

## The Oregonian

# Portland officials have a plan to save the Alder Street food cart pod

*By Gordon Friedman  
June 24, 2019*

Portland's famous food cart pod on Southwest Alder Street, which is facing eviction at the end of June to make way for construction of a Ritz-Carlton hotel, may have a new home along the North Park Blocks.

Aides to Commissioner Chloe Eudaly are hurriedly coordinating the potential move with the Pearl District neighborhood association, nonprofits and business leaders.

Eudaly's chief of staff, Marshall Runkel, said moving the carts to the blocks between West Burnside and Northwest Davis streets and Southwest Park and 8th avenues could bring new life to the under-used park space.

The move would "be a net positive" for the blocks, said Runkel, who provided The Oregonian/OregonLive with mock-ups showing 37 carts may be relocated to streets around the park area.

He stressed the idea is in its early stages and nothing is finalized. Officials are working to iron out the details, including how to supply carts with electricity and what kind of permit to issue for their use in the public right-of-way. Officials in Portland Bureau of Transportation are studying potential meter revenue losses from carts being placed in parking spots.

The project could have hit umpteen stumbling blocks, Runkel said, but has been progressing smoothly with key players lining up to support the carts' move – or at least not stand in their way.

Stan Penkin, president of the Pearl District neighborhood association, said his group received a presentation on the would-be move and views it as "a very exciting concept."

"We are generally in favor of it and would like to see something happen," Penkin said. Having food carts along the North Park Blocks could push back against residents' perception of the greenspace as "a sketchy area" he said.

"The North Park Blocks are one of the most beautiful parks in the city, or anywhere for that matter," Penkin said. "But it's always sort of had an edge to it."

Alder Street cart owners have known for months their space was on the chopping block. But their forced move-out date comes just as summer tourism season begins in Portland, making the need for a new space that much more urgent.

"This is important. What's more Portland than food carts?" said Keith Jones, a board member of Friends of the Green Loop, an initiative to create a six-mile park through inner-city streets that includes the Park Blocks.

Jones has been working with cart owners on the move proposal. Several owners – including one who is expecting a baby – are desperate to find a place to do business, Jones said.

"It's got to be done by the end of the month," he said. "There's no wiggle room."

Jones said he views the North Park Blocks move as a temporary measure to help cart owners find stability as the city government and civic leaders work out the details of the Culinary Corridor, a plan to have food carts occupy curbside parking spaces in parts of downtown.

Runkel said it's a sad irony the food carts that helped make Portland a destination are becoming endangered as downtown property values skyrocket and parking lot owners redevelop. "We're kind of a victim of our own success," he said.

Greg Goodman, the real estate investor who owns the Alder Street lot, said its redevelopment is part of Portland's "natural progress." But Goodman is still a firm believer the carts ought to be saved.

"Portland defined the food cart scene," he said. "It's become a bigger than life deal. It's part of our identity as a city."

Jones, the greenway advocate, said the situation will only become more common as Portland grows.

"More of these lots are going to disappear," Jones said. "We need to start asking, 'Where do we want the carts to go?'"

## **Portland is closing Sellwood Community Center. Now there's a grassroots effort to take over.**

*By McKenna Ross*

*June 21, 2019*

Sellwood-area parents say the childcare and other programs at the Sellwood Community Center can't be beat. But they're hoping they can be bought.

As the city moves to shut the center to help close a \$6.3 million budget gap, Sellwood residents are preparing to buy the building and keep its programs running come Sept. 1.

The Sellwood-Moreland Improvement League, or SMILE, has enough money in reserve, thanks to fundraising and a resident who remembered the center in her will. She left the proceeds her house's sale to the neighborhood association for the 99-year-old building via an endowment fund.

The goal is to lease for a year then buy the center's building from the city, Kim Borcharding, a SMILE member and volunteer coordinator on the effort, said. Borcharding and her colleagues hope to make a deal with the city before the school year starts in early September.

"They're moving very slowly, and time is of the essence," Borcharding said. "We know it will be successful if the city just agrees to do this."

The negotiations are facing the school year deadline, self-imposed by the community. Families that previously occupied the approximately 65 preschool spots and 85 after-school program spots otherwise will have to find other solutions. But tuition and openings are a challenge for many, Borcharding said.

City officials say they've met with SMILE board members, but without a proposal, no negotiations can take place.

"A plan has to be proposed," Parks and Recreation spokesman Mark Ross said. "There can't just be community interest."

That's what Sellwood residents are pitching in to make.

More than 60 people have volunteered their specialties in some way to make the proposal and business, SMILE officials say. A contractor is reviewing potential building updates. A graphic designer is working on branding. A digital marketing agency is planning the website.

