

## The Oregonian

# Freezing Forecast Prompts Multnomah County to Open Shelter

By Lynne Terry

December 11, 2017

UPDATED Monday, Dec. 11: Officials will again open severe weather shelter space Monday.

Imago Dei, a Christian church at 1400 S.E. Ankeny St., will reopen Monday night, according to a Multnomah County spokesman. The Bud Clark Commons day center, 650 N.W. Irving St., and the Sunrise Center, 18901 E. Burnside St., will also open.

People can call 211 for transportation or more information.

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Multnomah County will open its first severe weather shelter on Sunday evening, with forecasts predicting below freezing temperatures.

Space at Imago Dei, a Christian church at 1400 S.E. Ankeny St., will be open from 8:30 p.m. through 7 a.m. on Monday. The shelter has a couple of hundred beds, said Denis Theriault, a Multnomah County spokesman.

No one will be turned away, he said.

They don't need to worry about transportation, either. TriMet, first responders, taxi companies and other providers will be able to take people to the shelter.

"I don't want anyone to feel that they can't get transportation," Theriault said.

Call 211 for transportation or more information.

There are nearly 1,700 homeless people in Portland, Theriault said. Many of them have physical, mental or addiction problems.

"They're a very vulnerable population," Theriault said.

Other shelters will open as needed, he said. There are 1,400 beds open year-round in Portland.

The county also asked for donations of winter gear. It needs the following items:

- Thick socks
- Waterproof/resistant gloves or mittens (preferably dark colors/black)
- Waterproof/resistant winter coats (men's and women's sizes)
- Sleeping bags and warm blankets
- Waterproof/resistant hats (preferably dark colors/black)
- Knit hats (preferably dark colors/black)
- Tarps (preferably brown, dark colors)
- Hand warmers
- Rain ponchos

Items items can be dropped off at:

- JOIN, 1435 N.E. 81st Ave., Suite 100, Portland, OR 97213; open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Transition Projects, 655 N.W. Hoyt St., Portland, OR 97209; open 24/7.

- Check [211info.org/donations](http://211info.org/donations) for more information. There's also an online shopping list for those who want to click and pay.

"The gear is important," Theriault said.

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **City Hall Update: Two More Bureau Directors Leave**

*By Jim Redden  
December 12, 2017*

#### **Plus, Saltzman demands Uber data and council approves more affordable housing.**

Mayor Ted Wheeler announced the departure of the directors of two bureaus under his control on Thursday.

Portland Housing Bureau Director Kurt Creager resigned effective the next day. Assistant Housing Director Shannon Callahan was named interim director. And Office of Equity and Human Rights Director Dante James will leave on Dec. 15. Koffi "Jean-Pierre" Dessou, a program manager in the office, was named interim director.

The mayor's office will launch a search for permanent replacements. Seven bureau directors have left since Wheeler took office in January.

#### **Saltzman demands Uber data**

Transportation Commissioner Dan Saltzman has written to Uber CEO Dara Khosrowshahi demanding the company turn over information about a massive 2016 data breach that it failed to disclose until last month.

In the letter, Saltzman said Uber may have violated the city code by withholding the disclosure and demanded to know how many company drivers and passengers in the city were affected. Portland has objected to Uber's operation in the past and, most recently, demanded assurances the company has ended its admitted use of "Greyball" computer software to evade regulators.

"To learn now that Uber deliberately concealed a massive data breach involving both customer and driver information for a period of over a year adds to the already strained relationship the City has with Uber," Saltzman wrote.

#### **Council approves more affordable housing**

As part of its increased commitment to funding affordable housing, the City Council approved up to \$21.7 million in North Macadam Urban Renewal Area funds for the construction of the RiverPlace Parcel 3 development last Wednesday.

When completed, the 13-story project will offer 201 units of apartments affordable to households earning less than 80 percent of the area median income, with many priced well below that. They include 10 units reserve for veterans and 20 for those transitioning from homelessness.

"RiverPlace Parcel 3 furthers our commitment to providing affordable housing and supportive services for our most vulnerable neighbors, and building vibrant, diverse neighborhoods for all Portlanders," Mayor Ted Wheeler said of the city's contribution to the \$86 million project.

# Former Mayor Vera Katz Dies

*By Pamplin Media Group  
December 11, 2017*

**Leaders praise Katz a 'a trailblazer' who was able to find solutions to challenges facing the city and the state during prosperous times.**

Former Mayor Vera Katz, a former Speaker of the Oregon House who guided Portland for three terms during the 1990s and early 2000s, died Monday, Dec. 11. She was 84.

Katz was diagnosed in 2000 with breast cancer and battled the illness through surgery and treatment. Four years later, she was diagnosed with uterine cancer.

She led Portland as mayor from 1993 to 2005. Katz was elected to the Oregon House in 1972 and became the first female speaker of the house in 1985, a post she held until 1990.

