

## **The Oregonian**

### **Dueling demonstrations set for Saturday in downtown Portland**

*By Jim Ryan  
June 27, 2019*

Dueling demonstrators are set to assemble Saturday in Portland, signaling the city's first potential clash of the summer between right- and left-wing factions.

Online postings indicate two right-wing demonstrations are scheduled for Saturday: one involving the Proud Boys, a fraternal organization known for street fighting, and another organized by conservative activist Haley Adams and the "HimToo Movement." Counterprotesters are planning to gather in opposition.

On Thursday afternoon, Portland police said they were preparing for three demonstrations instead of the two discussed online — at Pioneer Square, Chapman Square and Waterfront Park. Lt. Tina Jones declined to comment on the groups that police were anticipating at each protest, or how many people they expected to be there.

Patriot Prayer, a right-wing group that often draws opposition in Portland, is hosting a separate event Saturday in southwest Washington. Leader Joey Gibson is expected to attend the Washington event.

The demonstrations come nearly a year to the day after Patriot Prayer and antifascist activists broke out in violence last June 30. Portland police declared that clash a riot.

The police agency plans to release information about the Portland protests on Thursday.

### **Federal, state and local law enforcement to host emergency safety training for faith-based leaders in Portland**

*By Maxine Bernstein  
June 27, 2019*

Federal, state and local law enforcement on Sunday afternoon will provide a special emergency training for leaders of churches, synagogues, mosques, temples and other faith-based congregations in the metropolitan Portland area.

The session is intended to prepare places of worship for potential attacks and violent extremism, such as the shooting at the Chabad of Poway in San Diego and the massacres at Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Christchurch Mosques in New Zealand and Emmanuel AME Church in Charleston.

The training will be held at 3 p.m. at Congregation Neveh Shalom, at 2900 S.W. Peaceful Lane in Portland.

"Law enforcement will present crucial and potentially life-saving information and surveilled intelligence about specific trends and potential threats," the event announcement says.

The workshop is part of a national program called “One Congregation One Precinct,” or OneCop, intended to try to forge stronger relationships between law enforcement and community members.

“Public gatherings are vulnerable and those seeking to inflict harm often perceive houses of worship as attractive targets where they can wreak havoc, exact mass casualties, cause psychological impacts, and get extensive media attention,” said the Rev. Markel Hutchins, a OneCOP national organizer.

In January, local faith-based leaders joined in the OneCop initiative with area law enforcement.

The goals of the program are to improve public safety by collaborating and sharing information on crime and violence, and strengthening the links between police leaders and faith-based leaders “to prevent violent responses to officer-involved incidents while also giving voice to growing public concerns relative to policing,” according to a letter sent to community leaders by Portland Police Chief Danielle Outlaw, Sheriff Michael Reese, Gresham Chief Robin Sells and Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill.

Portland Police have provided training to schools and educators about the threat of active shooters. “Nobody’s really been doing that for faith-based organizations, which have now become targeted,” said Lt. Tina Jones, police spokeswoman.

Members of the U.S. Attorney’s Office, the FBI, Oregon State Police, Portland Police Bureau and the Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington County Sheriffs’ offices will participate in the safety seminar. They encourage senior faith leaders and congregation security in Multnomah, Clackamas and Washington counties to attend the free seminar.

## **Injured cyclist sues city over unmarked metal cable across Kelley Point Park path**

*By Diana Kruzman*

*June 26, 2019*

A Portland man is suing the city over a bicycle accident in a public park that left him with extensive injuries when a worker used an unmarked metal cable to close off a path, according to court documents filed this week.

The lawsuit filed Monday by James Thorne accuses the city of negligence in the May 2018 crash in Kelley Point Park.

Thorne’s attorney, Jason Kafoury, said an official from Portland’s Risk Management Division told him that a city employee or contract worker had placed the cable. City spokeswoman Heather Hafer said the city does not comment on pending litigation.

The lawsuit says Thorne suffered injuries to his back, neck and elbows and required surgery on his left shoulder and right wrist. It asks for \$1 million in noneconomic damages for “pain, discomfort and interference with ordinary activities,” as well as \$86,000 in medical expenses and nearly \$85,000 in lost wages while Thorne recovered from his injuries.

