

The Oregonian

E-scooters Return to Portland Friday, But City Won't Say Which Companies

*By Andrew Theen
April 23, 2019*

Electric scooters will return to Portland streets on Friday for the first time since November, but transportation officials aren't yet saying which companies have received permits or how many devices to expect on day one.

Twelve companies applied for a one-year permit under the city's second attempt at regulating dockless e-scooters, the transportation trend that swept the nation's biggest cities in the past two years, but it's not clear which companies passed the city's standards.

"We won't be releasing company names until Friday," spokesman John Brady said in an email." The city confirmed to The Oregonian/OregonLive on Monday that it expects scooters to be available Friday, as originally planned, but it hasn't released any more details.

In 2018, five companies applied for the initial four-month trial period and three were approved.

The 12 companies that sought to enter Portland's marketplace for a year-long permit included two of the familiar brands from 2018 (Bird and Lime), plus well-known newcomers like Car2Go and Lyft.

Portland set different guidelines for allowing the on-demand and rentable scooter industry to operate on city streets in 2019, including requiring companies to use technology known as geofencing to prevent riders from parking devices in Tom McCall Waterfront Park, stepping up pressure on the companies to regulate illegal sidewalk riding and creating a one-time daily "right of way fee" designed to encourage the companies to offer service in east Portland (fees will skew higher for closer-in trips) and other regulations.

The city had previously said it would aim for starting with 2,500 devices citywide, but encouraged the companies to add more during the coming months. If companies meet the city's checklist, the total fleet size could grow 15,000 devices by January, but city leaders say 9,000 scooters is a more realistic fleet size.

Companies are required to begin service with no more than 50 percent of their permitted fleet size during the first week.

Transportation officials said they plan to make the approved company's applications publicly available later this week.

Woman Sues Portland Streetcar After Falling and Fracturing Thigh Bone While Buying Ticket

By Andrew Theen

April 23, 2019

A 78-year-old woman filed a lawsuit Monday seeking \$934,474 in damages after she fell and fractured her femur and suffered other injuries while buying a ticket onboard the Portland Streetcar last year.

Vincenza Scarpaci is suing the city, TriMet, the Portland Streetcar and the transit driver in Multnomah County Circuit Court relating to a May 2018 incident.

According to the lawsuit, Scarpaci boarded the streetcar at Southwest 11th Avenue and Clay Street on May 30, 2018 and started to buy a ticket on-board. Passengers can buy fares on-board the streetcar through a vending machine, unlike MAX light rail trains.

While she was reading the instructions of how to ride, Scarpaci said she was standing in the center aisle within view of the streetcar operator. Scarpaci alleges the streetcar operator “abruptly and without warning” pulled away from the station while she was still standing, causing Scarpaci to lose her balance and fall.

She fractured her femur, injured her left hip, aggravated osteoarthritis in her left knee and hip, and suffered anxiety and depression as a result of the incident, the lawsuit claims. Scarpaci said she incurred \$214,474.37 in medical costs as a result of her injuries and expects to spend another \$20,000 on medical care. She is seeking an additional \$700,000 because she suffered “permanent injury” and “severe pain and distress” to her daily life as a result of the incident.

Portland’s City Attorney Office declined to comment, citing the pending litigation.

Scarpaci said the streetcar operator pulled away without notifying her, creating an “unreasonably dangerous hazard,” especially as she was still standing trying to pay her fare.

The lawsuit alleges having a vending machine on a moving train, which requires “use of both hands to obtain a ticket,” is dangerous in and of itself.

Streetcar riders aren’t required to buy a fare on-board the vehicles. Users can buy tickets on the platform or by using the Hop Fastpass system, which allows riders to pre-load money on a transit pass and pay every time they ride streetcar or TriMet trains or buses. The streetcar has a Hop card reader onboard.

TriMet is transitioning away from its paper tickets, though riders will still be able to pay with cash on buses.

Portland Streetcar has “no immediate plans to do away with on-board vending, as we still sell paper Streetcar-only passes,” spokesman Andrew Plambeck said in an email. The transit service will discuss – with its board and other relevant stakeholders like TriMet’s committee on accessible transportation -- whether to include on-board machines on future streetcar vehicles, but there is no time table in place.

The Portland Tribune

Commissioner Hardesty Signs No Fossil Fuel Money Pledge

By Zane Sparling

April 24, 2019

Portland City Hall Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty aligns with Zenith oil terminal protesters.

City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty won't be reaping rewards from fossil fuel companies.

Hardesty announced Monday, April 22, that she signed on to a national compact — the No Fossil Fuel Money Pledge — in which politicians promise not to accept more than \$200 from political action committees, company executives or "front groups" whose business is making money from oil, gas or coal.

Hardesty went one step further, vowing not to accept any money at all.

"Fossil fuel money corrupts," Hardesty said, "and elevates the voices of dirty energy at the expense of people's health."

