

## **The Oregonian**

### **Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty appoints Portland's first African American fire chief**

*By Gordon R. Friedman  
June 13, 2019*

Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty has appointed Sara Boone as Portland's fire chief, bringing Boone full circle from becoming the city's first African American woman firefighter in 1995 to its first African American chief.

Boone was selected because she impressed an interview panel with "her commitment to community, her technical knowledge, her passion for the fire service and her leadership style," said Hardesty, the Fire Bureau commissioner, who in January became Portland's first African American city councilor.

Hardesty said she is confident Boone "will make sure our city is safe and cared for under her watch."

"I am deeply honored to be the next fire chief of Portland Fire & Rescue, a bureau I hold in high esteem because of the men and women who serve with honor, integrity, and sacrifice." Boone said in a statement. "My mission has always been caring for the city where I was raised. I am committed to ensuring that our responsiveness and our professionalism live up to the highest ideals of service, integrity, and equity."

Boone was raised in Northeast Portland and attended Lincoln High School where she excelled in track and field, according to a biography provided by Hardesty's office. She went to Boise State University on an athletics scholarship, graduated with an education degree and began exploring a teaching career when she met a fire inspector who encouraged her to consider firefighting.

Boone joined Portland Fire & Rescue more than 24 years ago as an entry-level firefighter and rose through the ranks to become the division chief leading medical services and training before being appointed chief.

### **Portland poised to make it easier for people with bad credit, criminal histories to find a place to rent**

*By Elliot Njus  
June 12, 2019*

After weighing a slew of tweaks Wednesday, the Portland City Council appears poised to push landlords to be more forgiving when they screen prospective tenants, loosening strictures on criminal history and poor credit that typically would disqualify applicants.

A vote is scheduled for next week even though Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty, a vocal supporter, will be out of town, suggesting Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, the proposal's champion, is confident of its chances.

And Mayor Ted Wheeler suggested he expects the majority of the council to approve the measure. He proposed six amendments, all but one approved by the council.

If approved, the ordinance would take effect March 1 — a delay from the original proposed start date of Oct. 1.

The ordinance sets “low barrier” screening criteria for landlords to use when they evaluate a renter’s application. It would limit checks to felony convictions within the past 7 years and misdemeanors within the last 3 years. Renters wouldn’t be rejected for credit scores above 500, a court eviction order older than 3 years or insufficient credit history.

The landlords instead may use their own criteria, but they’d have to provide written justification for denying a rental application.

Landlords have said the latter option would add costs and open them to legal liability, while the former would restrict their ability to protect their property and other tenants.

In all cases, landlords would generally have to process applications in the order received and may not require proof of lawful presence in the U.S.

The ordinance is intended to help renters with past convictions or credit dings find housing, particularly in a market where high costs already restrict their options. Eudaly has said those background check flags don’t accurately predict whether a tenant will pay the rent on time, damage the property or bother their neighbors and instead provide cover for discrimination.

The proposal also would bar landlords from requiring tenants to earn more than two-and-a-half times the rent in income. Landlords say that raises the risk tenants will fall behind on rent, but Eudaly argues that rising rents have left tenants little choice than to extend themselves further than is financially comfortable.

One of the amendments approved would allow landlords of all sizes to refuse a rental application from a prospective tenant who has previously violated a rental agreement with the same landlord.

Another would exempt certain shared properties, such as when a landlord lives in the other half of a duplex from the tenant, or if the tenant lives in an apartment built into the landlord’s house or yard. That amendment passed narrowly, and only after Commissioner Amanda Fritz reversed her vote.

Wheeler said this would put the ordinance in line with the city’s requirement that large landlords pay relocation fees when they evict a tenant. He said the ordinance could push small landlords out of the business of providing housing and perhaps turn a potential home into a vacation rental instead.

“If we create too much of an administrative burden ... it might just be easier for people to go click on the Airbnb site instead,” he said.

Eudaly pushed back, saying the city doesn’t have enough data to measure the impact of exempting small landlords.