Katz was born Aug. 3, 1933, in Germany. Her family fled Nazi Germany to Spain and eventually immigrated to the United States, where she grew up in New York City. In 1962, she and her husband, Mel, moved to Portland.

While in the Rose City, Katz worked to elect Democratic candidates and eventually jumped into politics in the early 1970s.

Oregon political leaders praised Katz's legacy and called her "a trailblazer" for women on many issues.

"I am deeply saddened by the loss of my friend Vera Katz," said U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden. "My memories of this indomitable woman stretch back more than 40 years to our work together during the 1975 state Legislature to reduce prescription drug costs. Vera recognized early on the importance of standing up for senior citizens and I fondly remember how older people gravitated to her house because she always picked up their spirits and made politics fun.

"Always a trailblazer, Vera will be remembered by Portlanders for the enduring legacy she leaves our city from her groundbreaking tenure as mayor, and by all Oregonians in every part of the state through her service as our state's first woman Speaker of the House and her lifetime of passionate advocacy for children, senior citizens and the LGBTQ community."

U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer, a Democrat representing Oregon's 3rd Congressional District, called Katz "a remarkable person" and recounted their "spirited campaign for mayor against each other."

"Many times, we joked that her victory was one of the best things that happened to me, because while she was mayor, it led to me being elected to Congress," Blumenauer said. "Vera was bold, shrewd, determined, smart, and an amazing role model. Our city would not be what it is without her. I will miss her constructive criticism, counsel and friendship."

U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley tweeted that Katz was an Oregon icon and pioneer who "broke barriers."

"Her remarkable legacy will not be forgotten," Merkley wrote.

Mayor Ted Wheeler called Katz "larger than life" and said she "made an indelible impact on Oregon and Portland over four decades."

"All of us in public service can aspire to her boldness, her candor, and her humanity," Wheeler said Monday. "On a personal level, I attended school with her son, Jesse, and cannot separate Mayor Katz from Vera Katz the mother. My heart goes out to her family and friends during this

difficult time. It's rare that someone as accomplished in public life makes a similar impact in their personal life. Vera did. Our community will miss her tremendously."

City Commissioner Dan Saltzman posted on his Facebook page a message praising Katz as "one of the strongest and most respected leaders our city has ever had."

"As mayor, she never took 'no' for an answer," Saltzman wrote. "She was incredibly visionary, thoughtful and tenacious on a wide range of civic issues, and I greatly enjoyed and respected her leadership all the years we overlapped on Portland City Council."

The Rev. Chuck Currie praised Katz's ability to overcome differences on local issues to find solutions.

"Mayor Vera Katz loved our city of Portland as much as anyone," Currie said Monday. "Her early work advocating on behalf of women means that there are opportunities available for my daughters that might never had been there without her advocacy. We often clashed during her tenure as mayor over affordable housing and efforts to end homelessness. Despite these differences, I never doubted her commitment to the common good of our city."

Senate Republican leader Sen. Jackie Winters, R-Salem, said she was saddened by the news. "We knew each other before I was ever elected to the House, I could always count on Vera to order ribs from Jackie's Ribs. She was a truly pioneering leader, and was the first woman to serve as Speaker of the House in Oregon. She will be dearly missed."

Multnomah County Commissioner Loretta Smith called Katz "an inspiration to those daring to take new paths."

"She helped to forge the path forward for women and people of color," Smith said. "Her storied civil rights record is likely the result of her family's own persecution. As a child her family fled the Nazis by crossing over the Pyrenees Mountains by foot. This legacy of strength in the face of adversity stayed with her throughout her career and has been a source of inspiration for me. She will be remembered for being tough and resilient, and for setting a high bar for women in elected office."

U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici, a Democrat representing Oregon's 1st Congressional District, called Katz "a true leader, and a pioneer for women in politics."

"Portland and Oregon are better because of Vera's leadership and legacy," Bonamici said. "She will be missed."

## **Willamette Week**

### **Former Portland Mayor Vera Katz Dies at Age 84**

*By Nigel Jaquiss  
December 11, 2017*

**Katz was the first woman to serve as Speaker of the Oregon House and later served as Portland's mayor for three terms.**

Former Portland Mayor Vera Katz has died at age 84.

Katz had battled adenocarcinoma, a rare form of cancer, since 2004. For 13 years, that disease required her to undergo dialysis three times a week. In early December, according to her former

mayoral spokeswoman Elisa Dozono, Katz was diagnosed with acute leukemia and ceased dialysis.

Katz served as Portland mayor from 1993 to 2005. Her three-term tenure stands in stark contrast to the mayors who have followed her—Tom Potter, Sam Adams and Charlie Hales—none of whom ran for a second term. Katz's exceptional longevity in that office speaks to her skill at orchestrating Portland's unusual commission form of government and to her skills as a politician.

Katz was born Vera Pistrak in Dusseldorf, Germany, in 1933. Her family, who were Jewish, fled Europe when Adolph Hitler took power, landing in New York. Katz and her husband, the artist Mel Katz, later moved to Portland in 1964.

