

## **The Oregonian**

# **Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler makes bid for reelection known in private conversations**

*By Gordon Friedman  
June 25, 2019*

Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler has privately told confidants and supporters that he will seek another term in office, though he remains officially undeclared and has publicly wavered about his reelection efforts.

During an after-hours meeting with several dozen business leaders last week, Wheeler described his accomplishments in office and said he would run again, according to three people who were present. The attendees asked their names not be published to maintain good relations with the mayor.

“He said he will be running,” said a person who was at the gathering, held in the offices of law firm Miller, Nash, Graham & Dunn. “He didn’t say he’s 95 percent sure. He said he’s running.”

The person said they were so confident of Wheeler’s decision to seek office again that it would be “misleading” if he backs away from a reelection campaign.

Another attendee said Wheeler made clear his intention to run again and discussed his desire for “balanced leadership within City Hall,” adding that he made no specific policy promises and did not seek campaign contributions.

Wheeler has also informed advisers that he plans to seek reelection. “He told me he’s running,” said Bob Stoll, a private attorney who has offered the mayor advice on homelessness policy. A senior city official said Wheeler has been adamant in private discussions about his reelection effort for at least two months.

Publicly, Wheeler has said voters should assume he is seeking reelection, though he has not committed. He told the Portland Tribune in May that he would seek reelection, for example, but declined to announce his candidacy even then.

Wheeler has said he must continue consulting his wife and daughter before making a final decision and pledged to announce his intentions after Labor Day. He was on vacation Tuesday and unavailable for comment.

Deciding whether to seek another term in office has been an internal battle for the mayor almost since the start. He has endured a bruising term in office during which a stubbornly persistent homelessness crisis and protests over police actions have overshadowed successes on infrastructure and housing investments.

Wheeler has said being mayor is frustrating and drew headlines last year with an off-the-cuff remark in which he said he “cannot wait” for his term to end. Yet the mayor – viewed by friends and advisers as a person with unyielding grit evidenced in part by his passion for mountaineering – also proclaimed in an April speech that being mayor is “my life’s work.”

Still, Wheeler’s campaign apparatus is not active. He broke with his campaign manager in March and has barely fund-raised, Willamette Week reported.

If and when he does declare for office again, Wheeler has a shot at becoming Portland's first two-term mayor in more than 20 years. Vera Katz was the last multi-term mayor, elected to a third term in 2000.

Continuity at City Hall is an asset that could lead Wheeler to a successful second term, said Len Bergstein, a political consultant active in Portland politics, adding that experience with Portland's unique commission-form government would make Wheeler a formidable incumbent.

Despite continued challenges addressing homelessness, Wheeler has successfully shepherded three budgets through the City Council and has worked well with his fellow commissioners to maintain comity, Bergstein said.

"The dynamics are in pretty good shape for Wheeler, if he figures out what he actually wants to get done, to do it," he said.

Two others have already publicly indicated their candidacy for mayor.

Teresa Raiford, a Black Lives Matter activist, has said she wants to reform how City Hall works with Portlanders, including people of color. Her campaign website states the city government has for too long been "a bureaucratic nightmare with little accountability."

Ozzie González, the sustainability director for construction company Howard S. Wright, has formed a campaign committee to fundraise for a mayoral race. He is a board member of TriMet, vice chairman of the Regional Arts & Culture Council and serves on the boards of the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce.

Announcing his candidacy would not automatically put Wheeler's name on the November 2020 ballot. The previous mayor, Charlie Hales, announced his reelection bid and even fund-raised but ultimately backed out after Wheeler entered the race.

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Sources: Rent control law cools investment in apartments**

*By Jim Redden  
June 26, 2019*

#### **Plus, politics erupt at the 2019 Oregon Legislature, leading to accusations of strong-arming and hypocrisy**

Investment in multifamily housing projects fell substantially in Oregon following passage of the new statewide rent control law by the 2019 Legislature in February.

According to a June 18 article in the rental industry trade journal CoStar, investments in market rate apartment buildings in Oregon totaled \$200 million in March, April and May of this year — a 38% drop from the \$325 million invested during the same period last year.

Most of the decline came from out-of-state investments, according to the article.

Some developers have been predicting out-of-state investment in multifamily projects will drop because of several relatively new policies that complicate financing them, including statewide rent control and Portland programs intended to help tenants and produce more affordable housing units.

## **Tensions with Portland Dems at Legislature**

The second Republican walkout of the 2019 Oregon Legislature revealed their displeasure with Portland-area Democrats.

The 11 Republicans in the Senate fled the state last week to deny Democrats the quorum needed to pass the controversial cap-and-trade bill that would raise energy costs. Oregon Gov. Kate Brown said she would call a special session for July 2 if the Republicans don't return before June 30, when the current session must end by law.