“I frankly don’t think small-time landlords should be more able to discriminate than anyone else,” she said.

A companion measure would require landlords to more thoroughly account for security deposit funds withheld for repairs and to allow they be paid in installments over three months.

# Salvation Army homeless shelter closes in restructuring of Portland shelter system

*By Molly Harbarger*

*June 12, 2019*

The city-county homelessness office will significantly restructure Portland's homeless shelter system this summer, with the long-time Salvation Army women's shelter losing its contract.

The change will also keep open 24 hours 115 beds that so far have required people to leave during the day.

By the end of summer, officials expect a slight increase in the number of publicly funded shelter beds available.

The moves come as the Joint Office of Homeless Services completed a process that required nonprofit homeless services providers to bid for contracts. The process is supposed to happen every five years as part of the city-county Joint Office's operation, but will happen again next fiscal year ahead of schedule.

The women staying at the Salvation Army shelter downtown were told Wednesday morning that they need to find new places to stay. A worker from the Joint Office was on site and will continue to be stationed there through the end of July to help find permanent housing or other temporary shelter for the nearly 100 people staying there.

The Salvation Army still will run a publicly funded domestic violence shelter and 35 single-room occupancy units.

Joint Office Director Marc Jolin did not specify what criteria the Salvation Army did not meet to keep its contract, but said that this is the first time the nonprofit has had to compete under new criteria.

The newly formed Joint Office put extra emphasis on low-barrier shelters that allow people to use them at all hours and with few strings attached to their stay.

As part of that vision, the Joint Office is creating two new shelters that are supposed to open this summer and would absorb the lost Salvation Army beds.

In August, the River District Navigation Center, funded partly by nonprofit Harbor of Hope and the Joint Office of Homeless Services, is supposed to open. It will provide space for 100 people, including couples, to stay.

The planned Foster shelter, at Southeast 61st Avenue, will hold 120 women and couples.

Both will go beyond just places to sleep and will have on-site social service workers and classes to help people find employment and permanent housing.

"When we first came together to address the crisis, we doubled our shelter capacity, and now our priority is to give people experiencing homelessness not only a safe place to rest, but a place to connect with key services so that their next step is a home," said Multnomah County Chairwoman Deborah Kafoury.

The temporary shelter operating in the county's Mead building will also close because of the planned openings.

Two new family shelters are expected to open this summer -- [one in a motel on Southeast Powell Boulevard](#) and the Portland Homeless Family Solutions shelter for 25 families in Lents.

The openings also triggered a change in management for some of the shelters. Transition Projects, which will run the navigation and Foster shelters, will cede the Wy'east shelter, 1415 SE 122nd Ave., operation to Do Good Multnomah.

Do Good, a nonprofit that mostly focuses on veterans, will fold 40 beds for veterans from its current facility into the Wy'east shelter, bringing the total to 110.

Now a temporary shelter, the Walnut Park shelter at 5329 NE MLK Jr Blvd. will stay open until the end of this winter. That space holds 80 single people and couples. It will be the only overnight-only publicly funded shelter left.

Eventually, Walnut Park's space will likely be redeveloped. Jolin said that Northeast Portland is at the top of the list for potential replacement shelter locations, but has no specifics on timing or location.

There are few homeless shelter beds available in that quadrant of the city, and a high need, Jolin said.

## **Portland Building renovation costs obscured by creative accounting, auditors say**

*By Gordon R. Friedman*

*June 12, 2019*

Officials managing the massive Portland Building reconstruction categorized some spending as parts of other projects to avoid disclosing a 10 percent cost overrun, city auditors said in a report published Wednesday.

The officials excluded furnishings, computer equipment and construction of a childcare facility from the renovation budget to appear to stay within a \$195 million appropriation from the City Council, according to the report. The true cost for the project is more like \$214 million.

Mayor Ted Wheeler and Tom Rinehart, the city chief administrative officer, strongly disagreed with auditors' conclusions in a response letter.