Katz began her political career in 1972, representing Portland in the Oregon House. She became the first female Speaker of the Oregon House in 1985 and served in that position for three sessions. She won the 1992 mayor's race in an epic battle against now U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Ore.).

Katz's dozen years at City Hall shaped Portland as we know it, with the development of the the Moda Center, the Pearl District, the Portland Streetcar, the Eastbank Esplanade, South Waterfront and other Portland landmarks. Even a deal that went sideways initially, the renovation of the aging facility then known as Civic Stadium into what is now Providence Park, paved the way for the explosive popularity of the Portland Timbers and Thorns.

Katz, a devoted TriMet rider who never learned to drive, even mobilized the city to battle floodwaters.

As a leader, Katz excelled at finding consensus among a sometimes fractious coterie of city commissioners, a legacy of her tenure in Salem.

Katz is survived by her son Jesse, a Los Angeles journalist, her grandson Max Katz and her former husband, Mel Katz.

"My mom was the embodiment of the American dream: coming with nothing and making a better life not just for herself but for the countless others she touched," said her son, Jesse, in a statement. "While we miss her terribly, I know that her fearlessness, generosity and persistence will continue to shine light on our world."

#### **Update, 11:15 am:**

City Commissioner Dan Saltzman, who served with Katz from 1999 to 2005 and is the last of her former colleagues still at City Hall, praised Katz's leadership.

"As Mayor, she never took 'no' for an answer," Saltzman said in a statement. "She was incredibly visionary, thoughtful and tenacious on a wide range of civic issues, and I greatly enjoyed and respected her leadership all the years we overlapped on Portland City Council."

Mayor Ted Wheeler called Katz "larger than life."

"She made an indelible impact on Oregon and Portland over four decades, from the early 1970s to after the turn of the new millennium," Wheeler said in a statement. "All of us in public service can aspire to her boldness, her candor, and her humanity. On a personal level, I attended school with her son, Jesse, and cannot separate Mayor Katz from Vera Katz the mother. My heart goes out to her family and friends during this difficult time. It's rare that someone as accomplished in public life makes a similar impact in their personal life. Vera did. Our community will miss her tremendously."

# Portlanders Mourn Vera Katz, the Rose City's Last Successful Mayor

*By Rachel Monahan*

*December 11, 2017*

**"She was sweet, she was kind; she was wonderful. But 'polite' doesn't come to mind. She was fun, entertaining, loved a good joke. But if she was pissed off, look out."**

On Dec. 11, Portland lost its last great mayor: Vera Katz died at 84. Katz, who ran Portland with vision and willpower, was remembered today by a spectrum of state and city luminaries.

## **Jesse Katz, her son, in a statement:**

"My mom was the embodiment of the American dream: coming with nothing and making a better life not just for herself but for the countless others she touched. While we miss her terribly, I know that her fearlessness, generosity and persistence will continue to shine light on our world."

## **Elisa Dozono, former spokeswoman for Katz and now a partner at Miller Nash Graham & Dunn LLP, tells WW:**

"I think about the times I would be out with her. She would talk to anybody. She talked to the homeless all the time. We'd be out on the streets, and she would talk to them. She would look them in the eye and ask them questions and show that she cared—that extraordinary ability she had despite being such an introvert—just her ability to connect with people, to take their problems as her own and decide to do something about it.

"Most people don't know what an introvert she was. She just really spent a lot of time on her own processing things on her own. She didn't like to do the schmoozing and everything. That just wasn't her."

## **Former City Commissioner Mike Lindberg tells WW:**

"She was what I would call a 24/7 mayor. She took very few vacations. ...She would take her entire in-basket [home] (not just hers, but the office's inbox). She basically read every letter or reports that was sent to the mayor's office. That meant that if she ever ran into anybody like on the bus...or at City Council meeting, she'd say, 'oh yeah, I read your letter.'...At night she kept the police scanner on at night. She was police commissioner the entire four years. ...If there was a police shooting, Vera would call [her staff] and say give me a report in two hours or I'll meet you out at a certain address. ...During all that time, being mayor was pretty much her total life."

## **Former City Commissioner Randy Leonard tells WW:**

"I was on the council under three mayors —Vera, Tom [Potter] and Sam [Adams]. I served in legislature under a variety of senate presidents and house speakers. Nobody exercised power the way Vera did. And it wasn't always necessarily subtle...She used the amount of power she needed to do what she wanted. And I recognized it, I was never put off by her exercising power because she could just as easily go the other way and be helpful to you.

"By any measure, she was an unusual person in the most positive sense possible. She was never intimidated. She always fought for what she believed in. If she felt like she was being put into a corner, she said, 'let's pull out the big guns.' She did. It worked.

“I had been politics a long time. I was used to people sneaking around, telling you one thing and doing another. She sat me down and basically said I will make your life a living hell [on one issue]. I appreciated it.

