

The Oregonian

Portland Budget Director Leaves for Parks & Rec Job

By Gordon Friedman

October 9, 2018

Claudio Campuzano, the interim director of Portland's City Budget Office, is leaving his post to take a job as a manager at Portland Parks & Recreation, he said Tuesday.

With Campuzano's departure, the budget office loses its top employee for the second time in five months. And it comes as the office and top city administrators are working to redo Portland's budget process, aiming to make it more stable, predictable and transparent.

Campuzano has been a city employee for 10 years, working his way up the ladder as a financial analyst and assistant budget director before being named interim director after Andrew Scott left the post in May. The job is demanding, requiring financial skills and political deftness to guide the mayor, city commissioners and bureau directors as they craft Portland's more than \$5 billion annual budget.

Campuzano said the city has closed its recruitment for a permanent budget office director, who will report to the mayor. It's unclear when the mayor's office will announce Campuzano's replacement.

Campuzano's job at Parks & Recreation will have him oversee finance, technology and parks property, though his primary role will be managing the bureau's more than \$200 million annual budget.

The Portland Tribune

City Hall: Police Change Gun Violence Tracking Methods

By Jim Redden

October 9, 2018

Plus, the Inclusionary Housing policy is producing more affordable housing, and a US judge has delayed the start of the new police community oversight committee.

The Portland Police Bureau has redesignated the Gang Violence Response Team as the Gun Violence Response Team.

The change means the team will investigate all incidents of gun violence, except for robberies and domestic violence, instead of only those involving gangs. The bureau still has a Gang Enforcement Team, however.

The change will make it impossible to directly compare the number of such incidents by month and year until 2020. The most recent numbers, including a few incidents investigated after the change was made, show little change this year from 2017. As of Oct. 1, the team had investigated 88 incidents of gang and gun violence, compared to 86 incidents of gang violence by the same time last year.

Several shootings have happened since then, including two homicides.

New policy producing more affordable housing

The Portland Housing Bureau reports that 362 affordable apartments either have been built or are in the development process since the Inclusionary Housing program approved by the City Council took effect in February 2017.

The IH program requires developers to set aside units affordable to households earning 80 percent or less of the median family income in new multifamily projects with 20 or more apartments. Over the past 18 months, the Bureau of Development Services has issued or began processing permits for 43 projects covered by the IH program.

The PHB report released Oct. 3 says Portland has a deficit of 22,000 affordable units, however, and must produce an additional 10,000 by 2035 just to maintain that gap, given the 123,000 additional households expected in the city by then.

To read the report, go to: <http://tinyurl.com/ycr8k9pm>.

Community oversight panel delayed

U.S. District Judge Michael Simon refused last Thursday to grant final approval to Portland's new citizen police reform oversight panel, saying he needs more information to make a final decision.

Simon is overseeing the city's settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice after its investigation determined Portland police have historically used excessive force against the mentally ill. Such a committee is a required part of the settlement.

Although the City Council already has approved the new 13-member Committee on Community-Engaged Policing proposed by Mayor Ted Wheeler, Simon ordered all parties to return to court with an update on June 6.

Willamette Week

Opponents of Portland Clean Energy Measure: Tax Haul Could Double City's Estimate

*By Nigel Jaquiss
October 9, 2018*

ECONorthwest analysis says 1 percent surcharge on big retailers could yield between \$43 million and \$79 million a year.

Opponents of a city of Portland tax measure on the November ballot today released a study showing that Measure 26-201, the Portland Clean Energy Initiative, could raise \$43 million to \$79 million annually in taxes.

That's a bigger number than a preliminary estimate from the city's Revenue Division, which said in June 2017 that the measure was likely to raise \$35 million to \$51 million. (Proponents of the measure tweaked it slightly after the city produced its estimate.)

Opponents of the tax, who include many of the big retailers that would probably pay it—such as Walmart, Comcast and Fred Meyer—hired Portland consulting firm ECONorthwest to analyze the measure. The company produced its report in July but it was only released today.

The tax measure, which has the support of 150 community organizations and City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, would levy a 1 percent surcharge on the revenues of large retailers that have more than \$500,000 in retail sales in Portland and more than \$1 billion in retail sales nationally.

The money would be used to fund energy efficiency and carbon reduction projects for low-income Portlanders and communities of color and to provide job training in the energy field for those groups.

ECONorthwest wrote that ambiguities in key definitions of what exactly constitutes "retail sales" and which companies qualify as "large retailers."

"The large estimated range is primarily a function of ambiguous wording in the Initiative itself and uncertainty over how the Initiative would be implemented by the City of Portland if it were to be passed," the report says.

Proponents aren't buying it.

"The Portland Clean Energy Initiative is well-written and broadly supported by all segments of our city," said Dr. Adriana Voss-Andreae, the executive director of 350PDX and one of the measure's chief petitioners. "Our initiative will create huge energy savings and job opportunities for low-income Portlanders. The few wealthy corporations that will be subject to the surcharge would rather spend thousands on a biased study than pay their fair share so that low-income Portlanders can have clean energy and living-wage jobs."

