

The Oregonian

Portland Accidentally Sends Out Alert Warning of 911 Outage in 5 Counties

*By Everton Bailey
July 2, 2018*

The Portland Bureau of Emergency Communications erroneously sent out a televised emergency alert Monday that warned of a nonexistent 911 outage.

Todd DeWeese, an agency spokesman, said the 911 service was testing the emergency alert system when the alert was somehow broadcasted to residents in Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah and Washington counties in Oregon and Clark County in Washington. He said he didn't know how it happened.

"As far as we knew, we did everything right," DeWeese said. "It was in practice mode and for some reason, it didn't stay that way."

The message, written in English and Spanish, appeared around 4:15 p.m. It said the outage was scheduled to last from 4:02 p.m. to 4:32 p.m.

DeWeese said there were no issues with the 911 system in the counties mentioned in the message. The system will be examined to determine what caused the malfunction, he said.

A routine local test of the emergency alert system is scheduled for Thursday.

The Portland Tribune

ADUs Often More Affordable, Except When Short-Term Rentals

*By Steve Law
July 2, 2018*

Portland State University survey provides new insights about fast-growing residential trend in the city.

Portland's growing inventory of accessory dwelling units generally rent for about the same or lower than apartments, with one major exception: About a quarter of the units are set aside for more lucrative Airbnb-style nightly rentals.

Those are some of the takeaways from a newly released survey by Portland State University's Institute for Sustainable Solutions. The institute is spearheading a multiyear initiative to make accessory dwelling units, sometimes called "granny flats" or "mother-in-law apartments," easier and less costly to design, finance and build.

The survey of 515 ADU owners, tenants and others who want to build them found the average rent for the units in the city, including utilities, is \$1,218. That compares to the average rent for a studio apartment now of \$1,170, and \$1,368 for a two-bedroom, according to Rent Cafe website. However, those apartment rents do not include utilities.

"The rents are about the same or lower than apartment rents but they're located in places where there aren't apartments," said Robert Liberty, director of the Institute of Sustainable Solutions. "A lot of them are cheaper."

Surveyors found 44 percent of the ADUs on the rental market are rented for below the market rate.

Secondary dwelling units can be added to nearly every single-family lot in Portland, either as a detached backyard cottage or a converted garage, attic or basement. They are largely being built in closer-in neighborhoods that enable tenants to be closer to jobs and desirable restaurants and bars.

Interestingly, the survey found that those building ADUs have very high education levels, and that extends to the people who rent them. Four of every five ADU tenants have four years of college or more, researchers found.

"I think these people are early adopters," Liberty said.

The initial wave of ADU builders and tenants tends to be clustered in more desirable closer-in neighborhoods, he said, that are also more popular for short-term rentals. "If we can make it easier for people and we can address the financing challenges, we can move beyond this limited geography and group of people."

PSU's ADU project is developing cheaper modular designs, teaming with others to create a "concierge service" to help people with building projects, and with a nonprofit lender to create new loan products.

The city of Portland has enacted a series of measures to promote ADUs, and until recently was seeing more of them built than any other city in the country. In 2016, 615 permits for new ADUs were issued by the city.

The state of California has taken steps to promote ADUs across the state, and that propelled Los Angeles to leapfrog past Portland, especially as LA legalized some of its estimated 50,000 unpermitted ADUs in converted garages.

Because of the dearth of financing, it's hard to get a bank loan to build an ADU, which has limited those building them to homeowners with deep savings or enough equity in their home to take out a sizable home equity line of credit.

Many of those building them are affluent but not rich, Liberty said. "Rich people don't need to build them."

PSU sent surveys to those who obtained or sought permits to build ADUs, or who live in them, so the survey does not cover units whose owners never got city permits. By some estimates, those outnumber the legal ones.

The major new findings since a 2013 ADU survey by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality was the rise of Portlanders building them with the intent to rent them as nightly rentals, Liberty said. Those can easily fetch more than \$100 a night.

Liberty said it's important to note that ADU owners account for a small share of the more than 4,000 short-term rentals operated in the city.

"Short-term rentals is an issue just of use of the housing stock; it's not specific to ADUs," he said.

The city of Portland recently moved to end a major subsidy for ADU development unless the owners agree not to rent them out for short-term rentals for the first 10 years.

About one-third of those surveyed said they intend to use their units as short-term rentals at some time. Owners said they were drawn to short-term rentals because of the lucrative returns, and the flexibility to use their units as guest houses parts of the year for visiting family and friends.

However, a greater number said they built their units to rent out long-term.

Other survey results:

- 45 percent of the owners said they built detached units, 21 percent converted their basements and 21 percent converted their garages.
- The median size of the ADUs was between 500 and 600 square feet.
- Only one-sixth of the units are designed to easily accommodate people using wheelchairs, such as by having wide doorways and restrooms on the ground floor.
- Relatively few of the owners or tenants are people of color.
- Three-fifths of the tenants say they downsized their living quarters when moving into the ADUs.
- The biggest appeals of living in ADUs were, in order: cost of living, the neighborhood, distance from work, a relationship with the owner, to get detached housing, sustainability, a desire to downsize and access to transit.
- Only one in 10 of the ADU households have children.
- Seven in 10 said they were influenced to build the ADU by the city's waiver from paying development fees.
- Only 38 percent of ADU residents drive alone to work, compared to 70 percent across the region.