“She was sweet, she was kind; she was wonderful. But ‘polite’ doesn’t come to mind. She was fun, entertaining, loved a good joke. But if she was pissed off, look out.”

“She never lost a war. She might have lost a skirmish or a battle. When she declared war on something, it was ‘man the battle station.’”

“She was tremendously influenced by her childhood, specifically escaping Nazi Germany, and all that was associated with. She was as passionate as she can imagine about how people were treated....She had just had that experience as a child. It was source of her passion. She appreciated more the most the ephermeal nature of life....it created in her a fire through all the time I knew her.”

**Oregon House Speaker Tina Kotek (D-Portland), in a statement:**

“She was among a generation of women who defied the circumstances of the time and led a revolution that allowed many other women, including me, to serve. As both a legislator and the first female Speaker of the Oregon House, she showed that women could be strong and effective leaders. It is not lost on me that my three sessions as Speaker are in no small part because of her.”

**Former City Commissioner Jim Francesconi tells WW:**

“I’m not sure I understood it at the time, but she will go down as one of the greatest mayors in Portland’s history. She really did love the people of Portland. You could see that in big things and little things she did.”

“I was in the room on many, many occasions where she was the one standing up for the public interest, whether it was the width of the greenway or the public right way, or public art, or historic preservation. ...She was always thinking about how to move the ball for the public.”

**County Chair Deborah Kafoury on Twitter:**

“I feel so incredibly lucky to have grown up surrounded by amazing women leaders like Vera Katz, Betty Roberts, Norma Paulus and of course, my mother, Gretchen Kafoury. Sad to learn that Vera Katz has died. It’s hard to think of someone who has had more of an impact on this city than our former Mayor.”

**City Commissioner Dan Saltzman tells WW:**

“She was the only mayor I’ve served with who wouldn’t take no for answer. ...I often ask myself when I’m taking a tough vote ‘What would Vera do?’ because she had a particularly pragmatic outlook.”

**Former City Commissioner Erik Sten, in an email:**

“Vera loved the city and loved being in charge of it. She was passionate and ready to fight for Portland. No one outworked her ever and no one did more homework. Her passion for detail and planning were great fits for a City that wants to get it right. As a new council member we often argued, but as I grew to know her on a personal level, I came to admire and respect her. It took time, and it wasn’t easy, but after working by her side and arguing with her for a decade, I came to realize there was no one better.

“She was Mayor for a long time and I think the city took her strengths for granted. Much of Portland’s current successes flow directly from her hard work. I don’t think we knew just how good she was when she was doing it, but she really set the standard for how a Mayor should act and react.

“She held power when necessary—taking all the bureaus, controlling PDC and reviewing virtually every line in the budget—but she also gave the right assignments to the right members. Once we agreed on a task or an assignment, I knew what to expect. She was consistent and always competent.”

**U.S. Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Oregon), in a statement:**

“We ended up waging a spirited campaign for mayor against each other. Many times, we joked that her victory was one of the best things that happened to me, because while she was mayor, it led to me being elected to Congress.

“Vera was bold, shrewd, determined, smart, and an amazing role model. Our city would not be what it is without her. I will miss her constructive criticism, counsel, and friendship.”

**Senate President Peter Courtney (D-Salem), in a statement:**

“Vera Katz was more than a pioneer. She was a force. She escaped the Nazis. She battled cancer. She ran the House. She ran the city. She was a natural leader. Vera led and people followed. As Speaker, she had partnership with Denny Jones. She was from Brooklyn and Portland. He was Prineville and Ontario. They didn’t have an urban-rural divide. They worked together. They’re both gone now, but that’s a part of her legacy I will always remember. Oregon has lost great human being.”

**Mayor Ted Wheeler in a statement:**

“Vera Katz was larger than life. She made an indelible impact on Oregon and Portland over four decades, from the early 1970s to after the turn of the new millennium. All of us in public service can aspire to her boldness, her candor, and her humanity. On a personal level, I attended school with her son, Jesse, and cannot separate Mayor Katz from Vera Katz the mother. My heart goes out to her family and friends during this difficult time. It’s rare that someone as accomplished in public life makes a similar impact in their personal life. Vera did. Our community will miss her tremendously.”

**Phyllis Oster, director of international relations and cultural affairs when Katz was mayor, tells WW:**

“One thing that was very important was how open she was about her illness and how willing she was to talk to other people. People would come up to her at events or while she was walking down the streets, and she would be happy to stop and talk to them and maybe give them some comfort about what she was going through.

“She was an extremely compassionate person. She loved Portland very much, and she loved Oregon, and I considered her to be a true public servant. She really did care about providing Portland with the best she had to offer. And she was an extremely private person. She was really private, and very few people actually ever went into her house. But she was so willing to give of herself to people in public. That was interesting dichotomy.

“She absolutely was an introvert. She wasn’t a glad-hander. She liked being with people, but she would have much preferred to be at home reading planning documents. But when she was with you, she was with you a 100 percent. There was nothing phony about her. When she was there, she was on completely.