The Skanner

Portland NAACP Speaks on the City Council Resolution on Unreinforced Masonry Buildings

*By Antjuan Tolbert
October 9, 2018*

The NAACP wants the City Council to delay or reconsider a resolution that the civil rights organization says discriminates against African Americans and could displace people of color from their traditional North & Northeast Portland neighborhoods.

The resolution, passed by the council on June 13, addresses seismic risks to buildings with unreinforced masonry (URM) that could collapse during a 5.0+ magnitude earthquake.

The measure would disproportionately harm disadvantaged residents. Moreover, the city did not consult with them, has not adequately informed them and has not taken necessary steps to mitigate the damage and displacement the measure would cause, wrote E.D. Mondainé, president of the Portland chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

"My absolute hope is that it is not the thought of the Portland City Council, that the African American community of greater Portland, Oregon, stand idly by while being further marginalized and disenfranchised; nor walk silently while being continually oppressed, turning a blind eye toward injustice," Mondainé said in a letter to Mayor Ted Wheeler and other members of the city council.

"I want to believe that Oregon is a place that values community, and a place that desires to be a part of healing.

“I want to believe that the Oregonians of today are better than the Oregonians of the 1800’s,” the letter said.

Mondainé, Pastor of the Celebration Tabernacle Church and a small business owner in North Portland, likened the measure to the displacement of African Americans from the Albina neighborhood by the Portland Development Commission (PDC) in the 1960’s and 1970’s.

“The City Council declared the area blighted in 1964 (similar to what is happening now). The PDC tore down 160 houses and 28 businesses.” Mondainé said in his letter.

Under the current resolution, Mondainé said, buildings with unreinforced masonry will be “placarded,” a step he likened to the “blighting” of Albina, and one that will harm the property values of owners and could displace renters.

Regarding the current resolution, the NAACP president wrote: “The City of Portland, Oregon maintains that all affected property owners were notified via United States postal Services regular mail.

"However, a comprehensive survey of a council of African American Pastors, and several other African American business owners (myself included), all report not having received said notifications. The result is a great number of affected stakeholders that are both uninformed about their non-compliance status and excluded from the decision-making process. “

“The NAACP would like to believe that the city did its due diligence to inform the community concerning this issue; however, due to the harms that have been committed, and yet to be repaired, against the African American community ... the NAACP is requesting that the URM placarding be halted until an inclusive resolution has been drafted and approved by the community,” the letter said.

The letter quotes documentation from the city government that the database of unreinforced masonry buildings is not reliable.

“The negative implications surrounding placarding on all listed URMs will undoubtedly cause horrendous and costly ramifications to property owners. The ability to secure financing, and buy or sell property, will be severely hindered. The fact that The City of Portland’s URM list is unreliable becomes an immense injustice to the property owner, and a mischaracterization of said property” it said.

Oregon has a history of racial discrimination, and also of seeking to right the wrongs of the past, Mondainé wrote. “It is imperative to remember that in 1857, Oregon adopted a state constitution that banned black people from visiting the state, residing in the state, or holding property in the state. The law stated, ‘No free negro or mulatto... shall ever come, reside, or be within this State, or hold any real estate, or make any contracts, or sustain any suit therein.’”

“Let it be established that the African American community has no desire to be noncompliant” the letter said. “It is however, of critical concern of the NAACP Portland Branch, that Oregon’s documented history of excluding the African American community from the decision making processes, appears to be rearing it’s unsightly head once again.”

“The NAACP Portland Branch is open to dialogue with City Council with hopes of orchestrating an inclusive plan that will help to ensure not only that the African American community is included in the resolution, but to also ensure that the African American community is provided with adequate support from the city to be in compliance. We hope that the City will make the righteous and equitable decision.

We are stronger together. I look forward to your response,” the letter said.

Portland City Council will vote October 10 to require plaques on unreinforced masonry buildings and notify tenants. Information about the proposed ordinance is available on the Portland Bureau of Development Services website. Comments can be sent to cctestimony@portlandoregon.gov.

The Portland Observer

Shaking Up Controversy

By Danny Peterson

October 9, 2018

Earthquake retrofits seen as next wave for displacements

A city-led effort to post and label some buildings in Portland as potentially unsafe during a major earthquake, the first step to requiring major and costly upgrades, is shaking up controversy with many African American community church leaders, among others, who say the unintended consequences of such a measure may lead to an undesired repetition of history: homes, businesses and non-profit organizations in traditional communities of color being displaced at the hands of the city.

A proposed placarding ordinance, slated to be voted on by the City Council on Wednesday, is the first part of an over-arching effort to get certain buildings made of brick and mortar or brick and plaster, called unreinforced masonry (URM), up to current codes over the next several years. Over 1,600 such buildings exist in Portland, according to the city's website.

Though scientists consider Portland to be due or overdue for a major earthquake, the city has more URM buildings that are at risk of collapse during an earthquake than any other city on the West Coast, a city official said.

