thursday ousted Portland Housing Director Kurt Creager, making Creager the third director the mayor has axed in his first year. The decision came months after Wheeler came under fire for move too slowly on his housing agenda. In August, the mayor moved long-time City Hall aide Shannon Callahan into an assistant director role at the housing bureau, raising speculation in City Hall that Wheeler intended to replace Creager. The city paid Creager about \$97,000 to leave.

### **Dante James**

Office of Equity and Human Rights

Time in role: 5 years

Last day: December 15, 2017

The mayor also announced on Thursday the departure of Dante James, director of Portland's Office of Equity and Human Rights. James put in his resignation last month after deciding to move back to Denver where his wife and son are.

## **The Portland Tribune**

# **Wheeler: Portland housing, Human Rights Directors Leaving**

*By Jim Redden*

*December 7, 2017*

The mayor's office is establishing a process to replace both directors whose departures were announced Thursday.

Mayor Ted Wheeler announced the surprise departures of the directors of two bureaus within his portfolio on Thursday.

Kurt Creager, director of the Bureau of Housing, and Dante James, director of the Office of Equity and Human Rights, are both stepping down in December.

Neither had been widely known to be under formal review or considering leaving.

Creager's last day with the City will be Dec. 8. His bureau is currently one of the most prominent in Portland now because of the City Council's push to build more affordable housing.

Among other things, the PHB is currently reviewing application for projects to be funded by the \$258.4 million affordable housing bond approved by Portland voters at the November 2018 general election. The first are expected to be presented to the council in March.

Although some affordable housing advocates have criticized the time it is taking to submit the applications to the council, much of the delay was caused by Wheeler's appointment of Stakeholder Advisory Group to draft a policy framework for spending the money. After buying an apartment complex before the group was appointed, the PHB still has around \$200 million to spend.

"Kurt has been a tremendous asset as we work to add more affordable housing units in Portland and implement stronger protections for tenants," said Wheeler. "I wish Kurt all the best as he moves on from his time with the City."

Shannon Callahan, currently an assistant housing director, will serve as interim housing director. Callahan has worked closely with the PHB since 2013 in her previous role as policy director for Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who was assigned the PHB at that time. Wheeler appointed Callahan assistant housing director in August.

James's last day with the City will be on Dec. 15.

"Dante's work was instrumental in creating the budget equity tool, and our plan to enhance equitable workforce development in city construction projects through the Community Equity and Inclusion Plan, which was unanimously adopted by City Council this year, among many accomplishments," said Wheeler. "His leadership at the helm of OEHR will be missed."

Koffi "Jean-Pierre" Dessou, currently a program manager in OEHR, will serve as interim bureau director. Dessou has over 23 years of experience in public and private organizations. He worked for the U.S. Department of State at the American Embassy in Togo for 16 years.

According to Wheeler spokesman Michael Cox, the mayor's office is establishing a process to appoint permanent directors of each bureau.

# State Approves Comp Plan Update, Appeal Planned

*By Jim Redden*

*December 7, 2017*

## **Neighborhood association preparing to appeal approval of missing middle housing policy to Land Conservation and Development Commission.**

The controversial update of Portland's Comprehensive Plan moved closer to taking effect on Tuesday when the state Department of Land Conservation and Development rejected all objections filed against it.

The department notified Mayor Ted Wheeler it had approved the update — technically known as periodic review tasks 4 and 5 — in a Dec. 5, 2018 letter.

After the announcement, Mayor Ted Wheeler said, "Portland's new Comprehensive Plan builds on the efforts of the past while guiding Portland to a prosperous, healthy, equitable and resilient future. This Plan will ensure the city will have more housing for Portlanders of all ages and incomes. We will continue to increase family wage jobs, while protecting our environment and addressing climate change. Portland's plan will build healthier neighborhoods and focus on the needs of Portlanders who have long been ignored.

In the press release announcing the approval, department director Jim Rue said, "Portland is an attractive city with lots of people moving there each year. The city council had to make difficult choices about how to best accommodate the expected growth. Our review found the plan to be consistent with the state's requirements for efficient, managed use of land."