The first-termer won't be left penniless, however. Hardesty has just under \$17,000 in her campaign chest, according to state records. So far in 2019, she's spent about \$3,000 and has taken in almost \$1,000 in contributions.

Hardesty's 2018 campaign for office was predicated, in part, on championing the Portland Clean Energy Fund, and Hardesty was the only adult speaker at the Youth Climate Protest held on the steps of City Hall in March.

Hardesty also sent staffers to monitor the short-lived protest outside the Zenith oil terminal in Northwest Portland in on Earth Day weekend.

"I ran on a platform of small donor campaign contributions, open and accountable elections, and climate justice initiatives here in the city, and I urge my colleagues and future candidates to do the same," Hardesty said.

Other local signatories to the No Fossil Fuel Money Pledge include U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, Multnomah County Commissioner Susheela Jayapal, Milwaukie Mayor Mark Gamba and state Reps. Karin Power, Alissa Keny-Guyer, Tawna Sanchez and Rachel Prusak.

Willamette Week

E-Scooters Are Back in Portland, Starting Friday

By Elise Herron

April 23, 2019

It's still unclear how many will be available.

Electric scooters will be back on Portland streets this weekend.

Love them or hate them, e-scooters return Friday for a second, year-long pilot program.

A spokesman for Portland Bureau of Transportation, Dylan Rivera, confirmed with WW yesterday that the agency does "expect some e-scooters to be available on Friday."

He adds: "We are still working out the details about how many scooters will be available."

At the start of the month, 12 companies had applied for inclusion in the trial program. It's unclear how many companies have been approved, but PBOT says it will allow up to 2,500 e-scooters at the start of the pilot.

During the second pilot, PBOT plans to enforce stricter rules on riders operating scooters on sidewalks or in public parks.

As well, the agency will offer incentives to companies that effectively crack down on riding in prohibited areas and ones that make scooters available to East Portlanders and people with disabilities. Under the incentive program, the number of e-scooters on city streets could jump to 15,000 by January.

The Portland Business Journal

Despite Latest Setback, Prosper Portland Still Has High Hopes for Centennial Mills

By Jon Bell

April 24, 2019

About a year ago, Prosper Portland picked the Lynd Company to be the next team to take a shot at developing the Centennial Mills property on the Willamette River.

With its proposal to develop a mixed-use project with two buildings and 400 units, the Texas real estate developer had risen to the top of a pool of 11 offers that Prosper Portland had received.

But about six months into their due diligence phase, Lynd started to quiet down a bit in its communications with Prosper Portland. It soon became clear to Eric Jacobsen, a project manager with Prosper Portland, that Lynd was finding the site to be a little bit more complicated and challenging than they'd initially expected. So when word finally came to Prosper Portland that Lynd wanted out, he wasn't exactly shocked.

"I would say in the past six months, it's been pretty challenging to make much progress," he said, "so I wasn't entirely surprised when they finally said they didn't want to pursue it."

Last week, Lynd became the latest in a lengthening line of prospective developers who, for any number of reasons, have not been able to make something happen at Centennial Mills, the 4.4-acre property that the city's redevelopment agency acquired in 2000 for \$7.7 million.

In 2015, Jordan Schnitzer proposed a \$115.7 million project in a deal that deal fell through after Schnitzer and Prosper Portland couldn't close a public funding gap. And in 2012, California-based LAB Holding LLC hoped to develop the site, but to no avail.

This time around, it appears as if the costs to fully develop what Prosper Portland has in mind were the main driver preventing a project.

According to Jacobsen, estimated costs associated with environmental cleanup of the site, as well as what it would take to preserve the flour mill building on-site as Prosper Portland has specified, likely ended up being more than Lynd was willing to shoulder. In addition, Lynd had requested reimbursement for some of the environmental cleanup costs, which was not part of their initial offer, he said.

The environmental contamination, while not out of the ordinary for similar properties along the river, is something that was included in Prosper Portland's initial RFP for potential redevelopment. Some of that, related to a Tanner Creek sewer line, Prosper Portland plans to take care of, to the tune of about \$1 million, according to Shawn Uhlman, public affairs and community engagement manager for Prosper Portland.

Kimberly Branam, executive director of Prosper Portland, said some relatively recent directives from the Federal Emergency Management Administration related to building within the 100-year floodplain also added complexity to the Centennial Mills site.

However, she's confident that, despite Lynd's withdrawal, the city can still find the right developer to finally bring Centennial Mills to life.

During last year's RFP process, Prosper Portland received five or six other offers on the site that are worth pursuing. Branam said the agency will do just that.

She also said that, though Centennial Mills has long been an albatross for the agency, she's hopeful that the site still holds plenty of promise.

"I think we've known that it was a challenging sight. It presents unique opportunities," Branam said. "I am optimistic, personally, that we are going to be able to make it work. It's unfortunate (that Lynd pulled away), but I feel like we have fewer unknowns than we did before and that the opportunity is still there."