That prompted Republican state Sen. Tim Knopp of Bend to tell the Oregon Capital Bureau, "If it's just another attempt to pass Multnomah County's policy agenda without input from our constituents, I don't think that we will be there."

For many Republicans in the Legislature, Multnomah County is the same as Portland — the most liberal city in Oregon that dominates state politics. Although Eugene and Corvallis also are liberal cities, they are not seen as having as much influence as Portland.

### **Politics in Salem? Shocking!**

State Senate Republicans wasted no time calling Oregon Gov. Kate Brown a hypocrite for ordering the Oregon State Police to return them to the state Capitol after they walked out last week.

The Republicans noted that Brown supported House Democrats when they walked out of the 1981 Oregon Legislature to prevent passage of a legislative redistricting bill written by Republicans. The walkout lasted five days.

Brown, who was the Senate Democratic leader at the time, called the walkout "very appropriate" and suggested Senate Democrats would do the same.

"Under the circumstances, it's fair to say we would use all the tools available to us," the Associated Press quoted Brown as saying.

## **Willamette Week**

### **Will the Portland Clean Energy Tax Be Passed on to Consumers? Check Your Trash Bill.**

*By Rachel Monahan  
June 26, 2019*

**The expected revenues from the tax expanded greatly—after voters passed it.**

Starting next week, most Portland households will pay 75 cents more a month for garbage collection. About 20 cents of that increase happened because Portlanders voted last November to tax big companies for climate change projects.

But it's not clear voters understood they were agreeing to tax their trash and recycling pickup. That's partly because proponents of the Portland Clean Energy Fund surcharge said the tax on big corporations would not be passed on to customers. (Companies with more than \$1 billion in sales nationally and \$500,000 within the city are subject to the 1 percent increase in their business license tax.)

"I was surprised, because I really thought that Portland voters were told explicitly that this is something that big corporations were going to be paying, not the average voters," says Stuart Weitz, 54, a Northwest Portland homeowner who was alerted to the increase by a mailer sent to city residences earlier this month.

(He voted against the measure in November.)

He's not alone in being surprised. As city officials and businesses have learned this spring, the scope of the Clean Energy Fund has expanded.

A 2017 analysis by the city's Revenue Division of a draft of Measure 26-201 predicted the tax would raise between \$35 million and \$51 million a year. During the campaign, proponents argued the clean energy tax would raise roughly \$40 million a year.

But in February, after voters passed the measure, the Revenue Division updated its estimate of tax receipts—to between \$54 million and \$71 million a year.

How did this happen? "One primary difference between the 2017 analysis and the 2019 analysis was the definition of 'retail sale,'" says Thomas Lannom, director of the Revenue Division.

The draft analyzed in 2017 defined it as "the sale of products, goods or services to the general public by a Large Retailer."

But the measure passed by voters was far broader. It "means the sale to a consumer for use or consumption, and not for resale," the measure states. "Retail sale includes but is not limited to the sale of services, including but not limited to retail banking services."

It's not clear whether the broader definition roped in garbage companies or they were included from the start. (Lannom says he doesn't know.)

But it does show the tax is being passed along to Portland residents. During the campaign last year, proponents argued the surcharge would be absorbed by big corporations and there would not be a direct effect on consumers. Opponents said the tax would function much like a sales tax.

Garbage pickup, while unique in being highly regulated by the city, is an example of the way voters will, in fact, be directly affected.

Just three of 11 trash haulers have revenues large enough to be subject to the tax increase. But the city spreads the costs of garbage pickup to all customers. And on May 29, the City Council voted to do so.

Garbage haulers have asked the Revenue Division that they be considered utilities, which are exempt from the surcharge. But haulers are not considered utilities in city code, says Lannom.

This is at least the second way the tax will directly affect city taxpayers.

As WW reported earlier this month ("Clean Break," June 5, 2019), the draft rules also make clear that construction companies will be taxed, which in turn could raise the cost of publicly financed projects, including schools and affordable housing.

The same groups that campaigned for a \$40 million-a-year measure are now lobbying to maintain the broader definition. Advocates defend the increased scope of the tax.

"We have always acknowledged that the Revenue Division alone could make the full determination of who was subject to the surcharge, and the measure's definition of 'retail sales' explicitly includes the sale of services," says Khanh Pham, organizing director at OPAL Environmental Justice Oregon and a spokeswoman for the Portland Clean Energy Fund community coalition.

"Furthermore, we built into the measure a process for the nine-person grant committee of Portland community members to suggest changes to City Council if they deem it absolutely necessary."

The advocates also say the benefits of the measure outweigh the increased garbage fees.

"Garbage haulers are regulated by the city, a very different process than retail goods which will not increase in price," says Jenny Lee, advocacy director at APANO and a spokeswoman for the coalition. "This tiny garbage rate increase will be only pennies a month on average per household. Meanwhile, Portlanders and communities will see many financial benefits from the fund's living-wage jobs, job training and energy savings, along with healthier, more vibrant communities."