Managers have been transparent about spending, Wheeler and Rinehart wrote. They said spending on office furnishings, tech equipment and the childcare buildout were truly independent projects because they "were never part of the project scope" for the Portland Building's reconstruction.

Rinehart said in an interview Tuesday that spending via side projects is standard for large initiatives like the Portland Building re-do.

Either way, auditors found the increased costs will affect city bureaus that rent office space in the Portland Building. Costs per square foot are slated to rise from \$21 at temporary quarters this year to \$43, much of that at the spiffy renovated digs, in 2021, for example.

Rinehart said he and the mayor have a "friendly disagreement" with the conclusions of auditors working under Auditor Mary Hull Caballero and remain "open to suggestions" about ways to improve business.

All of the side-project money was approved by the City Council, just not as a part of the Portland Building project. Auditors found the project is generally on track to meet minimum construction

requirements and to reopen on time. But a promise to spend \$1 million on improving diversity among the construction workforce was not kept.

## **Opinion: Portland's tenant screening proposal heightens renters' risk of eviction**

*By Guest Columnist Deborah Imse  
June 12, 2019*

Imse is executive director of Multifamily NW, a statewide association representing landlords and property managers.

During a May 29 hearing on Portland City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly's proposed changes to tenant screening procedures, I testified before the Portland City Council:

“When someone moves into housing they do not have the income to support, they are far, far more likely to fail to make rent payments and ultimately be evicted. We see this frequently even for tenants who earn more than three times the monthly rent. By eliminating that basic protection, you are ensuring that more vulnerable Portlanders will enter into housing contracts they cannot afford, that more Portlanders will be evicted, and that those same exact Portlanders will then have a much harder time securing housing as a result of a for-cause eviction. This chain of events will logically lead to more housing instability; and ultimately, homelessness.”

I was surprised that Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty responded by questioning the premise that rent-burdened tenants are more likely to fall behind on payments, face eviction and ultimately experience more housing instability. Her comments were described by her supporters on social media as a “takedown,” and the audio clip played well as a political soundbite on [Oregon Public Broadcasting](#). She even [tweeted](#) about me after the hearing.

Far be it from me to question Hardesty's well-hewn political skills, which were on full display the night of the hearing. But with a housing crisis going on outside city hall's chambers, Portland doesn't have time for politics. It's time for the City Council to make wise decisions, even when they're politically inconvenient. Portland families are depending on them to get this right.

If Hardesty is truly interested in making good policy, she could start by reviewing some of the many empirical studies showing that rent-burdened households face higher eviction rates and housing instability, particularly when their share of gross income devoted to rent exceeds 30 percent (Eudaly's proposal sets the threshold at a whopping 50 percent). They could look at the strong correlation between eviction and homelessness and decide that Portland doesn't need more of either:

An [April 2018 report by Pew Charitable Trusts](#) found that “rent-burdened households have higher eviction rates, increased financial fragility, and wider use of social safety net programs, compared with other renters and homeowners.”

A [December 2018 Zillow Economic Research](#) article states that “it has long been a real estate rule of thumb that a person's housing costs should not exceed roughly 30 percent of their income, and this research finds empirical evidence to support that adage at the community level. When the share of average income spent on rent in a community begins to meaningfully exceed that line, the risk of housing insecurity and/or homelessness rapidly increases.”

Anti-poverty group [Community Service Society New York](#) notes in a [September 2018](#) piece that “rent burdens, when a renter household pays more than half of their income toward rent, are a top predictor of an eviction.”

Multifamily NW will continue to be a willing partner to help the city find solutions to make renting more affordable, more accessible and protect all Portlanders from discrimination. But we cannot support a proposal specifically intended to allow for more rent-burdened households. It will hurt the very people it purports to help. Perhaps that is why no other city in the country that we can find has ever been foolish enough to enact a similar policy. And if city leaders were to look a little closer [at the research](#), they would realize that Eudaly is asking them to vote for an ordinance that will make our homelessness problem worse.