Bishop Marcus Irving of Albina Christian Life Center on N Willamette Blvd says his church is one of the properties the city has earmarked to receive a warning sign for posting, which conveys its message in 50-point bold font.

Irving was upset to learn about the requirements, just one month prior to a resolution being passed back in June setting guidance for an eventual adoption of the retrofitting mandate.

"When I started contacting churches, none of them knew anything about the [proposed] mandate to retrofit our buildings," Irving said.

Though city officials have said they sent letters to stakeholders this past spring, many apparently had not received them, according to a statement from the Portland NAACP which is working on the issue on behalf of other black churches and other community members.

Irving's church and two other black churches were on the URM list on June 16 of this year, according to an internet archive of the city's website from that time. Those churches, both in north Portland, were Celebration Tabernacle Church, led by current NAACP president Pastor E.D. Mondaine and Christ Memorial Church, led by Pastor Roy Tate. Both Mondaine and Tate told the Portland Observer they didn't receive any notification then that they were on the list, but Irving did receive written notice in May. According to the most up-to-date URM list from the city's website, all three are still listed.

New Testament Church of God, Maranatha Church, and Trinity Full Gospel Pentecostal Church are more examples of black churches in the north/northeast area of Portland on the list, among dozens of other churches all across the city.

A huge concern for Bishop Irving and others is the expense to retrofit. Irving estimates the cost to upgrade his church for better earthquake protection would be anywhere from \$1 to \$1.75 million.

“There's no lending institution that would lend us that kind of money,” he said.

Continuing to operate without the upgrades, Irving said, could result in his church, and other establishments who can't afford the remodels, being condemned and forced closed.

In addition, some 7,000 residential units--1,800 of which are designated as serving low-income – are designated as non-conforming to the new standards.

Of the 1,600 non-residential URM buildings, 1,415 are commercial, including thousands of small businesses, 43 are Portland Public Schools, and 38 churches, according to a grassroots volunteer group made of individual and family community members called Save Portland Buildings.

About four years ago, the City Council directed three of its city departments—the Bureau of Emergency Management, Bureau of Development Services, and Portland Development Commission (now called Prosper Portland)—to research and create recommendations for a mandatory retrofit policy for the buildings in question, Bureau of Emergency Management Public Information Officer Dan Douthit told the Portland Observer.

The mandate to go beyond the required posting to actually retrofit the identified commercial buildings, schools and churches, is expected to come to City Hall in about a year. A committee will be formed until that time to assess the logistics of its implementation (the city is currently accepting applications to be a part of that committee)

As part of that process, city officials are working with state legislators to drum up a way of partially reimbursing owners for the cost of retrofitting, Douthit said. He added that a revolving fund specifically designated for non-profits, is one idea being looked into.

A 20-year time frame for the building upgrades to be completed for each building, with a shorter timeframe for city-owned buildings, is expected to be part of the mandate, but the yet-to-be-formed committee will ultimately decide that, Douthit said.

Irving has called for the entire process to start from scratch and Portland NAACP released a statement last month calling for the immediate halting of the any placarding initiatives “until an inclusive resolution has been drafted and approved by the community.”

The civil rights group compared the practice of placarding to the historical blighting of Albina, referencing black neighborhoods that were designated as “blighted” in north and northeast Portland in the 1960s and 70s by City Council. The designation allowed the Portland Development Commission to tear down 160 houses and 28 businesses and is blamed with causing the displacement of a large number of African Americans in the area.

According to its website, the Save Portland Buildings group also calls for the halting of placarding on buildings, as well as education to the community about earthquake readiness, and a fix of the city's URM list which has inaccuracies.

A disclaimer on the city's website states its list of URM buildings apparently isn't 100 percent reliable, having been started from a list from the 1990s from a very cursory “windshield” study, Douthit said. Data points were then investigated, corrected, or added later by city staff, when the retrofit mandate recommendations were being formulated four years ago.

Douthit said the list is mostly accurate. He added that an appeals process is in place for those who are on the list that might've gotten their building upgraded in the interim, which would further improve the list's accuracy.

The accuracy of the list raised a lot of questions from community members last Wednesday when the City Council heard testimonies on the placarding proposal and received much opposition, though Commissioner Dan Saltzman defended the list.

Community members representing music venues, business owners, and others said the placards could drive away revenue. During that hearing an amendment passed unanimously, initiated by Commissioner Amanda Fritz, to make the placards more accessible—such as including the text in brail—and mandating the information be passed on to tenants of the buildings in question.

The original initiative to upgrade URM buildings was spurred by the fact that Portland is considered to be under-equipped for a major catastrophic earthquake charting 5 points or above on the Richter scale, one that scientists say may happen any day. The last catastrophic quake to hit Oregon was in 1700, 318 years ago, while the average interval between most major quakes is 243 years.

Under the city's proposed timeline, a publicly-owned building impacted would be required to post the warning placards on or before Jan. 1; privately-owned buildings would have until March 1 and non-profits would be given until Nov. 1, 2020. The new regulations would be enforced by regular inspections through Portland Fire and Rescue.