The Multnomah Neighborhood Association, which filed one of the most significant objections, is already preparing to appeal the approval to the appointed Land Conservation and Development Commission that oversees the department. The association must file its appeal within 21 days of the approval. The commission could consider the appeal at its March 15-16 meeting in Salem.

The commission's decision can be appealed to the Oregon Court of Appeals.

The association and Northeast Portland neighborhood activist Margaret Davis had objected to the so-called missing middle housing policy inserted in the update late in the planning process by the City Council. It calls for creating a process for the council to consider rezoning large portions of most single-family neighborhoods to all such smaller multifamily developments as duplexes, triplexes and cottage clusters.

Among other things, the association and Davis argued the policy was introduced too late in the process for adequate public comment, as required by state land use planning laws. They also argued the council did not sufficiently justify the need for such housing.

Department staff rejected both arguments, the council received public comment and documentation on the need for the policy before adding it to the update.

"The objections do not demonstrate that the local decisions fail to rely on an adequate factual base or are unreasonable based on the evidence in the whole record," Rob Hallyburton, the department's

community services division manager, wrote in a Dec. 5, 2017 letter to Mayor Ted Wheeler. "All objections to the submittal are determined to be invalid or are rejected. The submittal is approved."

After receiving the letter, association Land Use Committee Chair James Peterson emailed other association members and critics of the proposed policy, saying, "We are reviewing the DLCD review to file an appeal to the DLCD Commission."

The council anticipated the appeal and recently voted to delay the effective day of the update from Jan. 1 of next year to May 24.

The missing middle housing policy to be presented to the council is being developed by the Residential Infill Project within the city's bureau of planning and sustainability. Although it is still being written, the appointed Planning and Sustainability Commission that oversees the bureau is scheduled to hold its first hearing on it on May 8. The council is expected to vote on the final version of the policy by the end of next year.

You can read the department's letter at [www.oregon.gov/LCD/docs/periodic\\_review/Portland/Portland\\_Task4-5\\_ApprovalOrder\\_001982\\_final\\_20171205.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/LCD/docs/periodic_review/Portland/Portland_Task4-5_ApprovalOrder_001982_final_20171205.pdf).

You can read a recent Portland Tribune story on the issue at [portlandtribune.com/pt/9-news/380509-266953-critics-demand-public-vote-on-infill](http://portlandtribune.com/pt/9-news/380509-266953-critics-demand-public-vote-on-infill).

## **ODOT looks at Seven Toll Scenarios**

*By Paris Achen  
December 7, 2017*

**The transportation agency and its consultants will conduct modeling of the different tolling scenarios. None of the models are intended as formal proposals, they say.**

The Oregon Department of Transportation will conduct modeling of seven tolling scenarios along Interstates 5 and 205 to see how the variations would affect traffic and nearby neighborhoods in the metro area in the next 10 years.

The work is the next step for a regional committee charged with coming up with recommendations for how to toll Portland-area freeways. The committee's goal is to offer a plan that would help manage vehicle bottlenecks and raise funds for road improvements.

A \$5.3 billion transportation-funding bill, passed earlier this year, required the Oregon Transportation Commission to consider tolling in the Portland metro area. It is not required to implement tolling.

The committee is scheduled to submit recommendations by June. The decision on a tolling scheme rests with the transportation commission.

It's unlikely that the tolling methods would be uniform along the two interstates, as segments of the freeways have different geographic obstacles, said David Ungemah, a consultant with New York-based transportation engineering and management firm WSP USA.

Options include tolling all lanes of the freeways, tolling an existing lane, possibly in segments; or constructing an additional lane to toll, Ungemah said.

The tolls could be priced at set amounts or dynamically according to congestion or time of day.

The seven scenarios to be modeled are:

- 1) Both interstates would be tolled on all lanes in both directions;

- 2) Both interstates would have one existing lane in each direction converted to a toll lane;
- 3) Both interstates would have an additional toll lane constructed in each direction;
- 4) I-5 would have no toll lanes and I-205 would have one additional lane constructed in each direction that would be tolled;
- 5) I-5 would be tolled on every lane in both directions; no tolls on I-205;
- 6) I-5 would have one existing lane in both directions converted to a toll lane; I-205 would have all lanes in both directions tolled;
- 7) I-5 would have one existing lane in both directions converted to a toll lane; I-205 would have a newly constructed toll lane added in both directions.