If Portland wants to make renting more affordable and accessible, it should establish policies that will create more supply in the market. If Portland wants to protect against discrimination, it should fund enforcement of existing fair housing laws already on the books. If Portland wants to help people with disabilities find accessible housing, it should complete a clearinghouse of available accessible units. There are things the city can do to further these goals, but this careless proposal is not one of them.

## **Portland has a plan for its human poop problem**

*By Gordon R. Friedman  
June 11, 2019*

\$316. That’s the average amount Portland taxpayers shell out each time a crew is dispatched to clean up human waste from city streets, sidewalks or parks, according to a government analysis.

It’s a common problem, the city found. At least half of filings with Portland’s [homelessness complaint system](#) – as many as 450 a week – include reports of human waste, its report said.

A cleanup team is not dispatched to each call, and the city didn’t report the total amount it has spent on waste removal. But the report said disposal of more than 3,300 gallons of waste – not factoring in a \$200 per incident dispatch fee and cleaners’ up to \$104 per hour rate – cost \$26,480 alone over one year. Cleanup costs are also factored into the city’s \$3.5 million a year homeless camp removal program.

The volume of waste, substantial expense to taxpayers to clean it up and infectious disease hazards led the City Council last month to vote to spend money on a program it hopes will decrease the problem of people relieving themselves outdoors. It will place portable bathrooms and showers in problem areas and provide on-site staffers to ensure the facilities are kept tidy.

Portable toilets, wrapped in local-friendly patterns like the famed Portland airport carpet or Trail Blazers colors, will initially be placed in high-need areas in downtown, Southeast Portland and outer East Portland, according to the city analysis.

[Mayor Ted Wheeler](#) said he proposed the funding after hearing time and again from residents who are “concerned about the amount of human feces that we are seeing on our streets, in storefronts, in neighborhoods, in parks.”

Beyond aesthetic cleanliness, Wheeler said in an interview that bathrooms are needed to help prevent the outbreak of diseases such as Hepatitis A.

The mayor's program, called Hygiene Street Response, aims to deploy six portable toilets and build mobile bathroom and shower trailers that the city will give away to nonprofits serving the homeless.

Toilets will be attended to by "public space managers" – homeless people hired to ensure proper use of the toilets, dispose of trash and syringes, and collect data on the bathrooms' use.

Officials budgeted \$877,000 for the program during the next fiscal year. At least \$615,000 will go to attendants' salaries. How many will be hired and at what rate is up to a to-be-determined social service organization the city will contract with for management of the toilets, said Jen Clodius, a spokeswoman for the city [Office of Management and Finance](#).

If all goes to plan, the report states, the bathrooms will improve the quality of life for homeowners and homeless people alike.

This year's appropriation isn't the first time the city has purchased bathrooms for homeless people.

In 2016, the city paid \$216,000 to buy a 2,400 square foot bungalow with bathrooms, showers and a laundry facility for homeless people, but [it was never put to use](#). The city sold it at auction last year for \$45,000 – a \$171,000 loss – according to the bill of sale, provided to The Oregonian/OregonLive in response to a public records request.

Wheeler promised the bathrooms funded with this year's budget would not be sold.

"We will not be auctioning these off," the mayor said. "We will be using them."

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Portland Building audit sparks denials**

*By Jim Redden*  
*June 12, 2019*

Reconstruction of the Portland Building is over budget and not complying with equity goals set by the City Council, according to an interim audit of the project released by the city auditor's office Wednesday, June 12.

Mayor Ted Wheeler and Chief Administrative Office Tom Rinehart dispute those findings in a unusually strong response to the audit.

According to the audit, the project is estimated to cost \$214 million to complete, not the \$195 million limit approved by the council. Additional costs will pay for furnishings, technology equipment and tenant improvements necessary to complete the project, according to the audit.

"While the public narrative about the Portland Building focused on activities tied to the \$195 million budget, this does not include components critical to delivering a functional building," city auditors wrote in the report

In their response, Wheeler and Rinehart insisted the furnishings, technology equipment and tenant improvements were never included in the original \$195 million budget, and that the council was briefed on all of them. "The project has been transparent about additional initiatives proposed outside of the construction budget and the return on investment for each of them," Wheeler and Rinehart wrote.