“You know, particularly now, with everything that’s going on in politics, she set such a high bar for honesty and humanity.”

## **The Portland Mercury**

### **Severe Weather Shelters Are Opening for the Cold Snap. Here's How You Can Help.**

*By Dirk VanderHart  
December 11, 2017*

Last night was bitterly cold, and that weather pattern is expected to stick around. With the National Weather Service predicting freezing temperatures over the next two nights, the Portland-area's severe weather shelter

system kicked into gear last night—and might be open for days depending on the forecast.

Multnomah County officials opened up a severe weather shelter at Imago Dei, at 1302 SE Ankeny last night, and admitted roughly 35 people seeking refuge from the cold, according to Denis Theriault with the Joint Office of Homeless Services. County officials were still awaiting an updated forecast before deciding whether to reopen severe weather shelter space (which is in addition to winter shelters the county is already running). Here's a full list of available shelter space, kept by 211.info. Update: Officials are opening shelters in Southeast Portland and Gresham beginning at 8:30 pm tonight.

At the same time, an emergency warming shelter in the Montavilla neighborhood opened last night, and is planning to open its doors again at 7 pm. It's at Saint Peter and Paul Episcopal Church, 247 SE 82nd.

The Mercury recently explored the often-unsafe strategies the city's growing houseless community is forced to employ when temperatures dip. With recent high-profile fires, and four exposure deaths from last year's severe winter still lingering in the city's mind, officials are stressing they won't turn anyone away who wants respite during severe weather.

When skies are clear, the county characterizes "severe weather" as temperatures of 25 degrees Fahrenheit or below (or wind chills that reach that depth). Here's the response plan for severe weather that lasts for three days or less.

- The Joint Office’s contracted severe weather shelter provider, Transition Projects, initially opens one or more shelters, with hundreds of beds at the ready. Locations include Imago Dei in southeast Portland, the Bud Clark Commons in downtown Portland, and a shelter in Gresham. Shelters are low-barrier, with space for carts and bikes, and access for pets. Community partners may also open spaces if needed.
- The Joint Office works with 211Info, TriMet, outreach providers, first responders and taxi companies to coordinate transportation of people and supplies to warming centers, and also to distribute cold weather gear to those who choose not to come to shelter.
- Trained volunteers fill shifts at warming centers as needed.
- 211 serves as the information hub for shelter, transportation, gear and volunteer needs.
- The Joint Office convenes a daily call of first responders, outreach providers and shelter providers to monitor shelter capacity and assist in logistics coordination.

What can housed allies do to help? Donate. Here's a list of things advocates at JOIN and Transition Projects are most in need of:

- Thick socks
- Waterproof/resistant gloves or mittens (preferably dark colors/black)
- Waterproof/resistant winter coats (men's and women's sizes)
- Sleeping bags and warm blankets
- Waterproof/resistant hats (preferably dark colors/black)
- Knit hats (preferably dark colors/black)
- Tarps (preferably brown, dark colors)
- Hand warmers
- Rain ponchos

Even easier: Here's an Amazon wish list JOIN created. You can have purchases sent right to the organization's address: 1435 NE 81st Avenue, Suite 100, Portland, OR, 97213

## **The Portland Business Journal**

### **Vera Katz, a Longtime Portland Mayor, Dies at 84**

*By Andy Giegerich  
December 11, 2017*

When proponents of bringing Major League Baseball to Portland in the early 2000s visited City Hall, they were met by one very enthused, and influential, supporter.

Portland Mayor Vera Katz told the group she would stand behind them because of her love of the game and her belief that a Major League team would fit perfectly in the Rose City. Katz, it turns out, was a massive Brooklyn Dodgers fan, beaming as she recalled the exploits of her childhood heroes.

The Oregon Stadium Campaign's efforts failed, but not because of Katz, who also backed a stadium funding mechanism that, because it's still in effect, could feasible help build a big-league ballpark today.

It would be one of many legacies of Katz, who served as Portland's mayor for three terms in the 1990s and 2000s. Katz has died at the age of 84.

She's being remembered for being a trailblazer — Katz was Oregon's first female Speaker of the House — as well as her advocacy for children, senior citizens and the LGBTQ community.

"Vera Katz was a pioneering leader as first woman speaker in Oregon and 3 term mayor helping guide an important era for our region," Rep. Earl Blumenauer tweeted Monday morning. "Her life story was an inspiration starting with marching across the Pyrenees as an 8 year old fleeing nazi Germany in 1940."

Katz served as the city's mayor between 1993 and 2005, a period in which Portland grew both in size as well as national stature. The Portland Streetcar hit neighborhood streets during her tenure and the Pearl District became a U.S. model for mixed-use development. The Eastbank Esplanade, used by thousands of runners, walkers and bicyclists every day, also opened.

A statue of Katz sits just north of the Hawthorne Bridge. The path was eventually renamed the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade.

She became Portland's mayor in 1993 after serving as Oregon's Speaker of the House.