ODOT also will analyze how traffic would change on the interstates in the next 10 years if no tolls are imposed.

The modeling would reflect road improvement planned in the next 10 years.

None of the scenarios are formal proposals, Ungemah said.

Members of the committee and the transportation commission intend to hold several public hearings before deciding on a final plan.

The commission also would determine toll rates and exemptions. Toll booths would not be used to charge drivers. Instead, the agency would use transponders to register a charge and license plates identification to send bills to drivers without transponders, Brouwer said.

"That's how Washington's system works."

## **Willamette Week**

### **Portland Housing Bureau Director Kurt Creager Is Leaving Abruptly, and Equity Director Dante James Is Leaving Too**

*By Rachel Monahan  
December 7, 2017*

**Creager given a severance package of \$96,714.94, worth seventh months' salary.**

The Portland Housing Bureau will have new leadership as it embarks next year on spending the \$258 million housing bond approved by voters.

Bureau director Kurt Creager is leaving abruptly. His last official day is tomorrow, the mayor's office announced. He'll received a severance package worth \$96,714.94, worth seven months' salary, according to his severance agreement.

Shannon Callahan, who served as an aide to Commissioner Dan Saltzman until August, will be the interim director. Wheeler appointed Callahan as assistant housing director this summer.

"Kurt has been a tremendous asset as we work to add more affordable housing units in Portland and implement stronger protections for tenants," says Wheeler in a statement. "I wish Kurt all the best as he moves on from his time with the City."

At the same time, the mayor's office announced that Dante James, who heads the Office of Equity and Human Rights, is also stepping down.

James's last day with the City will be Dec. 15. (He is not receiving a severance package.)

"Dante's work was instrumental in creating the budget equity tool, and our plan to enhance equitable workforce development in city construction projects through the Community Equity and Inclusion Plan, which was unanimously adopted by City Council this year, among many accomplishments," says Wheeler.

Koffi "Jean-Pierre" Dessou, currently a program manager in in the office, will serve as interim bureau director.

## **The Portland Mercury**

### **In Shake-Up, Ted Wheeler Announces the Departure of Directors of Housing, Diversity**

*By Dirk VanderHart  
December 7, 2017*

Two of Mayor Ted Wheeler's bureaus—including one of his highest profile assignments—are getting a major shake-up.

Wheeler's office today announced the impending departure of Housing Director Kurt Creager and Dante James, director of the city's Office of Equity and Human Rights. The surprise departures, one of which appears to be forced, come as Wheeler grapples with outcry over the city's housing crisis.

James' last day is December 15. He'll be replaced in the interim by Koffi Dessou, a program manager in his office. Creager's last day is tomorrow, though an email autoreply says he's out today on leave.

Wheeler's office has positive things to say about both men in the announcement.

"Kurt has been a tremendous asset as we work to add more affordable housing units in Portland and implement stronger protections for tenants," Wheeler said in the release. "I wish Kurt all the best as he moves on from his time with the City."

About James, Wheeler said: "Dante's work was instrumental in creating the budget equity tool, and our plan to enhance equitable workforce development in city construction projects through the Community Equity and Inclusion Plan, which was unanimously adopted by City Council this year, among many accomplishments."

UPDATE:

Creager's departure has been in the works for a month at least. His severance agreement [PDF] shows that Wheeler had requested the creation of a severance package for the housing director as late as November 7 (which was technically the date Human Resources approved the request). Under the agreement, signed November 30, Creager receives six months of medical and dental benefits and a payout of \$96,714.94, equal to seven months of pay.

Creager submitted his letter of resignation [PDF] on Tuesday. His departure signals a possible shift in direction for what is probably Portland's highest-profile bureau these days.

Creager had hardly been stagnant in his job. In the last two weeks alone, the housing bureau had proposals before council that put city funds to two large affordable housing projects—a 240-unit building in the Lloyd District, and a 203-unit project in the River Place neighborhood.

