

The Oregonian

Irked by Inaction, Portland's Mayor Asks, 'In What City is it Legal to Engage in a Street Brawl?'

*By Gordon Friedman
March 12, 2019*

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler on Monday criticized how local prosecutors and his own Police Bureau handle street violence among political factions.

In a wide-ranging press conference, Wheeler called for a change to rules and laws if they do not allow police officers to arrest brawlers and vowed that anyone fighting on Portland streets will not escape unpunished.

Wheeler, animated, baffled and exasperated at times, said it defies belief that left- and right-wing protesters who slug each other on Portland streets can evade arrest and prosecution with impunity. Yet he said that is exactly the advice his aides have received from Multnomah County prosecutors.

Wheeler made particular reference to an Oct. 13, 2018 fight outside the Kelly's Olympian bar in downtown Portland. On that night, members of Patriot Prayer and Antifa used their fists, batons and even bear mace to bloody and blind each other outside the popular establishment.

Portland police officers were present but did not attempt any arrests. Video footage of the fight went viral, drawing international news coverage that cast the Rose City as a lawless town.

Wheeler said officials in the office of Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill told mayoral aides that prosecutors could do nothing because the law allows for "mutual combat" between people fighting.

"That was an unacceptable answer for me," Wheeler said Monday.

Brent Weisberg, a spokesman for Underhill, said the prosecutor's office will continue filing charges against people who fight in public. "We continue to investigate the violence that has recently unfolded and will hold the perpetrators accountable," Weisberg said.

Weisberg said the prosecutions are "incredibly complex" and some elements have been oversimplified "by individuals other than prosecutors." Sometimes prosecutors cannot determine "the initial aggressor," he said, making it legally and ethically questionable to file charges.

For his part, Wheeler said that when he watched video of the fight, he "could not reconcile how what I was seeing on that tape could possibly be sanctioned or legal."

In the months since, news coverage has questioned the mutual combat standard, probing if Underhill's office was correct in its assessment and showing that Joey Gibson, the Patriot Prayer ringleader, believed mutual combat laws would keep his followers from prosecution.

"I found it useful when people started raising the question of whether mutual combat was a thing at all," Wheeler said. "Turns out, guess what, it's not."

State law bans mutual combat and physical fighting in general.

As prosecutors have declined to file charges, police have declined to make arrests. Wheeler said that left him wondering, "Why aren't you arresting these people?"

“In what city is it legal to engage in a street brawl?” the mayor asked. “C’mon folks, we’re overcomplicating this. You’re not allowed to fight on the streets of the city.”

Wheeler went on: “How am I supposed to explain this to my 12-year-old daughter? That we allow adults to fight on the streets of our city. Is there anybody who actually thinks this is a good idea? I don’t.”

Berk Nelson, a senior adviser to Wheeler on police matters, said officers consider “the totality of the circumstances,” such as their own safety, before moving to arrest people fighting in the streets.

City Attorney Tracy Reeve declined to discuss if her office has done any analysis of the mutual combat standard or arrest practices, citing lawyer-client privilege.

Wheeler said he has not directed Police Chief Danielle Outlaw or other officials to change their approach to arrests. But he said he has made his frustrations “eminently clear to all parties involved.”

If the law doesn’t allow for arresting street fighters, it must be changed to “untie our hands,” he said.

“In cities across the country they’re looking at us like, ‘What the heck? We’d arrest these people.’”

Portland Trumpets Rosy Numbers for Controversial Infill Plan, Buries Dimmer Forecast

*By Brad Schmidt
March 12, 2019*

Portland planners publicly overstated by five times the number of new homes they expect a controversial infill plan could create over the next two decades.

City officials boasted that their plan projects “the addition of 24,000 units in triplexes or fourplexes” by the year 2035.

But the city’s own forecasts paint a much different picture.

Planners expect a net of fewer than 4,000 new units to be built in residential neighborhoods citywide under their infill plan, according to numbers obtained by The Oregonian/OregonLive and not previously disclosed by the city.