"I am deeply saddened by the loss of my friend Vera Katz," said Sen. Ron Wyden, in a statement. "My memories of this indomitable woman stretch back more than 40 years to our work together during the 1975 state Legislature to reduce prescription drug costs. Vera recognized early on the importance of standing up for senior citizens and I fondly remember how older people gravitated to her house because she always picked up their spirits and made politics fun.

In recent years, she worked with the Gallatin Group, a public affairs specialist that employs many former pols.

"RIP Vera Katz - a truly remarkable trailblazer who gave so much to Oregon & inspired generations of women to run for office," Oregon Senate Majority Leader Diane Rosenbaum wrote on Twitter.

## **The Skanner**

### **Joint Office of Homeless Services Announces Severe Weather Strategy**

*By the Joint Office of Homeless Services  
December 11, 2017*

#### **Updated 11:35 a.m. Monday, Dec. 11:**

The Joint Office of Homeless Services will open severe weather warming centers for the second night in a row Monday, Dec. 11, with cold temperatures and sustained freezing windchills again forecast throughout Multnomah County.

Forecasts show temperatures at or below freezing, with sustained winds and windchills below 25 degrees. Anyone who needs a warm space should call 211 for information and to arrange transportation to shelter as needed. No one who calls seeking shelter will be turned away. Transition Projects will open severe weather centers downtown, in Southeast Portland and in Gresham from 8:30 p.m. Monday to 7 a.m. Tuesday, when conditions are forecast to be at their coldest.

Severe weather centers accommodate individuals and couples, people in families, and pets and belongings. They do not require identification or any other documentation. Additional sites, including sites operated by community partners, may open, so anyone in need or who knows someone in need should check ongoing communication from 211. Anyone interested in keeping up-to-date about shelter can also sign up for text alerts at [211info.org](http://211info.org).

On Dec. 10 the Joint Office of Homeless Services opened its first severe-weather warming shelter of the year and released the following information on its severe-weather strategy for 2017-2018.

For the hundreds of neighbors in Multnomah County living without shelter, even just a single day or night of severe winter weather – including high winds, and snow, sleet and ice – is a lifethreatening event that requires an emergency response. The danger grows as conditions linger.

That's why, no matter how many days of severe weather we might see, the Joint Office of Homeless Services and Multnomah County's and Portland's emergency management officials all share a rapid-response plan that can scale up to provide the needed response. The plan is centered on a basic commitment: No one who needs a warm, dry place will be turned away.

On the busiest night during last year's crisis, outreach providers and first responders worked with the Joint Office and scores of volunteers and community-based organizations to help nearly 750 people escape the cold, with room to spare. Those crisis spaces were in addition to the more than 1,500 year-round and winter beds already in our community.

The Joint Office and Emergency Management works closely with service providers as well as first responders and partners in Multnomah County, Portland and Gresham. They also rely on the support of community groups, residents and other government agencies.

### **When the Plan Takes Effect**

The Joint Office declares a severe weather event whenever any of the following conditions are met:

- Temperatures forecast at 25°F or below
- Forecasts predict at least an inch of snow in most areas
- Overnight temperatures forecast at 32°F or below, with at least an inch of driving rain
- Other conditions, including severe wind chills or extreme temperature fluctuations

The Joint Office continuously monitors National Weather Service forecasts for downtown Portland (97204), Portland International Airport (97218) and Troutdale (97060). If any meet the thresholds for severe weather, the Joint Office notifies Multnomah County's communications office and 211info, which alerts service providers, first responders and community members who've requested notice.

The alerts list available night and day shelters, alongside details on transportation. On days that fall short of the thresholds for emergency response, the Joint Office may still send alerts about services.

### **How the Response Works**

The response builds in orchestrated ways, depending on the severity of conditions, how long they're expected to last, and where they're occurring. Severity levels can escalate quickly if conditions change.

#### **First-level response: Three days or less of severe weather**

- The Joint Office's contracted severe weather shelter provider, Transition Projects, initially opens one or more shelters, with hundreds of beds at the ready. Locations include Imago Dei in southeast Portland, the Bud Clark Commons in downtown Portland, and a shelter in Gresham. Shelters are low-barrier, with space for carts and bikes, and access for pets. Community partners may also open spaces if needed.
- The Joint Office works with 211Info, TriMet, outreach providers, first responders and taxi companies to coordinate transportation of people and supplies to warming centers, and also to distribute cold weather gear to those who choose not to come to shelter.
- Trained volunteers fill shifts at warming centers as needed.
- 211 serves as the information hub for shelter, transportation, gear and volunteer needs.
- The Joint Office convenes a daily call of first responders, outreach providers and shelter providers to monitor shelter capacity and assist in logistics coordination.

## **Second-level response: Four or more consecutive days of severe weather**

- The response grows to a 24-hour operation, both for the Joint Office and 211. Multnomah County's emergency management department assigns a liaison to support the response. □ All Level 1 responses continue, including ongoing expansion of shelter capacity as needed.