At the helm of the housing bureau since 2015, Creager's watch coincided with a city increasingly alarmed by its housing market, and therefore a lot of activity. As he laid out in his resignation letter, that included the declaration of a housing state of emergency, a new tax on short-term rentals like Airbnb, shift of resources that created the county-run Joint Office of Homeless Services, and the passage of the city's first-ever affordable housing bond.

Of all those things, the bond has been a flashpoint. Mayor Ted Wheeler has faced backlash for delay in getting money from the \$258 million housing bond out the door, and according to the Oregonian, bond spending was a central component of a critical memo Wheeler sent Creager in August. It's perhaps notable, then, that Shannon Callahan, a former aide to Commissioner Dan Saltzman who was a guiding hand in the bond passage, will be taking over for Creager in the interim. She joined the housing bureau this summer.

James, meanwhile is leaving to pursue employment opportunities in Colorado, according to Wheeler spokesperson Michael Cox.

Hit the jump for the full announcement. This post will be updated.

Portland, OR – Mayor Ted Wheeler today announced the departure of directors of two bureaus within his portfolio. Dante James, Director of the Office of Equity and Human Rights, and Kurt Creager, Director of the Bureau of Housing, each announced they are stepping down in December.

James's last day with the City will be on December 15.

“Dante's work was instrumental in creating the budget equity tool, and our plan to enhance equitable workforce development in city construction projects through the Community Equity and Inclusion Plan, which was unanimously adopted by City Council this year, among many accomplishments,” said Wheeler. “His leadership at the helm of OEHR will be missed.”

Koffi “Jean-Pierre” Dessou, currently a program manager in OEHR, will serve as Interim Bureau Director. Dessou has over 23 years of experience in public and private organizations. He worked for the U.S. Department of State at the American Embassy in Togo for 16 years.

Creager's last day with the City will be December 8.

“Kurt has been a tremendous asset as we work to add more affordable housing units in Portland and implement stronger protections for tenants,” said Wheeler. “I wish Kurt all the best as he moves on from his time with the City.”

Shannon Callahan, currently an Assistant Housing Director, will serve as Interim Housing Director. Callahan has worked closely with the Portland Housing Bureau since 2013 in her role as Policy Director for Commissioner Dan Saltzman. Wheeler appointed Callahan Assistant Housing Director in August.

The Mayor's office is establishing a process to appoint permanent directors of each bureau.

# **Booming Portland Might Now Be Facing a Budget Hole of Between \$9 Million and \$30 Million Next Year**

*By Dirk VanderHart  
December 7, 2017*

At a time of record revenues, the city's financial outlook is dimming a bit.

The City Budget Office now believes Portland might see between \$9 million and \$30 million in increased costs for providing the same services next year, Budget Director Andrew Scott said Wednesday. That's up from a potential \$5 million to \$25 million increase budget officials had been predicted.

Should the increased costs come to pass, they could make for a difficult budget season. Mayor Ted Wheeler had already directed the city's general fund bureaus to offer of 5 percent cuts in their next budget requests, based on the possibility of a \$5 million to \$25 million deficit. It's unclear if Wheeler will modify that requirement.

Scott revealed the updated budget figures in a meeting of A Home For Everyone, a task force of officials throughout the Portland area trying to address the growing homelessness crisis. While Scott noted better-than-expected property tax revenue, rising business taxes, and solid lodging tax revenue, he said new labor agreements (including a newly reached deal with the District Council of Trade Unions, the city's largest union group), rising pension costs, and higher costs associated with inflation could outweigh that progress.

Or maybe it won't. The city also could see a sizable surplus once again next year. A better idea of where the city stands will be available when the budget office releases a formal budget forecast in two weeks.

## **The Daily Journal of Commerce**

### **Portland Housing Bureau Suddenly in Leadership Transition**

*By Chuck Slothower  
December 7, 2017*

Portland Housing Bureau Director Kurt Creager is departing, Mayor Ted Wheeler announced Thursday.

Creager's last day will be Friday, according to a statement from the mayor's office.

Shannon Callahan, who had served as assistant director of the Housing Bureau since August, will become interim director. Callahan previously worked as a policy adviser for Commissioner Dan Saltzman.