What’s more, the plan isn’t expected to deliver those new homes to the inner eastside neighborhoods as planners have stated, an analysis of those numbers shows. Instead, it would disproportionately steer a majority of new units to poorer neighborhoods east of 82nd Avenue, where the risk of displacing residents is high.

It’s not clear which number might ultimately prove more accurate.

But planners have trumpeted the higher figure of new homes when they talk about ways to offer more housing options to keep prices affordable while using the lower figure to analyze specific neighborhood impacts and the potential that vulnerable residents could get pushed out to make way for the new homes.

The infill proposal could become official city policy by this summer. The city's volunteer Planning and Sustainability Commission is expected to vote on the proposal Tuesday before referring it to the City Council for final action.

While forecasting home construction is an inexact science, city officials acknowledge they haven't adequately communicated their infill projections. Nothing in their work was intended to be misleading, they say.

"We need to be more articulate," said Donnie Oliveira, a spokesman for Portland's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

Planners say their overarching objective isn't to hit a quota for new infill but rather to create more choices about the types of homes available in residential neighborhoods.

Changing the zoning code is the only way to add new housing options, they say, even if it takes several decades for developers to build significantly more infill units.

"It's a major step in removing the regulatory barriers, but not the market barriers," said Morgan Tracy, a lead planner on the project.

Portland neighborhoods would see disparate changes in new housing construction if a residential infill plan is adopted. Portland is already expected to add about 16,000 new units in neighborhoods zoned for single-family housing. But if the infill plan is approved, that number would grow to about 20,000 – with areas east of 82nd Avenue taking more than half of the net gain. This map shows how the infill proposal would either increase or decrease new home construction, by census tract, above the current forecast.

Called the Residential Infill Project, the zoning proposal has been four years in the making.

Planners set out to revise zoning codes to discourage developers from demolishing an old home to make way for a single, expensive McMansion. It also aims to address Portland's "missing middle," providing more housing choices for residents looking to live in something other than a detached single-family home or an apartment along a bustling commercial drag.

Planners devised a plan that would greenlight the construction of duplexes, triplexes and quads in leafy neighborhoods currently zoned to allow only single-family housing.

The concept is beloved among progressives who believe zoning constraints limit housing supply and exacerbate Portland's mounting affordability crisis. But residents from influential neighborhood associations, such as Eastmoreland and Multnomah, deride the project as a Trojan horse that would cram more people into neighborhoods and encourage demolitions of old homes.

In reality, the project could do neither.

Confusion about Portland's infill project can be traced to two numbers: one prominently displayed in a February city report and one that is nowhere to be found.

The city report spelled out the proposed infill zoning changes for the planning commission and general public.

The figure that the city emphasized in the report, 24,000 new infill homes, initially came from an economic analysis by an outside consultant, Johnson Economics. It analyzed redevelopment potential given previous development trends, underlying land values and projected sales or rental prices. It represented maximum growth in an unfettered market.

But the city didn't spell out results of a second, similar analysis that reached a much different conclusion: about 4,000 new units. That number never appeared in the report and could be found only by obtaining data used to draw the report's maps -- which The Oregonian/OregonLive did.

The two numbers are so disparate because the consultant and the planners used different projections to calculate population growth and movement.

Portland planners started with the assumption that the city would add about 123,000 housing units by 2035 -- a number already vetted and used in the city's comprehensive zoning plan. Most of those are projected to be built in high-density areas like downtown or busy commuter corridors. Portland's single-family neighborhoods would get 16,000 new units, according to the comprehensive plan.

With the adoption of the infill proposal, planners shifted some growth from apartments along corridors into single-family neighborhoods. They now project about 20,000 new households in residential neighborhoods -- a 4,000-home net increase in those areas.

The planning bureau considers the 4,000 tally a "more realistic view" of projected infill growth, said Oliveira, the spokesman, though planners say the differing forecasts are intended to complement rather than compete against one another.