At the helm of it all are two retired Parks bureau employees from the neighborhood, who have been everything from a life guard to a building director throughout their combined 47-year-careers.

"It's really inspiring to see all these people to see all this knowledge and education dedicated to this," Borcharding, a real estate agent, said. "It's incredible that these people are volunteering. We have such a depth of knowledge, and we have 30 days to pull this off. In my opinion, it's the stars aligning."

The neighborhood association currently owns and operates two buildings: the SMILE Station, an event space, and Oaks Pioneer Church, a wedding venue. The SMILE Station is a former firehouse that the neighborhood bought from the city in 1990.

But the volunteers still have a lot of work to do in the next two months. If the city accepts a proposal, the project leaders will have to hire a program director, among other staff, and do as much as possible to ensure the seamless transition they want.

The group declined to comment on the expected costs to keep the center running. There are currently eight full-time employees at the community center, city officials said, and seasonal part-time staff varies. SMILE intends to keep a similar staff size.

Families have long considered childcare programs at Portland's community centers as affordable alternatives. Rates for next school year were going to be \$474 monthly for five half-days per week of preschool. After-school care prices varied but were as much as \$265 monthly. The YMCA after-school program at Llewellyn Elementary School, in comparison, is \$424 monthly for the school year.

The average full-day price of preschool for toddlers in Portland is \$1,400 monthly, researchers at Oregon State University said. Market analysts can't determine an average price for preschools because half-day services, like those offered at Sellwood Community Center, can vary in hourly options.

So, what happens if a deal isn't reached by then? The building's last day will be Aug. 31, Ross said. Community groups are still welcome to submit a proposal after the closure. But Borcharding doesn't want momentum to wane or children to lose days at the center.

"It's my mind, that's not an option," Borcharding said. "If we don't open Sept. 1 — that's the school year start. It's do or die."

For some residents, that isn't far off. Sellwood resident Julie Currin had two kids enrolled in the after-school care for three years. She said not only is the community center an affordable option for families, but for many, it's the only available option. After-school care at the two elementary schools in the area, Llewellyn and Duniway, are at capacity and have lengthy wait lists. Currin said her children are at numbers 61 and 62 on Duniway's list.

Currin said she's looked elsewhere for after-school care but has come up empty-handed. She's researched the minimum age minors can be left alone — 10 years old in Oregon, but her oldest child is 8. The only option left is to cut back her work hours as a pediatrician, which would make living in Sellwood unaffordable.

“It’s bad when you’re researching what the stay-at-home laws are,” she said. “I was literally thrown into a panic. It’s such a lifeline for our family to have something after school.”

## **Portland settles discrimination lawsuit with water bureau employee for \$20,000**

*By Diana Kruzman*

*June 20, 2019*

The city of Portland awarded a water bureau employee \$20,000 Wednesday to settle a lawsuit accusing her supervisors of sex discrimination and retaliation.

Dylana Lewis, who sued the Portland Water Bureau in April, said she had been denied promotions because she was a woman and penalized for taking protected family leave.

“We work to create a professional, safe and productive work environment,” spokesperson Jaymee Cuti said. “We are satisfied with the resolution of this claim.”

Lewis began working for the Portland Water Bureau as a meter reader in 2016 and was later promoted to a meter technician. Her supervisor, Ron Drath, called Lewis "my dirty girl" and referred to female technicians as his "kids" and "problem children," according to the suit.

Lewis accused Drath of denying her the opportunity to attend professional conferences, micromanaging her schedule and disbelieving her when she sought lighter duty due to an injury. She added that the city retaliated against her complaints by assigning her to work downtown where she had to pay steep costs for parking.

After seeking help from the bureau’s human resources department and stating that she feared retaliation from Drath and another supervisor, Lewis was told she would have to seek a job elsewhere in the city government, but was not selected for an alternate position, the lawsuit said.

Drath is still employed by the water bureau, Cuti said.

The Portland City Council approved the settlement Wednesday after city risk management officials concluded “there is risk the city may be found liable” by a jury.

Lewis filed her suit in conjunction with four other employees – James Corbell, James Griner, John Grimsbo and Kevin Thompson – whose cases are still ongoing.

The five plaintiffs are represented by Fargey Law of Portland, which did not immediately return a call for comment.

## **Climate change protest blocks street in downtown Portland**

*By Lizzy Acker*

*June 21, 2019*

Protesters from an Extinction Rebellion PDX rally used a fire truck to block Southwest Fourth Avenue near City Hall for several hours Friday afternoon.