The city failed to make the cable clearly visible to bicycle riders or notify park visitors that the trail was closed, according to the Multnomah County Circuit Court suit. Kafoury called it a “massive hidden danger.”

“If you’re going to close any kind of public trail, entrances should have a clear notice that the trail is closed,” Kafoury said. “You should never have an unmarked, difficult-to-see, life-altering hazard in the middle of a trail. That’s just crazy.”

The suit also seeks \$12,000 in damages for Thorne’s bike, which was battered during the crash, according to Kafoury.

Thorne declined to comment through his attorney.

Hidden hazards have tripped up cyclists in Portland before, including a woman whose face was cut in several places after she hit a booby trap along the Interstate 205 multi-use path in November. Two people were sentenced to community service in the case after admitting to planting strings across the path in an attempt to harass homeless people.

## **Portland eyes citywide Biketown expansion in 2020, with e-bikes as well**

*By Andrew Theen*

*June 26, 2019*

Portland hopes to extend its Biketown rental program “to the entire city” next spring, officials said Wednesday, and electric assist bikes are expected to be part of that expanded fleet.

The City Council approved a plan Wednesday to extend a contract with Motivate, which operates the Biketown fleet, through April 30, 2020. The \$3.4 million contract extension is intended to keep continuous bike service as Portland seeks a new contract with provisions – like e-bikes -- designed to grow ridership.

It’s possible Portland may choose to continue working with Motivate to run the Biketown system going forward, but Wednesday’s vote allows the system to remain the same until the spring.

The contract with Motivate was originally set to expire in August. As The Oregonian/OregonLive had previously reported, the city pledged to include e-bikes in the next contract, which it had hoped would mean e-bikes on Portland streets by the late summer of 2019. But as Willamette Week reported earlier this month, that plan was put on hold and the city intended to extend its existing contract, thereby delaying e-bikes until 2020. Wednesday’s vote made that move official.

Steve Hoyt-McBeth, a city transportation manager overseeing Biketown’s program, said the next contract would hopefully result in bike share bikes being available “to the entire city” next year. Portland currently has 1,002 bikes and 147 stations across central city and eastside neighborhoods.

Hoyt-McBeth said e-bikes, which allow rider to more easily pedal up hills, could be a gamechanger, particularly as the city eyes expansion to Southwest Portland. E-bikes make riding a bike “more viable for people,” particularly when hills are involved, he told the council.

John Brady, a city transportation spokesman, had previously told The Oregonian the city planned a “major expansion of the system to serve new neighborhoods and districts,” but he said the agency didn’t have any more specifics when directly asked.

Hoyt-McBeth said the city intended to renew its sponsorship contract with Nike, which extends through July 2021. The city can seek renegotiate or extend that deal in the summer of 2020.

One new wrinkle that's unlikely to be provided in 2020: Helmets. Hoyt-McBeth said the city "has not made progress" in finding a "real-time" rental service for on-demand helmets.

"We pursued negotiations with a vendor that proposed to have a helmet vending solution," Hoyt-McBeth said of the original contract, but he said the company went bankrupt, and the city has yet to see another company pop up with similar services.

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Property owners damaged by water main break can seek compensation**

*By Jim Redden*

*June 26, 2019*

#### **The City Council reverses the Portland Bureau of Risk Management and approves a process to pay for repairs**

Property owners who suffered damages when the 30-inch water main broke under Northeast Skidmore Street in March can now file claims for reimbursement with the city.

The Portland Bureau of Risk Management originally denied all claims because the cause of the break is not known and city liability cannot be proven. But the City Council agreed to provide compensation last week because of the size of the break and extent of the flooding, which damaged many nearby properties.

"There was no negligence in this case and Risk Management determined that the City is not legally liable for damages. Mayor (Ted) Wheeler and I quickly agreed, however, that the City has a moral responsibility to compensate community members who were harmed through no fault of their own under these rare and unique circumstances," said Commissioner Amanda Fritz, who oversees the Portland Water Bureau.

The deadline for those potentially affected by the main break to file a claim is July 15, 2019. Those who previously submitted a claim do not need to re-apply.

"This process, led by the Portland City Attorney's Office, will expedite the claims process and allow those impacted by the water to receive compensation without a need for costly and time-intensive litigation," said Water Bureau Director Mike Stuhr.