"They're both valid in terms of providing a range of what the outcomes could be," said Tyler Bump, a senior economic planner for the city.

The infill plan likely would cause fewer new homes to be built in Portland's popular amenity-rich neighborhoods closest to downtown, The Oregonian/OregonLive's review found.

That's not what planners have stated publicly. New homes under the city's proposal would be "distributed in neighborhoods across the city" while "inner Portland neighborhoods like Buckman, Richmond, Eliot, Humboldt and Northwest" would see "moderate increases in new housing units," planners wrote in their February report.

But a review of the city's forecast for 4,000 new homes shows the opposite.

Some of those same neighborhoods -- Buckman, Richmond and Northwest Portland -- could instead see no change, or even less development, because of the city's infill plan. Areas such as Sellwood-Westmoreland, Eastmoreland, Laurelhurst, Grant Park and Alameda would also see a decline in new houses.

And far from being distributed across the city, new homes under the infill plan would largely be concentrated only in a handful of areas: St. Johns in North Portland, Brentwood-Darlington and Mt. Scott-Arleta in Southeast Portland, Cully in Northeast Portland and many neighborhoods in east Portland.

In fact, areas east of 82nd Avenue stand to collectively gain about 2,000 new units, or more than half all of the units citywide projected under the infill plan. That's because land prices are lower, increasing the odds a given lot will be redeveloped.

In an earlier version of the city's infill plan, from October 2017, officials specifically excluded much of east Portland and St. Johns from such development because those areas "lack access to services, safe active transportation and transit connections, and they have poorer access to living-wage employment opportunities." Not steering additional growth to those would be consistent with city policies "to prevent displacement," they wrote.

City planners say they are no longer worried.

Tom Armstrong, a supervising planner for Portland, said city leaders are committed to making necessary improvements in east Portland. As an example, he pointed to a 10-year-old action plan for the area that has helped spark city-funded improvements.

“There has been renewed focus on investment,” he said.

Tom Lewis, chairman of the Centennial Community Association, said he’d gladly welcome more people but doubts the Portland City Council will spend more money in his outer eastside neighborhood.

Lewis bought his three-bedroom ranch house on Southeast 148th Avenue 46 years ago and has seen the city encourage the growth of thousands of new residents to the surrounding area.

“For 30 years, the infrastructure has not come with the growth,” he said. “That’s my main concern. We’ve lost grocery stores. We’re a food desert. We’ve just been run over on the boulevards left and right, with pedestrians being killed.”

Meanwhile, city planners claimed in their report that west Portland neighborhoods would “see minimal change in new housing units.” In fact, neighborhoods collectively west of the Willamette River would see about 500 fewer units built because of the infill proposal, The Oregonian/OregonLive found.

Reductions on the westside are linked to new rules that would cap the square footage of new single-family homes, making redevelopment there less appealing for both buyers and builders.

“I don’t think it’s necessarily inequitable,” Armstrong said of the projected disparities in growth between west Portland and neighborhoods east of 82nd Avenue.

Michael Andersen, a senior researcher for the urban think tank Sightline Institute, who has supported elements of the plan that promote more housing, said the newsroom’s findings appear to reflect the city’s effort to find a compromise solution.

“Advocates in Cully, east Portland and St. Johns have spoken to say they want the option to have these housing options in their areas, and it’s good that they may be getting some,” he said. “But the fact that so few might be built in general, and so few in high-amenity areas, is concerning.”

If the infill project faces one daunting hurdle, it may be the risk of displacing low-income renters.

City planners say their infill plan would result in less displacement citywide by 2035 than by simply leaving existing zoning rules in place. About 600 low-income renters in single-family homes are at risk of displacement under current zoning but that number would drop to about 480 under the infill plan, according to the city.

But Portland’s analysis is based on the proposal generating roughly 4,000 net new units. Planners say they haven’t run numbers to determine displacement if the number of new units built under the plan is higher, as the economic forecast suggested.