No reason was given for the leadership change.

"Kurt has been a tremendous asset as we work to add more affordable housing units in Portland and implement stronger protections for tenants," Wheeler stated in a news release. "I wish Kurt all the best as he moves on from his time with the city."

Neither Creager nor Wheeler's spokesman, Michael Cox, immediately returned messages seeking comment.

Affordable housing has been a focus for Wheeler's administration. The mayor chose to keep the Housing Bureau in his portfolio to directly oversee its operations. The city has received repeated criticism for doing too little to address its lack of affordable housing and rising homelessness.

On Wednesday, the City Council approved \$21.7 million in funding for BRIDGE Housing's project to build a 203-unit affordable apartment building at 2095 S.W. River Parkway in the South Waterfront District.

Wheeler also announced Thursday that Dante James, director of the Office of Equity and Human Rights, will step down. James' last day will be Dec. 15, according to the mayor's office.

## **The Portland Business Journal**

### **Climate Commitment Face-off: Wheeler vs. Brown**

*By Pete Danko*

*December 7, 2017*

Climate-change commitments are all the rage for U.S. politicians who think President Donald Trump is taking the country in the wrong direction on the issue. But even though the pols' pledges might sound alike, their prospects for meeting them can vary widely.

That seems to be the case with Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler and Gov. Kate Brown.

Wheeler this week signed the Chicago Climate Charter, which at its heart commits the city to achieving "a percent reduction in greenhouse gas emissions equal to or greater than our nations' Nationally Determined Contributions to the Paris Agreement."

That Paris commitment was a reduction of 26 percent to 28 percent from 2005 levels by 2025.

Gov. Brown made the same pledge in June, right after Trump said the U.S. was backing out of the Paris deal.

Wheeler, though, appears to have a much easier task ahead of him, with a big head start, as the chart below indicates.

The city works with Multnomah County in pursuit of its climate goals, and through 2014, the most recent year with data, emissions in the county were down 19 percent since 2005. At the state level, though, an uptick in transportation sector emissions has interrupted progress, and emissions through 2015 were down just 5 percent.

The state's lagging progress is one reason the governor is backing passage of cap and trade in 2018, although how much impact it could have by 2025 — the program wouldn't actually kick in until 2021 — is unclear.

What accounts for the big progress at the local level? Here's a key excerpt from the city and county's Climate Action Plan Progress Report issued in April:

Portland continues to have one of the highest voluntary participation rates in utility green power programs in the country, ranking third nationally in annual green power usage. Voluntary green power programs account for 7 percent of all electricity to residential, commercial and industrial customers in Multnomah County. Portlanders are also committed to onsite green power, adding over 3,800 solar electric and solar hot water systems since 1990. As a result of onsite green

power and energy efficiency investments, total residential electricity sales have declined by nearly 10 percent below 1990 levels. Local and regional planning has focused growth and development in centers and corridors, increasing access to low-carbon active transportation options like walking, biking and public transit and enabling shorter driving distances. Together with improved vehicle efficiencies, biofuels and electric vehicles, these land-use patterns have resulted in a reduction in total gasoline sales by 7 percent below 1990 levels.

## **5 Things to Know on a Day That's Still Hard to Imagine**

*By Andy Giegerich  
December 8, 2017*

As we prepare to publish today's Five Things, we're listening to some of the works of a man who undoubtedly changed the world.

Yes, we're thinking, a lot, about John Lennon today. Damn.

### **Union blues**

New Seasons faces questions from its employees who are looking to unionize.

The PBJ's Jon Bell writes that those workers question whether the grocer merits its coveted B Corporation status after it reportedly enlisted a group that works with Trump hotels on dealing with unionization.

"The employees' complaint states that the company has violated the terms of its B Corp certification in part by hiring a law firm with an anti-union history," Bell writes. "That law firm, Cruz & Associates, was also used by the Trump Hotel in Las Vegas to 'intimidate pro-union workers,' according to the release.

New Seasons responded to the complaint late yesterday.

### **Pop art**

The group New Avenues for Youth has opened a swell pop-up shop at Pioneer Place.