## **Willamette Week**

### **Portland Police Hire Nine Public Safety Support Specialists More Than Two Years After the Positions Were Funded**

*By Katie Shepherd  
June 27, 2019*

**The unarmed officers will assist sworn police responding to low-priority calls.**

More than two years after Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler de-funded the mounted patrol unit to fund a new group of unarmed officers, the Portland Police Bureau has hired the first group of recruits to fill those community-policing positions.

PPB announced June 27 it had finally hired nine Public Safety Support Specialists, unarmed employees who can assist sworn officers responding to some low-priority calls, such as non-injury traffic accidents. They can also perform other tasks that are unlikely to place the unarmed cops in harm's way.

Wheeler's 2017 budget proposal initially funded 12 community service officers, later renamed PS3s. The bureau has been working to recruit, background and train the new hires since the positions received final approval after union negotiations in late 2018.

"We are very excited to bring these high caliber individuals on board in the Public Safety Support Specialist and Police Officer roles," Chief Danielle Outlaw said in a statement. "We invite anyone considering a career in public service to apply to join our team as we continue to provide the highest quality public service in Portland."

The bureau also hired five new sworn police officers.

PPB has been facing a staffing shortage with more than 100 open positions in recent months. To address its recruiting struggles, the bureau recently lowered its hiring standards. New police can be hired with a GED and tattoos visible above the neck will not disqualify potential recruits.

### **Report Shows Portland Police Officer Had Posted In Extremist Facebook Groups Promoting Islamophobia and Anti-Government Paramilitary Organizations**

*By Katie Shepherd  
June 27, 2019*

**Before he was hired by the Portland Police Bureau, Eric Salmestrelli shared Islamophobic comments and an image promoting the Three Percenters on Facebook.**

An investigation published by Reveal this week exposed a Portland police officer's inflammatory and offensive Facebook posts that raise questions about the Police Bureau's background investigation process and again raise the specter of bias in policing protests.

Before he was hired by the Portland Police Bureau, Eric Salmestrelli shared an Islamophobic post about President Barack Obama inside a group dedicated to the Oath Keepers, Reveal reported. The report also shows that Salmestrelli posted an image promoting the Three Percenters.

The Oath Keepers and Three Percenters are anti-government paramilitary organizations with members who have frequently shown up at far-right rallies in Portland.

The Portland Police Bureau is under external review for possible bias in policing protests after WW and the Portland Mercury published friendly texts between a police lieutenant and Patriot Prayer leader Joey Gibson. Members of the Three Percenters and Oath Keepers often appeared at Gibson's rallies in 2017 and 2018.

Reveal reported that PPB investigated Salmestrelli's conduct after discovering the Facebook posts, but did not discipline the police officer because the bureau determined "the posts in question all occurred prior to the member's employment with PPB, no jurisdiction existed for the enforcement of a policy related to a member that was not employed at the time of the violation."

Police have rarely arrested members of right-leaning groups that sometimes riot in Portland streets.

WW reached out to Salmestrelli, PPB and Mayor Ted Wheeler's office for further information about the bureau's hiring process and the investigation of Salmestrelli's Facebook posts. This post will be updated as more information is made available.

## **The Portland Mercury**

### **Portland Police to Host First Active Shooter Training for Religious Communities**

*By Blair Stenvick  
June 27, 2019*

After a shooting at the Chabad of Poway synagogue in San Diego left one person dead and three others injured in April, Portland faith leaders started asking local law enforcement agencies what they could do to protect their own congregations.

Reverend Markel Hutchins fielded many of their calls. Hutchins is the leader of the One Congregation One Precinct (OneCOP) Initiative, an Atlanta-based organization that connects law enforcement with faith-based communities. OneCOP opened its Portland branch in January, which Hutchins oversees. While there haven't been any recent instances or specific risks of gun violence at religious spaces in Portland, Hutchins said it became clear to him after the Poway shooting that a large-scale safety training for Portland houses of worship was needed.

"We live in an environment," Hutchins said, "where those who intend to inflict harm often see large gatherings—including Sunday and Saturday services—as a vulnerable target that when attacked, can wreak havoc on a mass of people, and at the same time garner those attackers a great deal of media attention."