## **Third-level response: Extreme and/or extended severe weather**

- All Level 1 and Level 2 responses remain in effect. Emergency management officials assist in coordinating transportation resources to ensure vulnerable neighbors continue to be moved to shelter, staff and volunteers reach warming centers, warming center supplies are delivered in timely fashion, and cold weather gear can get to anyone still refusing shelter.
- As more shelter capacity is needed, emergency management officials use their resources to support all aspects of managing that expansion. Public buildings may open.
- Government workers are enlisted to expand the response and relieve volunteers and staffers who have been working for days.
- Because it can be challenging to move people from nighttime warming centers to day spaces and back, certain nighttime warming centers may remain open during the day.

### **Don't wait for severe weather to start helping!**

To volunteer: Transition Projects is providing special 90-minute training sessions for adults 18 and older interested in volunteering at a severe weather warming center. Go to [211info.org](http://211info.org) to sign up.

Volunteers will do hands-on work and should be comfortable working with people experiencing homelessness. These active shifts take place on the coldest nights of the year, so having reliable transportation in inclement weather is important.

To donate: Outreach providers need winter gear they can pass out now, so folks outside are ready for the cold, and to have in reserve during an emergency. Having the right gear staged in the right places before a crisis will help providers better focus on direct services and life-saving efforts in the moment.

Needed items include warm socks, waterproof gloves or mittens, waterproof winter coats, sleeping bags and warm blankets, fleece hats, tarps, hand warmers, and rain ponchos.

For drop-off locations and other tips, call 211 or go to Transition Projects.

## **Former Portland Mayor Vera Katz Has Passed Away**

*By The Skanner News Staff  
December 11, 2017*

Vera Katz, former mayor of Portland, passed away Monday, Dec. 11, according to Oregon Rep. Earl Blumenauer. She was 84.

The German-born Katz moved from New York City to Portland in 1962 and became the first woman to serve as Speaker of the Oregon House of Representatives in 1985. Later, she campaigned for mayor of Portland on a platform that included reducing crime rates and promoting public transportation.

She was elected the 49th Mayor of Portland in 1993 and served three terms until 2005.

During her first term, Katz endorsed the Yellow Bike Project, which drew national attention to Portland's artistic and bike-friendly culture.

“Vera Katz was larger than life. She made an indelible impact on Oregon and Portland over four decades, from the early 1970s to after the turn of the new millennium,” said Mayor Ted Wheeler in a statement. “All of us in public service can aspire to her boldness, her candor, and her humanity.”

“On a personal level, I attended school with her son, Jesse, and cannot separate Mayor Katz from Vera Katz the mother,” continued Wheeler. “My heart goes out to her family and friends during this difficult time. It’s rare that someone as accomplished in public life makes a similar impact in their personal life. Vera did. Our community will miss her tremendously.”

A visionary urban planner with the ability to reach across the aisle, Mayor Katz oversaw plans for the internationally known Pearl District and neighborhoods along the Willamette River that changed the city into a hipster haven and international tourist destination.

A champion of the arts, Katz also presided over construction plans of Lan Su Yuan, an intricate Suzhou-style Chinese garden in the heart of the city's old town that draws visitors from around the world.

In June 2003, a statue of Katz was erected on the Eastbank Esplanade. The following year, the bicycle and pedestrian trail was officially renamed the Vera Katz Eastbank Esplanade in her honor.

Katz endured a long battle of cancer that began in 2000 with her diagnosis of early stage breast cancer. Four years later she was diagnosed with a more serious cancer. This month, she developed acute leukemia after undergoing dialysis for more than a dozen years following cancer treatment.

U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden released the following statement this morning: “Always a trailblazer, Vera will be remembered by Portlanders for the enduring legacy she leaves our city from her groundbreaking tenure as mayor, and by all Oregonians in every part of the state through her service as our state’s first woman Speaker of the House and her lifetime of passionate advocacy for children, senior citizens and the LGBTQ community.”

**OPB**

## **Former Portland Mayor, Oregon House Speaker Vera Katz Dies**

*By April Baer  
December 11, 2017*

Former Portland Mayor Vera Katz died Monday morning. She was 84. The three-term mayor and Oregon House speaker was in charge for defining moments in regional history. Jesse Katz, Vera’s son, confirmed her death to OPB.

On Jan. 9, 1989, the president of the Oregon Senate, a man named John Kitzhaber, welcomed the legislature to session.

“At this time I’d like to introduce The Honorable Vera Katz, Speaker of the House, who will address the joint assembly,” Kitzhaber said.

To that point, Katz was the only woman to hold the job.

“Governor Goldschmidt, distinguished colleagues, honored guests,” Katz said, “sixteen years ago, I entered this building as a freshman legislator. I’m sure I felt the same awe and excitement many of you must feel today ...”

The room was full of people like Kitzhaber — who went on to become Oregon’s governor. And there were others, including Katz, who would leave an indelible imprint on Oregon.