The fire truck was purchased through Craigslist last week after supporters chipped in to raise the money, according to Ken Ward, a protest organizer with Extinction Rebellion. It represents wildfires, the biggest threat from climate change in this area, he said.

Around 200 hundred protesters chanted, "We the people declare a climate emergency," at the protest in Terry Schunk Plaza, which is across from City Hall.

The rally began at noon. Its goal, according to a news release sent out by Extinction Rebellion PDX, was "to declare a 'climate emergency' and call for mass disruption of business-as-usual, as a last ditch effort to force action on the climate change crisis."

Ward said the protesters planned to be there "until the climate emergency is dealt with," and planned to have performers join the protest at a later point.

The Portland Police Bureau said Friday that the rally did not have a permit.

"We are weighing the risks/benefits of the road impact and the protester and public safety," Tina Jones, a spokesperson for the bureau said over email Friday.

By 1:23 p.m., a lockdown was declared at City Hall in response to the protest.

Dorothy Elmore, the security manager at City Hall, confirmed the building remained on lockdown Friday afternoon. No one was being let in, even for official appointments. A mayoral aide said they had to move a meeting to a nearby building because their guest was not allowed in.

Shortly after 5:30 p.m., the event was over. "SW 4th Avenue in front of City Hall has been re-opened," Portland police tweeted. "Demonstrators have moved on and dispersed."

Michael Esposito, director of green housing company Nuearth Bioteecture, said his goal in attending the protest was "furthering the movement, getting more people to speak up and show up and figuring out some better answers."

"People have been asking politely for decades for government to do something about this approaching crisis, with nothing but zip to show for it," Sarah Carlberg, an organizer with Extinction Rebellion PDX, said in the release. "But we can do the same thing here in Portland that people did on the streets in London, and we know that was phenomenal!"

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Construction begins at Portland's Lynchview Park on 165th**

*By Teresa Carson  
June 21, 2019*

Lynchview Park will open in the winter with a cool playground, Portland loo restroom and more. Despite some unseasonably hot weather, work has begun in earnest on Lynchview Park. The formerly desolate 7.6 acres should be transformed into an inviting place to play and relax by this winter.

Adjacent to Patrick Lynch School, the park is at Southeast 165th Avenue and Southeast Market Street. Portland Parks & Recreation has owned the land since 1993, but it had not been developed and had no amenities.

Once finished, the park will have a colorful playground, a Portland Loo restroom, pathways, benches, irrigation improvements, public art and other amenities.

The Loo will be located near the new playground, which will be sited along the eastern edge of Lynchview Park, at Southeast 167th Avenue.

"We're hoping it's a Christmas present for the community," said Lisa Tyler, PP&R's construction manager on the project.

PP&R hired a local company to do the work. Paul Brothers Inc., a woman-owned Boring-based construction company, is the general contractor on the project.

"It provides great jobs for local folks," Tyler said.

PP&R had multiple community meetings to gather input about what kinds of features and improvements people wanted to see at the park. The agency based the design of the park on the citizen suggestions.

## **Transportation bureau plots out Portland's newest bikeway**

*By Zane Sparling*

*June 21, 2019*

It will be the first north-south neighborhood greenway built east of Interstate 205, PBOT reports.

The Portland Bureau of Transportation has staked out the route of the city's newest neighborhood bikeway — and it's the first north-south path east of Interstate 205.

PBOT has dubbed the green line on the map the "130s Neighborhood Greenway," though it technically dips as far down as 128th Avenue and up to 132nd.

Once built, the five-mile foot-and-pedal pathway will link the Springwater Corridor with the Interstate 84 multi-use path, with stops at nine schools and five parks.

"East Portland isn't as traditional of a grid as other parts of Portland," said Hannah Schafer, a PBOT spokeswoman. "Finding straight routes for people to bike on that aren't those big busy multi-lane arterials can be tricky."

Schafer said the city currently doesn't have a north-south bikeway past 85th Avenue. Two others in the 100s and 150s blocks have been funded, but not constructed.

Besides the 130s greenway, the bureau expects to cross off many items on its chockablock East Portland Active Transportation to Transit checklist this summer. The tasks involve sidewalk infill, Americans with Disability Act improvements, signalized crossings and protected bikeways.

Here's what else is coming:

- A half-mile worth of missing sidewalk will be filled in between Southeast 110th and 143rd avenues on Division Street
- The traffic signal at Southeast 130th Avenue and Stark Street will be rebuilt
- Four pedestrians signals will be constructed along Division and Glisan streets

The total cost of work is estimated at \$6.2 million. Construction will finish this fall.