The Portland Observer

Earth Day Pledge

April 23, 2019

Commissioner challenges fossil fuel industry

One day after protesters in Portland planted a "Victory Garden" along Northwest Front Avenue and partially blocked a train track to protest Alberta tar sands oil shipments to Portland's Zenith Energy terminal, Portland City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty issued a challenge to advance the environmental concerns about pollution from fossil fuels.

Hardesty says she will not knowingly accept any future campaign contribution of over \$200 from Political Action Committees or front groups of fossil fuel companies amidst the climate protests and calls for action locally and internationally. In addition, she says she will not take any money from these groups, according to her statement, issued on Earth Day.

"We need a city where every voice matters. Where our democracy works for everyone and our government listens to all of us. Fossil fuel money corrupts that and elevates the voices of dirty energy at the expense of people's health, the climate, and our democracy, something I will always reject," Hardesty said.

Hardesty previously championed the Portland Clean Energy Fund, a city ballot measure that voters passed last fall that is anticipated to bring in \$54 million to \$71 million in new revenue aimed at generating green jobs and environmental home improvements.

She also spoke with youth at the Youth Climate Protest in front of City Hall last month and more recently supported earlier protests at the Zenith Oil terminal.

Running for PCC Board

*By Danny Peterson
April 24, 2019*

Tiffani Penson connects to community

Tiffani Penson, a longtime Portland city worker, education advocate, and community volunteer, is vying for the Portland Community College Board of Directors for Zone 2, the district that encompasses the parts of north and northeast Portland that she grew up in, for the May 21 election.

“I understand community and the importance of it. I understand you have to invest in the people in your community because if you don’t, then you won’t have a thriving community,” Penson told the Portland Observer.

Penson began working on education issues working for former Mayor Sam Adams back in 2009, where she helped build that office’s SummerWorks program—a publicly funded paid internship program for diverse young adults ages 16-24—and has been overseeing that program in conjunction with Multnomah County and the subsequent mayors offices ever since.

As part of Mayor Adams’ education team, she helped develop a program called Future Connect, which provides a small scholarship and support for post-secondary students who identify as first-generation or low –income, currently housed at PCC.

As a Supplier Diversity Officer, Penson works with minority, women, and emerging small businesses to connect them with contracting opportunities for the city, a skill set she said would be valuable as a board member at PCC, where she hopes to expand programs for those types of businesses to help them grow.

She also wants to use those business partnerships to help transition youth into high paying trade jobs and for women returning to the workforce. Penson also expressed the desire to foster businesses’ investment to the college, reckoning that it would be a simple way for them to invest in the replenishment of their workforce and bolster the programming at the same time.

“If you invest, you see the fruits, and the fruits serve everyone,” she said.

Penson has worked to understand some of the issues impacting PCC by attending a PCC board meeting and has taken occasional classes at PCC, though her alma maters include Concordia University and University of Oregon. She speaks once per quarter at PCC for a business administration class.

Penson expressed much admiration for Oregon’s largest community college, which started as an adult education program in 1961. She said schools like PCC, which offer a mix of academic programs, certifications, and training in the trades is valuable for some of the most vulnerable populations in the community--like those who face economic, cultural, and learning challenges--who might not otherwise get a chance to receive further education.

“PCC provides that opportunity for them to go there, they have supports to make sure that they’re successful and I like that. And those are the things that I want to expand on because I think it’s critically important to make sure you provide the necessary supports for students that have facing barriers to be successful,” Penson said.

Expanding on the college’s wrap around services, like making sure students are fed and can afford transportation, was also listed as a high priority for Penson.

In addition to her work at the city, Penson currently sits on the board of KairosPDX, a public charter grade school that is focused on closing the achievement gap for African American students in north and northeast Portland. She also sits on the board of Oregon Native American Chamber, the Architecture Foundation of Oregon, and Bound for a Cure.

Penson has gotten the endorsements of Mayor Ted Wheeler, City Commissioner Amanda Fritz, former City Commissioner Dan Saltzman, former Mayors Sam Adams and Tom Potter--who she also worked for, State Sen. Lew Frederick, retired State Sen. Avel Gordly, and KairosPDX Executive Director and current PCC Board Chair Kali Thorne Ladd, who would be Penson's predecessor for the Zone 2 chair.

Speaking as to what motivates her to run for the PCC Board, Penson said she feels an obligation to serve others and get more young people enrolled in college, having come from an upbringing that provided her opportunities for success, such as being able to attend both private and public schools as a young African American woman.

"I feel like it's only important that I do what I can to make sure that others have that opportunity and access. And I love this place, I mean, I'll die here. It's not all perfect, but it's my home," she said.

Penson invites you to check out her website for more information about her background and goals for office at tiffanipensonforpcc.com. She has drawn one opponent in the election, Portland State University senior and former PCC student, Leonardo Kendall.