Unless the coalition of advocates supports a change, that puts city commissioners in a tight political spot.

Portland voters passed the measure overwhelmingly: 65 to 35 percent. Since then, Mayor Ted Wheeler and Commissioner JoAnn Hardesty have deferred to the coalition's views.

"PCEF is a community-led initiative, and any amendments to the rules should have support from the PCEF community coalition," says Wheeler's spokeswoman Eileen Park.

Hardesty agrees. "This measure was passed by the community with provisions in place that allow for alterations if needed," she says. "I'm committed to following the community's lead in reviewing and addressing the impacts of the surcharge and making changes if and when it's necessary."

(Commissioner Chloe Eudaly's chief of staff Marshall Runkel declined to comment.)

Commissioner Amanda Fritz said last month she supported a surcharge on her garbage bill to address climate change.

"I was really pleased to hear that I'm going to be paying 20 cents more per month," said Fritz.

## **A Fundraising Campaign Hopes to Raise \$300,000 to Relocate the Alder Street Food Carts**

*By Matthew Singer*

*June 25, 2019*

**The proposal would move 37 of the 40 carts to the North Park Blocks.**

The iconic Alder Street Food Cart Pod is in its last days, but the carts themselves might not be going far.

Last month, it was announced that the pod between 9th and 10th Avenues downtown would be closing June 30 to make way for a 35-story, 460-foot tall hotel tower, which was later revealed to be a Ritz-Carlton. But city officials are scrambling to relocate the evicted carts to the North Park Blocks, The Oregonian reported.

The proposal—effectively a collaborative effort between Commissioner Chloe Eudaly's office and Friends of the Green Loop, the initiative to create a six-mile "urban trail" through the city—would move 37 of the 40 carts to the two blocks between West Burnside and Northwest Davis streets on Northwest Park Avenue.

Relocating that many carts is a costly endeavor. According to Friends of the Green Loop, \$300,000 is needed to pay for towing and electricity.

To cover those costs, the group today launched a fundraising campaign, with the goal of getting the carts up and running by July 15.

"It sounds like a lot," says Keith Jones, co-director of Friends of the Green Loop, "but I think the community can really come together to pull this off."

In addition to the money, Jones says there are "a million details that change daily, sometimes hourly." But he says there is a determined effort between all groups involved to make it happen, despite the time constraints.

The move would be a temporary measure until officials can work out the details on the "Culinary Corridor," which would place carts in curbside parking spaces downtown as part of the Green Loop. The carts would remain at the North Park Blocks until the end of their season on October 31. Then, says Jones, the hope is they would settle permanently into the Culinary Corridor by next summer.

"We're shooting for next season. We would love to do now, but there are so many details to work out," Jones says. "Portland's growing, and surface lots are being developed, and we're not going to have place for carts anymore. We should be thinking of that now for later."

## **The Daily Journal of Commerce**

### **Food cart backers launch \$300,000 to fund move to the North Park Blocks**

*By Jon Bell*

*June 25, 2019*

Moving the popular Southwest 10th and Alder food cart pod to the North Park Blocks — an idea floated this week — won't happen for free.

Which is why the Friends of Green Loop, an initiative to create a linear park throughout Portland, has launched a \$300,000 GoFundMe campaign.

The funds would help cover the costs of towing the carts to the new location, installing electricity and, according to a release, help develop a long-term solution for the carts in Portland. The GoFundMe campaign just launched last night.

The release notes that most of the 40 carts, which reportedly employ between 200 and 300 people, are planning to make the move to the North Park Blocks, if the effort comes to fruition, by July 15. The new location would be a temporary one, possibly buying some time for proponents of a "culinary corridor" concept more time to get their ducks in a row. That plan would find the carts lining Southwest Ninth Avenue and Southwest Park Avenue between O'Bryant Square and Director Park.

"It is incredibly important for the carts to stay together as a pod, preserving their important role in Portland culture," said Keith Jones, co-director of Friends of the Green Loop. "Our ultimate goal is to move the vendors to a new Culinary Corridor concept, and we view this transition as a pilot project, building a case for placing more food carts within the Green Loop in the future."

The effort to move the carts, which are being displaced by the development of a 35-story tower, has garnered some other notable backing, including Portland City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly and Travel Portland.

"Portland is recognized as a global culinary destination in large thanks to our more than 600 food carts," said Megan Conway, senior vice president of communications and regional strategy for Travel Portland, in the release. "We support this thoughtful transition that enables growth and development while also maintaining room for a pod that is core to the Portland culinary experience ..."

### **Further Reading (linked below)**

**PBOT gets council support for Vision Zero, except from Commissioner Hardesty**

**During Vision Zero presentation, Commissioner Hardesty says distracted walkers are 'huge issue'**