“It’s time-consuming work to do,” Tracy said. “And certainly if we’re asked the question we’re going to answer to the best our ability.”

The potential for displacement is greatest in neighborhoods where development is more likely and there’s a higher proportion of low-income renters, according to the city’s analysis.

Virtually every neighborhood slated to add significantly more units under the infill plan -- including Brentwood-Darlington, Mt. Scott-Arleta, Cully, St. Johns and much of the area east of 82nd Avenue -- is considered by planners to be at risk for displacement.

Andre Baugh, a member of Portland's Planning and Sustainability Commission, has been critical in recent public meetings about the potential for the project to hurt low-income renters and communities of color in vulnerable neighborhoods.

"I really worry that we're being asked to displace certain populations faster than others, for this benefit of this greater good," he said at a public meeting last month. "The greater good of more units is not benefiting everybody equally."

Baugh was more restrained in comments to The Oregonian/OregonLive.

"There's risk here," he said, adding that he plans to press his case Tuesday. "I'm going to push it really hard, because it's the last chance to do that."

Portland Economist Calls Rose Quarter Freeway Project 'Tragic Error'

*By Andrew Theen
March 11, 2019*

A Portland economist and outspoken critic of the project to widen Interstate 5 through the Rose Quarter said Monday that it would be a "tragic error," and would serve as a lesson to other cities and states if the freeway project is built.

Joe Cortright said on his blog that opposing the estimated \$500 million project, which would add merging lanes and wider shoulders on I-5 through the Rose Quarter in the heart of Portland, is "important to the future of cities everywhere."

"A wider freeway will induce more traffic and pollution (and ironically, worsen traffic congestion), runs directly counter to the city and state's goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, does nothing to improve safety, especially for those walking or biking, and disproportionately benefits higher income commuters from outside the city, while imposing social and environmental costs primarily on lower income households and people of color," Cortright wrote on his City Observatory blog.

His comments come a day before the city and state transportation departments will hold a public hearing on the project, and they set the stage for what will likely be a lengthy and contentious hearing.

Elected officials are expected to attend the hearing and speak as well.

Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, who oversees the transportation bureau, has so far taken a measured tone on the project. In a January blog post, Eudaly said a project solely to benefit cars would be unacceptable.

"It should make it dramatically easier and safer for people walking, biking, taking transit, and driving in the Rose Quarter," she said in an email. Her chief of staff, Marshall Runkel, later told The Oregonian/OregonLive that while she may have different priorities for large infrastructure projects, she "doesn't have the professional expertise to second guess the technical analysis of PBOT and ODOT engineers."

Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty opposed the project during her campaign, and she told the Portland Tribune last week she believes the money would be better spent on bike and pedestrian projects.

Last month, the two local governments released a 108-page environmental assessment of the project, in which the governments stated the freeway project would actually “slightly reduce greenhouse gas emissions” and improve safety both on the freeway and on surface streets.

Runkel, Eudaly’s top aide, said the project had “evolved and improved,” and would be “unlikely to have any meaningful impact” on greenhouse gas emissions.

Cortright argued a similar freeway project on I-5 completed in 2010, which adds merging lanes between Lombard and Victory Boulevard in North Portland, resulted in an increase in traffic crashes – not a decrease.

Oregon transportation officials said the stretch of I-5 through the Rose Quarter had 881 crashes from 2011 to 2015, with most being fender benders on the southbound stretch of the highway near the merge with I-84.

Cortright, who has argued the state should first implement variable freeway tolls to manage congestion before moving forward with any large-scale infrastructure projects, also said he’s dubious has the ability to keep the final price tag under control.

The state in 2017 agreed to set \$30 million every year for the project starting in 2022. That money, according to the state statute, will be spent until the project is completed or bonds issued to pay for construction have been repaid. The agency expects to issue anywhere from \$420 million to \$450 million in bonds for the project over a 20- or 25-year period.

The actual price tag is squishy, too, as engineering costs are preliminary, but the estimate now hovers around \$500 million.