Auditors also reported that the city had not yet spent the 1% of construction costs set aside for community benefit grants, even though grant applications have been received. "No funds were spent in support of disadvantaged workers and businesses. There has been no report to Council about the status of these activities or results since 2016," according to the audit.

But Wheeler and Rinehart replied that the funds would soon be spent by Prosper Portland, formerly known as the Portland Development Commission, through a process known to the council. "In short, the opportunity, though delayed, will be realized," they wrote in their response.

Committee 'fully briefed'

In addition, the audit reported that the Portland Building Community Oversight Committee appointed to keep track of the project had not been able to fully track the spending.

"Over the years, the project team has been transparent about each individual budget request, but there has been no presentation of the collective Portland Building costs that result from these piecemeal decisions. As a result, budgets the project team presented to council and the Portland Building Community Oversight Committee did not include the entire work managed by the city or its contractors," according to the audit.

Wheeler and Rinehart included in their response a link to a May 15 letter from the committee praising the project staff. "Rest assured, our committee (and we understand with the council's blessing and actual votes) has been fully briefed on each of these matters prior to a decision being made," according to the letter signed by the five committee members.

Wheeler oversees the Office of Management and Finance, headed by Rinehart, and is in charge of the project. Although all audits include responses from those in charge of the bureau of project being audited, it is unusual for them to push back so hard. Most admit the shortcomings identified in the audits and say work is already underway to resolve them. But Wheeler and Rinehart appear to be flatly disputing many of the audit's findings, and they are not promising to do anything different in the future.

## **Definition of 'retail sale' may decide fate of business tax**

*By Jim Redden*

*June 11, 2019*

**WHAT IS HAPPENING?** A recent opinion by the City Attorney's Office has raised questions about the future of the Portland Clean Energy Fund approved by city voters at the November 2020 election.

Voters approved a 1 percent tax on the "retail sales" of large companies with at least \$500,000 in sales in Portland. The May 30 opinion defined the term "retail sales" much more broadly than supporters of Measure 26-201 said during the campaign.

It now includes practically all such sales, including local construction projects, which could raise the cost of such taxpayer-supported projects as school district renovations and affordable housing projects.

**WHO SAID WHAT?** The measure was a citizen-driven initiative petition intended to raise funds for clean energy projects that also benefit communities of color.

It was written by advocates with the help of research from Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, who supported the concept. She asked the Revenue Bureau, which will collect the taxes, a series of questions to help refine the measure.

Supporters insisted during the campaign that the term "retail sales" was narrowly defined and would only apply to large retailers, like Walmart. They said it would generate around \$49 million a year.

Opponents, which included much of the business community, said the term was not clearly defined and the tax could apply to many more businesses. They commissioned an ECONorthwest study released last July that said it could collect up to \$79 million, meaning more companies would pay it.

**WHAT CHANGED?** After the City Council approved a measure to implement the ballot language, the Revenue Bureau asked the Attorney's Office a series of questions in order to adopt the rules to enforce it, including how "retail sales" is defined.

The Attorney's Office defined the term very broadly, saying there are few exceptions in the measure approved by voters.

"The Ballot Measure defined a 'retail sale' broadly to mean a 'sale to a consumer for use or consumption, and not for resale,'" the opinion noted.

That means many things purchased by governments, including construction projects, are subject to the tax.

Although 1 percent may not seem like much, it amounts to \$2 million on the upcoming \$200 million renovation of Lincoln High School, prompting PPS officials to worry about whether it can be completed within the proposed budget. Affordable housing projects funded by bonds approved by Portland and Metro voters also will be affected.

**WHAT'S NEXT?** Good question. So far the discussions among Portland officials have taken place behind the scenes. Supporter Jenny Lee, advocacy director of the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, said the nine-member grant review committee created by the measure should suggest any changes they deem necessary. Opponents have not yet proposed specific changes.