That training, hosted by OneCOP, will take place this Sunday, June 30, and will be focused on protecting Portland's religious communities from shooting attacks.

The last couple years have seen an uptick in gun violence at houses of worship, both in the United States and abroad. At a press conference held Thursday, law enforcement officials repeatedly invoked recent mass shootings when explaining why this preventive training is necessary.

“Unfortunately, we’ve seen too many acts of violence against faith communities across the country,” said Scott Asphaug, the assistant United States Attorney in Oregon. “The Portland Metro Area is a welcoming and diverse community, but it is not unlike Pittsburgh or Charleston or Oak Creek or Poway.”

The training will include participation from the Portland Police Bureau (PPB), the sheriff departments for Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas Counties, the FBI, and the US Attorney’s Office.

Lt. Tina Jones, PPB’s spokesperson, said that while the bureau has provided small-scale one-on-one training sessions for individual houses of worship before, this is the first major training of its kind to happen in Portland—and one of the first in the country.

But while it’s clear that Portland’s faith communities need and want safety training, it remains to be seen whether religious minorities—many of which have historically found themselves disproportionately targeted by law enforcement—will turn out for a training that includes both local police officers and the FBI.

In February, the Portland City Council voted to leave the FBI’s Joint Terrorism Task Force, a group of regional law enforcement agencies that assist the FBI with identifying and surveilling potential terrorist activity. A major factor in that decision: Testimony from many people of color and religious minorities—including members of Portland’s Muslim community—who said they felt unsafe around law enforcement, and in particular the FBI.

Renn Cannon, a special agent in charge of the FBI’s Portland Division, told reporters that the FBI’s role in Sunday’s training will be to provide safety tips for responding to an active shooter, and to help faith leaders identify potential “pathways to violence” at their houses of worship.

Hutchins stressed at the press conference that Sunday’s training, which will be held at Congregation Neveh Shalom from 3 to 6 pm, is intended for leaders from “every house of worship.” He said he’s reached out to “the Muslim, the Jewish, the Hindu, the Buddhist, as well as the Christian communities,” and he’s hopeful that even communities who might otherwise be reluctant to interact with the police will make an exception for a safety training.

“There’s a lot of things that some of our houses of worship might disagree with Portland, or the Portland Police Bureau, the FBI, or some other law enforcement agency,” Hutchins added. “But we all agree on this subject matter, that people who come to worship deserve to be protected and feel safe in that space.”

## **The Daily Journal of Commerce**

### **Broadway Corridor plans take shape**

*By Chuck Slothower  
June 27, 2019*

In slide shows and master plan presentations, the contours of what will become the Broadway Corridor are taking shape.

On Tuesday, the 37-member steering committee that was convened two years ago by Prosper Portland met for the 20th and final time. Earlier recommendations by the committee led to the hiring of Continuum Partners of Denver as development adviser and the selection of the “Play” concept from three development scenarios put forth by ZGF Architects.

A master plan for the 14-acre U.S. Postal Service site is in the design review process, with the Portland Design Commission scheduled to meet with the project team for the second time on July 18.

A few things are becoming clearer, including a general layout for the larger 32-acre area bridging the Pearl District and Old Town Chinatown. A large-scale office development could be located in the north end of the Broadway Corridor, near the Broadway Bridge and Union Station. Mixed-income housing, with a substantial complement of affordable units, would be built in the south section.

Northwest Johnson Street is emerging as a main street through the Postal Service site that could be lined with commercial uses, said Nolan Lienhart, director of planning and urban design for ZGF Architects.

The North Park Blocks would extend through the site, with the city's Green Loop running along the west side of the Park Blocks. As the Green Loop heads north, it would begin to zig-zag and elevate, climbing toward the Broadway Bridge as a viaduct. Bicyclists could also take advantage of a cycle track on Ninth Avenue.

At the north edge of the Broadway Corridor, the street grid would terminate, providing a large site that could be used for a major office development. "It means it is very flexible from a development perspective," Lienhart said.

The development potential of the site is far larger than at any other location in Portland. The Postal Service property alone is planned to host 3.8 million square feet of development, with 2,400 households and 4,000 jobs, according to the 2015 framework plan.