Cortright said ODOT had a record of cost overruns on major infrastructure projects, and none have rivaled the size and scale of the Rose Quarter. The most prominent example, a 5.5-mile new stretch of U.S. 20 between Newport and Corvallis, ballooned from an initial approved spending plan of \$145 million to \$365 million, according to state records.

The public hearing is from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. on March 12. People can sign up to speak starting at 4:30 p.m. and up until 6 p.m.

The state and city plan a brief project presentation followed by public comment. Elected officials will be asked to comment first, followed by other residents. The meeting is at the Oregon Convention Center in^[1]_{SEP} Room A108, 777 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

The Portland Tribune

Portland Means Progress: Mayor's Program Seeks \$15 Hourly

*By Zane Sparling
March 11, 2019*

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler unveiled a new initiative on March 11 designed for merchants, business.

With a spiffy new website, Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler announced an initiative calling on employers to practice commerce with diversity in mind and voluntarily pay their workers more.

The program — dubbed Portland Means Progress — is open to city merchants who boost their company pay to at least \$15 an hour, just over the \$14.75 hourly minimum wage mandated by state law for all metro area employees by July, 2022.

After meeting that benchmark, employers must then accomplish at least one of three other tasks:

- Establish a pipeline for under-represented youth seeking on-the-job experiences, either via an internal process or with city partners such as SummerWorks or Connect2Careers.
- Purchase goods from small businesses run by people of color. The city's development commission has an online directory, Mercatus, to help with procurement.
- Create an inclusive workforce by providing diversity and equity training classes to all employees and managers.

"It is good business to follow these practices," Wheeler said during his monthly press conference on Monday, March 11 at City Hall. "I'm very gratified to see the strong response from local employers."

The mayor says "several dozen" companies have signed on as early-adopters of the initiative, with plans to activate Portland Means Progress citywide in 2020. For more information, visit www.pdxmeansprogress.com.

Next generation cells?

Wheeler also fielded questions regarding the rollout of fifth-generation cell phone towers, which are expected to dot the city with small-scale 5G wireless connectivity nodes.

Portland was the only city to appeal the August, 2019 ruling by the Federal Communications Commission that requires municipalities to accept every application from telecommunications firms to build the infrastructure.

More cities sounded the alarm after a second September FCC rule limited the fees cities can charge the installers of the equipment, an issue highlighted by Wheeler at the winter meeting of the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

"The federal government is trying to take control, and we at City Hall take a dim view of that," Wheeler said Monday, calling the actions a "land grab."

The mayor and Commissioner Chloe Eudaly hope the City Council will authorize a study of the health effects surrounding 5G towers. Wheeler noted that the city's appeal of the FCC's 5G rules have been moved to the Ninth Circuit Court, where he expects more favorable terrain.

Anything else?

Wheeler said he supports the Oregon Department of Transportation's effort to add interstate lanes in the Rose Quarter, emphasizing that the state legislature only chose three projects to fund out of 80 options. He called it a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to reconnect the Albina community," even if the proposed I-5 caps won't be strong enough to support buildings, only parks.

Regarding the perennial dream to lure Major League Baseball to the Rose City, Wheeler said his staff have conducted "check-ins" with planners, but he hasn't heard anything new.

Wheeler hopes to meet in person with the owners of the Zenith energy terminal in Northwest Portland in order to verify what's already been reported in the press: That an expanded facility will import tar sands oil from multiple sources, including the Dakotas and Canada, in order to export it overseas.

Wheeler said he does not want the company to expand, since its infrastructure will be in an earthquake liquefaction zone.

City Hall Watch: Council to Weigh Police Body Camera Pilot Project

*By Jim Redden
March 12, 2019*

Despite their obvious benefits, body-worn cameras are controversial, with law enforcement and civil rights experts both raising questions.

What is the City Council considering? A measure to authorize \$1.6 million for a pilot project for body cameras for Portland police is on the agenda for Thursday, March 14.