Katz talked about how, when she first came to Salem, it seemed to her as if Oregon’s truths might as well have been chiseled into the marble walls of the capitol. But, she predicted, the state was evolving.

“Contemporary truth is spelled out in the cold hard numbers that reflect changing demographic trends. And those trends represent the character of our future,” Katz said.

Katz’s grasp of the demographic changes in Oregon was one of the strengths of her career. She herself straddled the trends. Slightly older than the baby boomers, she was born in pre-war Germany. Katz and her family, who were Jewish, escaped to America when she was eight. The journey that drew her to Portland in 1964 was a transformation story. Katz hit the campaign trail for Bobby Kennedy in 1968. Galvanized, she was elected to the Oregon House in 1972, alongside a 24-year-old Lewis and Clark grad named Earl Blumenauer.

“Vera came in with perhaps the most compelling personal story of anybody there. This was a little girl who escaped Nazi Germany hiking through the Pyrenees, at age 8, I think, who had gone from sort of stay-at-home mom to legislator in about a five-year period of time,” Blumenauer said.

Katz, Blumenauer and their cohort made strides on land use planning, open records laws, drug reforms, gay rights, and more.

Blumenauer, who went on to serve in Congress, watched Katz form alliances with other women in Salem, and with men like moderate Republican Sam Johnson, who became a mentor.

“She could be very direct and hard hitting, but Vera could also be very charming and disarming,” Blumenauer said.

In a matter of years, Katz rose to become House Speaker and came to know Sam Adams. He was the political director for the Oregon House Democrats. He’d later become Portland’s first openly-gay mayor, but when they met he was still a young man in the closet.

“[Her office] became a place where very talented people that couldn’t get the kind of work they wanted elsewhere gravitated to her,” Adams said. “She found a place for hardworking people ... regardless of age, race, gender or sexual orientation. Her office became a magnet for smart, hardworking people.”

Their alliance propelled Katz into new territory.

After a bare-knuckles campaign against her former ally, Blumenauer, Katz was elected mayor of Portland in 1992, with Adams as her chief of staff. Katz was a politician with little direct administrative experience, and now she sat at the helm of a vast bureaucracy.

“She enjoyed that challenge. I remember when we moved into that office, there weren’t even networked computers yet. It was a time of amazing massive transformation in city services,” Adams said.

But Adams also calls Katz’s first term as a very challenging time. Voters had recently passed Measure 5, limiting property taxes on real estate, and weakening a pillar of funding for local governments. Adams says Katz spent much of her first term re-sizing the bureaucracy and keeping schools solvent with tens of millions of dollars in direct payments.

But Katz also invested in the city’s growth.

Chet Orloff is a historian who served on the city Planning Commission. Orloff sees entire areas of Portland that bear Katz’s imprint.

“The Pearl District, definitely, South Waterfront, Eastbank Esplanade ... Streetcar ... they have a thread running through them,” Orloff said. “They’re all about making this place more livable, and they’re all very design oriented ... the finest legacy this mayor left is this collection of not just buildings, but places. They really have become places.”

Katz drilled down on urban design and initiated aggressive anti-crime programs.

The Rev. Chuck Currie, a longtime poverty and housing activist, first got to know Katz when he was a teenager and just getting involved in politics. When she ran for mayor, he voted for her. But he says he was taken aback when Katz declined to act on low-income housing — the very homeless policy position points her campaign had asked him to write.

“The east side of Portland was mostly ignored during her tenure. Homelessness was an issue that she did not address. She was somebody who’d worked in Legal Aid, someone who’d supported Bobby Kennedy,” Currie said.

Currie remembers many very tense council meetings with Katz staring at him, silently.

Katz sometimes spoke of crime as a livability issue, part of a larger plan for changing the city. Even her critics agree her most durable imprint was the reclamation of entire industrial neighborhoods. She negotiated with developers for the creation of glittering high-rises in the Pearl and South Waterfront. Katz got the streetcar system moving and enlisted the private sector to help fund parks and other amenities.

In her later years at City Hall, Katz had serious health issues — a breast cancer diagnosis in 2000 and uterine cancer in 2004. Many close to her say it was very difficult for her to take care of herself while running the city.

During this time, Currie said he swallowed his frustration with Katz and their disputes. He hand-wrote a letter expressing good wishes for Katz’s health and received a gracious handwritten response.

“Both my daughters were assigned projects in their third-grade class on famous Portlanders,” Currie said. “My daughter Catherine was assigned Vera Katz. I pulled out pictures of the flood from 1996.”

That year, the Willamette swelled 10 feet above flood stage, nearly overwhelming downtown’s iconic Tom McCall Waterfront Park. Currie recalls the sandbag brigade.

“I was there, the mayor was there, the whole city was there,” Currie said. “That’s one of the moments I’ll always remember about Vera ... her leadership in that moment of crisis.”



Currie said he told his daughter that while he sometimes disagreed with Katz, the mayor loved her city and did her best.