Prosper Portland is planning to issue its first requests for proposals for on-site work later this year. The work will include relocating the post office's retail operation, demolition and environmental remediation. It'll be the first significant construction spending for the project.

"We're still fine-tuning the procurement strategy and timelines," said Sarah Harpole, Prosper Portland's project manager for the Broadway Corridor.

Continuum Partners is expected to begin serious talks with Prosper Portland this summer on how to develop the site.

"Now that the plan is better defined, we can begin a more concrete conversation with Prosper about a vertical development strategy, and that process will unfold over the next few months," Mark Falcone, Continuum's CEO, said in an interview.

Falcone said Prosper Portland's process has been sound, and Continuum is moving forward toward a memorandum of understanding with the agency.

"We're pretty excited about it," he said. "I think it does have an opportunity to create an iconic project for the city that creates a new kind of space that doesn't really exist there right now."

Continuum's commitment could be critical to the project's success. In recent years, developers have courted major public-private projects with Prosper Portland only to walk away prior to signing a development agreement.

Falcone acknowledged there are "challenges" working with a government agency that has a prolonged public process. Continuum Partners was selected as development adviser in April 2018 after a competitive application.

"We've got a lot of time invested in this, and hopefully we'll find a path forward together," Falcone said.



Prosper Portland spokesman Shawn Uhlman said Continuum Partners has been “actively engaging” in planning for the Broadway Corridor.

In May, Prosper Portland’s board endorsed the “Play” concept, carrying a \$50 million price tag for public realm improvements, including open space, the Green Loop, streets and public utilities.

“We’re far from being done with the project,” Lienhart said. “We’re closer to getting done with this phase of planning.”

Planners are considering how to make active, welcoming spaces underneath the Broadway Bridge, looking to precedents in other cities. Lienhart said a combination of public art, landscaping and activation is being considered underneath the bridge.

In a central open space, a flexible athletic court that could accommodate basketball, futsal and other activities is envisioned.

Alongside development planning, Prosper Portland is planning to forge a community benefits agreement that would guide work at the site.

At Tuesday’s meeting, steering committee members reflected on the two-year process.

“It took a long time to come to details,” said Jeremy Simer, a representative of Service Employees International Union, Local 49.

Neil Lee, vice president of the Oregon Chinese Consolidated Benevolent Association, said he would have liked to hear more from Continuum Partners. “We saw a lot of the architect, but we didn’t see enough of the developer here,” he said.

Paul Vanderford, director of green markets at Sustainable Northwest, said the planning process had proved fruitful.

“I do like the design we ended up with,” he said.

## **The Skanner**

### **Portland Police Bureau Announces New Officers, Public Safety Specialists**

*June 27, 2019*

On Thursday, June 26, 2019, the Portland Police Bureau hired nine public safety support specialists and five new police officers. The new hires will undergo orientation and training before being assigned to the precincts.

"We are very excited to bring these high caliber individuals on board in the Public Safety Support Specialist and Police Officer roles," said Chief Danielle Outlaw. "We invite anyone considering a career in public service to apply to join our team as we continue to provide the highest quality public service in Portland."

Portland Police has revamped its hiring process and reopens for applications on July 1, 2019. For the latest information on how to become a Portland police officer, including salary and benefit information or to apply, visit the Portland Police Bureau website.

The next hiring workshop and physical ability test is scheduled for Saturday, July 20 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. at 14912 NE Airport Way. The workshop is free and provides an opportunity to learn information on the application process and the physical ability test. Those who are interested can take the physical ability test on site. Learn more about the event and register online at the Portland Police Bureau website.

## City Passes Renter Protections

*By Christen McCurdy  
June 27, 2019*

Portland City Council last week passed two tenant-protection ordinances to change screening criteria and procedures, as well as capping the amount of money landlords can charge for security deposits.

The ordinances were put forward by Commissioner Chloe Eudaly and workshopped for nearly two years by the city's Rental Services Commission. They passed 3 to 1, with Commissioner Amanda Fritz opposing the ordinance. Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty was not present for the vote, but signaled her support in a written statement read by Eudaly.