**WHAT CAN I DO?** Contact information for all council members is available at the city's website at [portlandoregon.gov](http://portlandoregon.gov).

## **Willamette Week**

### **Mayor Ted Wheeler Poised to Sign Onto Tenant Protections**

*By Rachel Monahan  
June 12, 2019*

For weeks, [Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler has jockeyed with Commissioner Chloe Eudaly](#) over her proposal to limit how landlords screen prospective tenants and how large a security deposit they can demand.

Wheeler now tells WW he is willing to support Eudaly's tenant screening and security deposit ordinances. That's "contingent upon amendments being adopted," says his spokeswoman Eileen Park.

The mayor has proposed seven amendments that range from technical clarifications to expanding exemptions in the ordinances—for example, allowing more landlords to turn down tenants who have violated their lease repeatedly in the past year.

Eudaly is "mostly amenable to the mayor's proposed amendments," says her spokeswoman Margaux Weeke.

A City Council vote on the amendments (but not the ordinances) is expected June 12.

## **City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly Wants to Create Miles of Bus-Only Lanes Along Portland's Busiest Streets**

*By Rachel Monahan*

*June 12, 2019*

In 18 months, Portland streets could see the most dramatic change in public transit since the arrival of the streetcar. All it will take is gallons of red paint.

Deep in the bowels of city bureaucracy, Portland transportation officials under the direction of Commissioner Chloe Eudaly are preparing to debut what they're calling the "Red Lane Project": removing miles of roadside parking and traffic lanes from Portland streets to make room for uninterrupted routes for buses.

By one measure, the proposal is nothing new. Cities such as Baltimore, Seattle and San Francisco have already dedicated lanes to buses. Some think that dedicating lanes just to buses is the single best way to entice more commuters to take public transit: by ensuring it moves regardless of traffic jams.

TriMet, the region's transit agency, estimates it has spent \$14 million over the past two years compensating for slow-moving traffic.

Yet removing parking and car lanes for a kind of citywide Bus Mall will require tangling with what was until recently considered a politically untouchable class: irate motorists.

Eudaly's office says it's a necessary step to meet the city's climate action goals and support low-income residents, who are more likely to take the bus.

"Transportation intersects very dramatically with all the things we really care about," says Eudaly's policy director, Jamey Duhamel, adding that the commissioner and her aides asked themselves: "What can we do within transportation to really affect people's lives, the most vulnerable in our community? What we heard over and over was: 'How are you going to get buses out of traffic?'"

Eudaly herself says she's gearing up for a political fight.

"While most people may agree on fundamental truths, such as the threat of climate change or the human cost of discrimination, many are unwilling to voluntarily change their behavior or endure personal inconvenience in support of real solutions," Eudaly tells WW. "I feel an urgency to act on these issues because people are struggling and suffering right now, because the clock is ticking on climate catastrophe, and because I only have a finite amount of time to get this work done."

Eudaly has never cowered from public fights. She withstood the ire of landlords to introduce tenant protections, for instance. Even as Mayor Ted Wheeler balked at the effort, she has chipped

away at opposition to a policy seemingly without immediate political benefit: to end housing discrimination against renters with criminal backgrounds.

But for that renter proposal, Eudaly now has the public backing of four of five Multnomah County commissioners, three members of the regional Metro Council and one U.S. congressman—as well as what's expected to be a majority of the City Council (a vote is expected this summer).

With her plan for bus lanes, however, she may be entering more difficult policy turf: Portland's rush-hour gridlock, perhaps the greatest irritant in this city's daily life.

A previous commissioner to oversee transportation, Steve Novick, whom Eudaly defeated in 2016, lost the election in part by alienating voters with an unpopular push for fees to pave city streets. And if the "road diets" of the Portland Bureau of Transportation's recent past are any indication, bus lanes will draw public outcry. (In those "diets," PBOT has removed lanes and otherwise slowed traffic to make the roads safer for pedestrians and cyclists.)