The Institute for Sustainable Solutions will hold a national webinar about the survey on July 31. To join in, contact Molly Kramer at mokramer@pdx.edu

Old 25-Acre Landfill Officially Becomes New Cully Park

By Hailey Stewart

July 2, 2018

The Portland park is now open to community members after years of planning and fundraising

After years of planning and fundraising, community members and Portland officials opened Cully Park Saturday.

The 25-acre park at Northeast 72nd Ave. in Portland was unveiled with live music, Native American drumming and storytelling, food and games for the community.

Funding for the park came from public and private partnerships with the Park System Development Charge — a one time fee assessed on a development that covers a portion of the cost — and various private donations, according to a news release.

Verde, a Portland-based outreach and advocacy group, spearheaded the "Let Us Build Cully Park!" coalition, and raised \$70 million in donations from a combination of 50 donors, partners

and grants. Portland Parks Commissioner Amanda Fritz devoted \$6 million in System Development Charge revenue for the park's construction.

"The new park is a beautiful place that is a tribute to the years of effort by Verde, the Let Us Build Cully Park! Coalition, the community, Commissioner Nick Fish and me, and Portland Parks & Recreation," Portland Parks Commissioner Amanda Fritz said. "The park construction would not have been accomplished without these partners' efforts, and the completion of the first community-driven parks project in an underserved, diverse area of town is a testimony to collaboration by many individual and agencies."

The project transformed the lot, which was once a landfill and before that a sand and gravel mine, into a park for one of the state's most diverse neighborhoods. In addition to being one of the most diverse with 53 percent people of color and 27 percent of households below the poverty line, the area was one of the most park-deficient neighborhoods in Oregon, according to the news release.

Before the park opened, 517 families in the neighborhood did not have access to large open outdoor space and nature within a half-mile walk.

The park was designed with "community engagement and economic opportunity" in mind, the news release says. It features a playground, a community garden, a youth soccer field, walking paths, an off-leash dog area and space for future sports fields. The park also has parking space for 50 vehicles, restrooms and covered shelters.

Later this summer, Cully Park will be the location for Festival Latino, an event with live music, a soccer tournament and fitness activities. The event will take place Aug. 11 at 4 p.m.

"Cully Park is a statement about the power of community, and I want to especially thank the hundreds of Cully adults, families and children who worked so hard for so long -- my friends, you did it, you designed and built a park which everyone can enjoy, and which will serve generations of Portlanders," Executive Director of Verde Alan Hipolito said.

"From the unique Native Gathering Garden which will help honor and educate about indigenous cultural values and ethics, to sports fields, the huge play areas, climbing boulders, an overlook, dog off-leash area and much more, the park opening caps a much-anticipated, years-long process. Cully Park is now a showcase destination for relaxation, reflection, and play," Portland Parks & Recreation Interim Director Kia Selley said.

Willamette Week

Lyft Now Owns Biketown and Plans to Bring Dockless Bikes to Portland

*By Shannon Gormley
July 2, 2018*

Though rumors began circulating last month, the purchase was made official this morning.

Biketown has a new owner—ride-share company Lyft.

Rumors began circulating last month that Lyft would buy Motivate, the company that runs Biketown. Today, Lyft officially announced their acquisition of Motivate, which is the largest bike-share company in the U.S.

The ride-share company will take over all of Motivate's contracts, including its deal with the City of Portland. Along with the promise of more capital poured into Biketown's existing infrastructure, Lyft's press release states that the company plans to transition to dockless bikes.

It's an exciting shift, since Biketown's docking system has proven to be one of the program's biggest drawbacks. Seattle switched to dockless bikes in January, and now has a ridership rate that's only second to New York's. Some of Motivate's other markets, including New York's CitiBikes, began piloting dockless programs this spring.

Madeline Kaye, a PR representative for Lyft, tells WW that there will be no immediate changes to Biketown, and that it's too early to announce when dockless bikes will be installed.

"Lyft will begin integrating bikes into the Lyft platform once the deal closes, but it's safe to assume that bikes will become a mode that can be selected within the Lyft app," says Kaye.

The buyout is Lyft's entrance into the bike-share market, a decision that rivals Uber's purchase of JUMP this spring.

The Portland Business Journal

Lyft Finalizes Deal for Portland's Biketown, Other Bike Share Programs

*By Andy Giegerich
July 2, 2018*

The company that owns Portland's bicycle share program has been sold.

Motivate, which oversees Biketown and other bike share programs including New York's CitiBike, was, as expected, sold to Lyft. The deal had been rumored for the last several weeks.

Portland's popular program is sponsored by Nike Inc. Motivate had said in June it planned to expand Biketown's boundaries and adjust pricing downward.

The news was announced through the company's blog.

"Lyft and Motivate have both been committed for years to the same goal of reducing the need for personal car ownership by providing reliable and affordable ways to move around our cities," said John Zimmer, Lyft co-founder and president. "Bringing together Lyft and Motivate will accelerate our collaboration with cities and deliver even better experiences to our passengers and riders."

Along with New York and Portland, Motivate operates as Ford GoBike.

As part of this agreement, Lyft is buying Motivate's technology and corporate functions, including its city contracts. Chicago, Portland, Boston and Washington, D.C., are among the other major metropolitan areas in which Motivate operates.

While the blog post did not mention a price, the acquisition was reportedly valued at about \$250 million.