The reforms include:

- A first-in-time sorting process, requiring landlords to run each application in the order it was received;
- Tenants do not need proof of citizenship or government-issued ID if they can provide other proof of identification;
- Encouragement to use criteria that does not reject applicants with felony convictions that are more than seven years old;
- Landlords can require tenants to earn 2.5 times the rent in monthly income for less expensive units, or 2 times the rent for more expensive units (as determined by federal criteria); Lessening credit barriers so landlords may not reject applicants with a credit score of less than 500;
- Only the primary applicant's financial criteria will be screened, though other adults living in a unit can be screened for other criteria; Limiting the amount of security deposits in most cases to no more than one month's rent.

The Skanner reported in September that Multifamily Northwest, an advocacy group for landlords who own apartment buildings, had taken the unusual step of targeting some Portland renters with flyers warning them about the screening criteria ordinance.

Bearing the headline "Sex Offenders, Stalkers, and Felons Could be Your Neighbors!" the flyer suggested individuals contact their city council representatives. Spokespeople for city council representatives at the time said most of the negative feedback they received on the ordinance came from individuals who self-identified as landlords.

"While no one thing will solve the housing challenges everyday Portlanders face, these proposals are an important step forward to ensuring access to housing in this city is a goal that can be achieved by anyone. The protections provided to rental applicants and the limitations on screening fees and security deposit deductions will make renting more just and fair," Hardesty's written statement said.

Eudaly said screening criteria like credit scores and criminal background checks was a legal form of discrimination against groups Black Portlanders are disproportionately likely to be part of.

“While the language may be less explicit now, the effect is just as clear: We continue to see communities of color, and especially Black residents, pushed to the margins of our city and beyond at an alarming rate,” Eudaly said.

## **The Portland Observer**

### **Police Enlarge Hiring Window**

*By June 26, 2019*

#### **Will now accept applicants without degrees**

Portland Police Chief Danielle Outlaw has changed the bureau’s hiring criteria to lower some standards, including college degrees, to enlarge the pool of applicants and make some progress on what the officials call a critical staffing shortage.

The Portland Police Bureau currently has 128 officer vacancies, with a large number of additional projected retirements in 2020, officials said. The changes to hiring practices is taking place as the bureau is actively recruiting and hiring officers and continues to review and refine its process.

Beginning July 1, Portland police will align with Oregon state law enforcement standards for certification, including its education requirement. The state requires a high school diploma or GED to be certified as a police officer and the Police Bureau will adopt this standard.

Outlaw said the Bureau will continue to provide incentive pay to officers who pursue higher education and earn degrees. PPB will also continue to develop training and learning opportunities to ensure all officers receive necessary education and tools to develop and advance.

The department will also align with the state in regard to the hiring test, which is administered through the National Testing Network. Currently, all applicants must take this test; effective July 1, candidates with bachelor's degrees and lateral experience will not be required to take the exam. All others will be required to pass the test within 60 days of being placed on the Bureau's eligible list.

The Bureau is also considering changes to the grooming standard policy to include, considering candidates with tattoos above the collar line. Currently tattoos are allowed below the collar, but are reviewed to ensure there is nothing that is sexually explicit, racially and/or sexually biased or could be viewed as discriminatory. This standard will also apply to any tattoos above the collar.

Lastly, the bureau is considering changing its grooming standards to allow sworn members to grow a beard as long as the beard does not interfere with the proper fit of protective equipment.

"These changes to policies were made after careful review of our hiring process in the attempt to identify potential barriers to entry," said Outlaw. "We will revisit the effectiveness of these changes after two years to determine if our hiring numbers have increased."

To learn about the entire hiring process, visit [joinportlandpolice.com](http://joinportlandpolice.com).

## OPB

# Forced To Move, Portland's Alder Street Food Carts Are Planning For The Future

*By Meerah Powell  
June 26, 2019*

The food cart pod on Southwest 10th Avenue and Alder Street in downtown Portland is arguably the largest and most well-known collection of food carts in the city. It's been around since the late 1990s and at its peak, it had about 60 carts with food ranging from Thai to German and Mexican to Italian.

Later this summer, developers are breaking ground on the lot to build the Pacific Northwest's first Ritz-Carlton hotel. The food carts have to leave before the end of June.

### End Of An Era

Jameson Wittkopp runs Altengartz, a German food truck. He's the longest-standing current member of the Alder Street pod. He wasn't surprised to hear about the upcoming development.