Why is this important? Some criminal justice experts believe body-worn cameras are one of the best tools for understanding what police actually do in the field, especially after controversial incidents, such as police shootings. Video of such incidents can provide a more reliable record of what led up to them, how the police reacted, and whether the reactions were justified.

Why just a pilot project? Despite their obvious benefits, body-worn cameras are controversial.

Some law enforcement authorities argue the videos do not always give a complete picture of what happened. There may be other people or vehicles outside the range captured on video. They also can malfunction.

Some civil libertarians say police use of such cameras can be invasive, capturing video of people in crisis in private locations without their permission.

And the actual costs of operating a bureauwide police camera system are not yet known, including the cost of storing and editing requested video for public release.

How long has the council been considering the issue? The use of such cameras came to prominence after a series of controversial officer-involved shootings nearly a decade ago. A 2013 survey of 500 police agencies found that less than 25 percent used them. Then-President Barack Obama voiced support for them and the U.S. Department of Justice made \$23 million in grants available for pilot projects.

The Portland Police Bureau first began looking into them in 2014, seeking public feedback in 2015. The council approved \$834,000 in one-time funds and \$1.6 million in ongoing funds in the

2016-17 budget, but not all of the money was spent. Instead, the Oregon Legislature decided to weigh in on the issue, holding hearings and eventually setting guidelines for their use.

Other law enforcement agencies in the region already have deployed such cameras, including the Oregon State Police, the Washington County Sheriff's Office, the Beaverton and Hillsboro police departments, and the Portland State University Police Department.

When could the pilot project begin? If the council approves the ordinance, the project could begin in early 2020, following more public outreach by the police and additional approval by the council.

What can I do? The ordinance is introduced by Mayor Ted Wheeler, who is the police commissioner. His office number is 503-823-4120 and he can be reached at MayorWheeler@PortlandOregon.gov, @tedwheeler, and Mayor Ted Wheeler, 1221 S.W. Fourth Ave., Room 340, Portland, OR 97204

The hearing is scheduled for 2 p.m. Thursday, March 14, in the Council Chambers of City Hall.

You can read the ordinance at tinyurl.com/yytqlqbv.

Willamette Week

Mayor Ted Wheeler Says Prosecutors Gave Portland Police Bad Advice on Brawling: “We Could Have Acted Much Faster to Arrest People”

By Katie Shepherd

March 11, 2019

"My question was first of the Police Bureau: Why aren't you arresting these people?," Mayor Ted Wheeler says. "In what city is it okay? In what city is it legal to engage in a street brawl?"

Mayor Ted Wheeler sharply criticized Portland police and Multnomah County prosecutors' tactics in approaching violent clashes between right-wing extremists and their antifascist adversaries on Portland's streets.

At a press conference Monday afternoon, he suggested the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office gave the Portland Police bad advice that discouraged officers from making arrests during what he called "semi-sanctioned street brawls."

"My question was, first, of the Police Bureau: Why aren't you arresting these people?," Wheeler says. "In what city is it okay? In what city is it legal to engage in a street brawl?"

Wheeler's press conference came days after WW reported that his office had asked police and prosecutors why they had not arrested right-wing extremists—and received answers that appeared to contradict Oregon law.

Today, Wheeler said he asked for that meeting between his staff, police and prosecutors to discuss why no one had been arrested after a vicious melee outside of Kelly's Olympian, where two far-right activists kicked and stomped on a man laying on the ground.

"In reviewing the video tape and in listening to what other people who are experts in criminal law were saying, I believe that we could have acted much faster to arrest people and cut it off,"

Wheeler says. "And it's even more concerning to me that this concept of mutual combat has been convoluted and watered down to the degree that even Joey Gibson is quoting it as a potential mitigating factor in coming to Portland and engaging in street brawls."

He says the concept of mutual combat—which is not a legal defense in Oregon—first came from a prosecutor at MCDA. When he asked police why they had not made arrests after a particularly brutal Oct. 13 beatdown that was captured on video, Wheeler says mutual combat was the excuse provided.