"To cut lanes down when you have more cars is not common sense," says Jon Shleifer, owner of EuroClassic Furniture on Southeast Foster Road and a critic of the "road diet" there. "You would want to have more lanes to keep the traffic flowing. It's hurting people so bad with all these changes. They are benefiting 5 or 6 percent of the population but not the people who have lived here forever."

To be sure, Eudaly and her advisers say this effort, unlike road diets, would benefit motorists, too. More reliable, faster bus service would attract riders to buses, which would take cars off the road to make more room for the ones that remain.

"We think this is a win-win for everybody," says Duhamel. "There are a large number of Portlanders who will use transit if it's reliable and it's fast. There's a large segment of the population who will always have to use their cars, whether it's for work, because of different abilities, or for far travel."

The proportion of Portland commuters riding public transit has stagnated at about 13 percent, roughly unchanged since 2005. (To achieve the climate action goals the city has set, a quarter of commuters need to ride public transit by 2035.)

Last fiscal year, even as Portland continued to grow, TriMet saw the lowest number of bus rides in more than 18 years, a continuation of three straight years of decline.

One reason: Buses are traveling more slowly. Speeds on key routes have decreased by more than 7 percent between 2009 and 2017.

That, in turn, means TriMet has to run more buses, which costs more, for the same amount of service.

"TriMet estimates an additional cost of \$14.3 million to keep buses that were experiencing slower running times on time," says TriMet spokeswoman Tia York.

Research in other cities shows efforts to speed up bus travel times by 5 to 15 percent with red lanes or similar methods has meant a 2 to 9 percent increase in passengers.

PBOT has yet to choose particular routes or decide how many miles to devote to bus lanes, but the agency is studying more than a dozen high-frequency bus routes where buses run at least every 15 minutes during the day and that have already been on its radar for fixes within the next few decades. Such streets include Southeast Division and Foster Road, North and Northeast

Killingsworth, and Northeast and Southeast 122nd Avenue (see map). Eudaly's team believes it has the City Council's support.

"We did some early temperature checking with council members," Duhamel says, adding she was advised to make the pilot program last multiple years to accurately assess its impact. "I think we have some pretty good, solid support."

If the plan is successful, Eudaly's office hopes to negotiate a deal with TriMet to reinvest the savings in more electric buses more quickly, furthering the environmental benefits of the project, and to expand the agency's definition of low-income riders to offer free or reduced fares to a wider swath of commuters.

Transportation officials acknowledge this is a paradigm shift. "It's an identity shift culturally," says Art Pearce, a policy manager at PBOT. "You wouldn't be at all surprised to see strong transit priority in New York City or San Francisco. Those are bigger-city approaches that Portland is ready to approach as we've grown."

Eudaly, meanwhile, is girding for battle online.

On May 17, as first reported by Bike Portland, she posted a link on Facebook announcing Southwest Madison Street now has dedicated bus lanes near the Hawthorne Bridge.

When challenged in the comments section on what that would do for cars, Eudaly doubled down. "If you're sitting in your single occupant vehicle cursing congestion," she wrote, "remember: YOU ARE THE CONGESTION."

## OPB

# Sara Boone Becomes Portland's 1st African American Fire Chief

*By Meerah Powell  
June 13, 2019*

Portland Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty announced Thursday that she has chosen Sara Boone as the city's next fire chief.

Boone has been with Portland Fire and Rescue for 24 years.

She became the first African American female firefighter for the agency in 1995. Now, she'll be the city's first African American fire chief.

"Chief Boone is well-respected throughout the bureau and we have a great collaborative relationship. I know that she has the vision and experience to lead the bureau as it takes on new challenges," Hardesty said in a news release. "I am confident that she will make sure our city is safe and cared for under her watch."

Portland's former fire chief, Mike Myers, [left his position in January](#) to work in Cannon Beach, Oregon. He has since returned to Portland to lead the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management, which Hardesty also oversees.

Portland now has black women atop its two major public safety agencies: Boone at Portland Fire and Rescue and [Police Chief Danielle Outlaw](#).