"To be honest, I thought it would happen sooner. It's a prime piece of real estate," Wittkopp said. "I feel fortunate to have been here 18 years and eight months."

Wittkopp got his start running a coffee push-cart in Salem before opening Altengartz in Portland.

For him and many others, owning a food cart or truck is the first step into the region's culinary scene — whether looking to eventually start a brick and mortar restaurant or just making a name for yourself.

Wittkopp opened a second location in Beaverton last year.

The introductory nature of these carts is especially important when looking at the diverse communities who operate them.

"These are, a lot of these are immigrant businesses, you know? And we talk about diversity and inclusion in Portland; this is it," said Keith Jones, co-director of Friends of the Green Loop. "So, it's time to step up and make sure that these things continue to exist."

The Green Loop is a six-mile linear park concept that is slated to eventually loop through downtown streets, over to the east side and back. Portland City Council unanimously approved the concept for the loop last year in its Central City 2035 plan.

Jones is working with the city, specifically Commissioner Chloe Eudaly's office, to find a temporary home in the area for the bulk of the Alder Street carts until eventually moving them into a part of the Green Loop.

Jones says he envisions the carts as part of a "culinary corridor" on Southwest 9th Avenue between Portland's Director Park and O'Bryant Park, but in the meantime, he and the city are working on moving most of the carts to the North Park Blocks, between Northwest Davis and West Burnside Street, replacing the metered parking spots currently there.

"It's a pilot program to see how we do things with the right-of-way, and if we can figure it out there, we can start looking at it in different spots throughout the city," Jones said.

## **A Changing Portland**

The high-rise building replacing the food cart pod is one of the biggest private sector projects in downtown Portland since the U.S. Bancorp Tower, or Big Pink, in 1983.

“[The] Ritz-Carlton will have 251 hotel rooms. There will be 138 residential units including eight spacious penthouses,” said Pat Walsh, with BPM Real Estate Group, the developer for the 35-story building.

It’s expected to open in 2023.

Along with amenities for guests, it’ll include business, retail and restaurant spaces.

Compared to the food carts, Wittkopp said he doesn’t think it will have much use for locals.

“I think that’s something that no one in Portland is going to use and this is something that thousands of people a day in Portland use,” he said. “So in terms of servicing the local community, I don’t think it’s really even in the same ballpark.”

Angie Johnson owns Eat Adventures, a food tour company in Portland. She’s been showing visitors Portland’s food scene, and in a specific tour — its food carts, for more than seven years.

She said food carts are a beloved piece of Portland culture, by both locals and tourists alike.

“It’s approachable,” Johnson said. “It’s a price point that can meet any of our needs and it doesn’t matter where you come from, there’s something for anybody.”

And Johnson isn’t really surprised the pod is relocating, because she says food carts are designed to be transient.

“It’s like puzzle pieces and in the neighborhoods or downtown, when a pod closes, the carts go different locations,” she said. “Some of them begin a new pod somewhere, some of them get absorbed in existing pods, so I think as a whole, the food cart scene, whether it’s downtown or in the neighborhoods, you’re just always watching the pieces shift.”

## **The Future Of Portland’s Food Cart Scene**

After almost two decades at the Alder Street pod, Wittkopp has decided to work on a mobile schedule in Oregon City and locations in Washington County, while still operating his second location in Beaverton. He’s not sure what the future of food cart pods looks like in Portland.

“I think it’s sad,” Wittkopp said. “I think it’s a huge piece of Portland culture going away, and there’s this cultural void that’s going to be developing downtown where Portland culture’s kind of being moved to the suburbs along with the food carts and then the culture that’s going to be here is going to be I think a bit artificial. It’s going to be comprised of a Ritz-Carlton hotel and whatever demographic that brings.”

Jones, with Friends of the Green Loop, has a rough estimate of \$300,000 for plans to relocate the carts. That money would go toward costs for towing, supplying electricity and developing a long-term plan for the carts. On Monday, he created a GoFundMe to raise that money.

“This is a great example of private-public partnership,” Jones said. “People came together around this in both the private sector and the public and said we don’t want to lose this. It’s important to us, and how can we help?”

They’re trying to get the carts to the North Park Blocks by July 1.

**Additional Reading (Linked Below)**

**Is the New Portland Building Still the Portland Building?**