As the PBJ's Clare Duffy writes, the effort helps educate fledgling workers learn the ins and outs of business as they navigate the tricky retail world.

### **Here they are**

There are a ton of business people worth watching in 2018.

We've identified 18 of them (one for, conveniently and not-so-coincidentally, each year of the current century) and spotlighted them here as part of our year-end coverage.

See you soon?

### **Change is afoot at Portland's City Hall.**

For starters, Dante James, who heads the city's Office of Equity and Human Rights, will leave his job Dec. 15. He'll move to Colorado "to reunite with his family."

James had led the department since March 2012. Indeed, he's the office's first director.

Housing Bureau Director Kurt Creager is also leaving his position. As Willamette Week reports, though, his departure is far more abrupt. Creager's last day is today.

## **Go get 'em, Nick**

Also from City Hall comes word from Commissioner Nick Fish that the amiable councilor is facing more intense treatment for his abdominal cancer.

Fish revealed the plans yesterday in his weekly newsletter to constituents.

"I have been overwhelmed by the number of cards, calls, and other well wishes. They have been a great source of support for me and my family during this difficult time," he wrote.

"My doctors are encouraged by my progress so far. Ironically, they have decided to double down on my treatment in the hopes they can knock out this disease. I know this will make things a little harder in the short term, but I am optimistic that we will win this fight."

As are we.

## **OPB**

### **Shake-Up At Portland City Hall Continues As Housing, Equity Directors Leave**

*By Amelia Templeton  
December 8, 2017*

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler announced the departure Thursday of two of the city's bureau directors, the latest in a series of shake-ups in leadership that have stretched from the police bureau to the city human resources department.

One the directors is leaving voluntarily. Dante James was hired by the city five years ago to help launch the city's Office of Equity and Human Rights.

James is moving back to Colorado, where he spent much of his life and career. He is following his wife, who is in school there.

"It was time for him to get back with family," said Jeff Selby, the office's communications manager. James' last day with the office will be Dec. 15.

"His leadership at the helm of OEHR will be missed," Mayor Ted Wheeler said in a statement issued by his spokesman.

Koffi "Jean-Pierre" Dessou, currently a program manager in OEHR, will serve as interim bureau director.

Wheeler simultaneously announced that the director of the Portland Housing Bureau, Kurt Creager, is stepping down at the end of the week.

Creager has held the top post at the Housing Bureau since 2015. He was hired by Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who oversaw the bureau at the time. Wheeler campaigned on a promise to increase the city's affordable housing supply, and shifted the housing bureau into his portfolio when he took office.

Creager's departure is voluntary — at least on paper. But it's happening through a targeted severance program city commissioners have often used to push bureau heads out.

The city has agreed to pay Creager \$96,715, or seven month's pay, according to his severance agreement.

It will also pay his health care premiums for six months. In exchange, Creager has waived any legal claims against the city.

“Kurt has been a tremendous asset as we work to add more affordable housing units in Portland and implement stronger protections for tenants,” Wheeler said in a statement issued by his spokesman. “I wish Kurt all the best as he moves on from his time with the city.”

Creager has led the bureau during a period of intense change. The City Council spun off much of the bureau’s work on homelessness in 2016 when it created the Joint Office of Homeless Services with Multnomah County.

At the same time, the council expanded the bureau’s work on affordable housing production, housing policy and renter protections.

Creager worked with the city and housing advocacy groups to dedicate several new sources of funding for affordable housing, including a commercial excise tax, short-term rental tax revenue and a \$258 million housing bond passed by voters last year.

The Oregonian has reported that Creager clashed with Wheeler over how to spend the bond dollars, and that the mayor was unhappy with the Housing Bureau’s decision to purchase the Ellington, a 263-unit apartment complex, the month before Wheeler took office.

In a letter of resignation addressed to Wheeler and other city commissioners, Creager said he had decided to pursue other opportunities in his field of practice.

“Bureau staff, management and I have worked tirelessly for the people of Portland,” he wrote. “I wish you, mayoral staff, and my colleagues within the city of Portland and our many community partners and stakeholders the very best.”