"The answer came back, 'Well, we've gotten this advice from the district attorney that there's something in Oregon statute called mutual combat,'" he says. "And if you don't have a witness who's willing to come forward, if you don't have somebody who is willing to admit that they were a victim, or if two people had agreed to arrange to have a fight, it makes it very very difficult to prosecute."

In an interview with Oregon Public Broadcasting on March 7, Wheeler credited two WW stories debunking mutual combat as a reason to not arrest people engaged in dangerous fist-fights.

"Willamette Week has done a series of stories this week raising the question about whether there was perhaps a tip of the hand, if you will, towards Joey Gibson's group in terms of giving them a legal basis to engage in street brawls on our streets," Wheeler said on OPB last week. "[WW's reporting shows] the standard of mutual combat doesn't really exist. It's a fiction. So for me as the police commissioner it raises questions about whether or not there is a bias that exists in the overall system that seems to be helping some groups but not others."

Today, Wheeler intensified his criticism—and added a message to protesters.

"And by the way," he said, "if you want to come here and fight somebody, and you've got somebody in mind, and they agree, can you do us all a favor? Rent a boxing ring. They're available. The streets of our community are not a boxing ring. It is not acceptable under any circumstances."

Mayor Ted Wheeler's Adviser Berk Nelson Will Move to Lobbyist Job at Umpqua Bank

By Rachel Monahan

March 11, 2019

Wheeler's office announced the departure on Friday without disclosing where he was going.

Mayor Ted Wheeler's office on Friday announced the departure of staffer Berk Nelson, who has served as a senior adviser on public health and safety, including some work as a liaison to the police bureau.

Nelson, who previously worked in commercial litigation at Perkins Coie before joining the mayor's office in Jan. 2017, will join Umpqua Bank as a lobbyist, the mayor's office confirmed Monday.

"As far as I know there's no business the bank has before the Mayor's Office," says Wheeler spokeswoman Eileen Park.

The mayor's office did not reveal his new employer on Friday. It highlighted Nelson's work in City Hall including his effort "relocating R2DToo," the homeless village, a move that had proved a stumbling block for previous administrations.

Nelson said he was glad for his time in the public sector.

"This has been one of the most rewarding experiences for me because I have gained immeasurable insight into how government serves the community," Nelson said in his statement Friday. "I have made many friends and partnerships along the way that I will carry into my next position."

Wheeler praised Nelson's work in a Friday statement.

"I will miss Berk—he brought a wealth of intelligence and ideas to this challenging position," he said. "I have been lucky to have such a talented, hardworking advisor over the last two years."

The Skanner

Portland Parks Foundation Hosts Series of March Events

March 11, 2019

New leadership is coming to Portland Parks & Recreation and Metro. PP&R is writing a parks plan for 2035. Metro's third major green spaces bond will be on the November 2019 ballot. A Portland Parks Foundation speaker series hosted by Randy Gragg and PPF will focus on how Portland can have a parks system worthy of the bigger city it is becoming. All events will take place at Portland Center Stage at The Armory, 128 Northwest 11th Avenue.

Tickets for the series are available [here](#).

March 11, "State of the Union" featuring Portland Parks & Recreation's new director Adena Long, Metro Council President Lynn Peterson, and Metro Parks and Nature Director Jonathan Blasher. This event takes place from 6:30 to 8 p.m. and tickets are [available here](#);

March 18, "Albina Vision + I-5 Rose Quarter: A \$500-million Parks Opportunity," featuring Albina Vision leaders Rukaiyah Adams and Michael Alexander, Vanport Mosaic and others, takes place from 6:30 to 8 p.m. and tickets are [available here](#);

March 25, "City of Gardens: What is the Portland We Want to Grow?" featuring community leaders and creative thinkers discussing the future of parks in Portland, takes place from 6:30 to 8 p.m. and tickets are [available here](#).