

The Oregonian

Portland mayor and chief warn protest instigators: Expect stern police response

*By Gordon Friedman
August 6, 2019*

Demonstrators wishing to commit acts of violence or vandalism during a gathering planned for Aug. 17 in Portland should expect to be met with the full force of the law, Mayor Ted Wheeler and Police Chief Danielle Outlaw warned on Monday.

In an interview at City Hall with The Oregonian/OregonLive, the pair, who collectively lead Portland's police force, voiced their toughest stance yet against people using the cloak of free speech as a pretext to brawl on city streets.

Wheeler stated repeatedly — 18 times in all — that he rejects the violence and subversion of free speech perpetrated by demonstrators, regardless of their politics.

He promised a zero-tolerance approach, saying anyone who breaks the law during the demonstration next week should expect swift action by the police and raised the prospect of “mass arrests.”

He indicated an extra-large presence of law enforcement officers, from outside agencies as well as the Portland Police Bureau, will be on hand to ensure that happens.

And the mayor issued a stern repudiation of would-be instigators: “We don't want you,” he said. He added, “But if you do come, we will be ready for you.”

That echoes a message delivered by Outlaw, who said, “Don't come. We don't want you here. I don't care what side you're on.”

Right-wing activists from around the country have indicated they plan to hold an “End Domestic Terrorism” gathering on Aug. 17 at Tom McCall Waterfront Park in an attempt to build on public opposition to self-described antifascist groups known as “antifa.”

The event, which has not been granted a permit, is set to take place weeks after masked and black-clad people thought to be antifa members or sympathizers pummeled conservative writer Andy Ngo and others during a demonstration in June.

Supporters of the August gathering have spoken openly on the internet about bringing weapons to Portland and desires to “exterminate” antifa members. Portland's antifa group, Rose City Antifa, has issued a call for its supporters to “defend” the city.

Such rhetoric as led Wheeler and others to assume the demonstration will turn violent.

In response, Wheeler and Outlaw promise a different approach and larger turnout by police than shown at the June demonstrations and some earlier dueling rallies. City officials have been working with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to secure the personnel and equipment necessary to respond, he said.

As for whether he would ask Gov. Kate Brown for assistance from the Oregon National Guard, Wheeler said that step was “one more potential tool in the toolkit,” but declined to say if he had requested aid for the city.

Wheeler said it will be “obvious” on Aug. 17 that the city’s police force is “well-resourced” and prepared.

If police officers are quick to intervene in most cases when protesters turn violent, it would represent a shift from prior practices. Video evidence, eye-witness accounts and news reports of numerous demonstrations over the last 30 months shows police officers have at times allowed demonstrators to come to blows with near impunity.

On Monday, the mayor and police chief strongly rejected claims that police have failed to act against protesters acting violently.

“If something happens it’s not that we stand there,” Outlaw said, pushing back against what she said was a misperception that “we just stand there with our hands in our pockets and allow these things to occur.”

The chief explained that the matter is not as simple as whether to intervene or not — a complication that higher staffing levels for the August protest is designed to address.

Officers are sometimes told not to leave their posts to chase after people, because the officers are needed where they are, Outlaw said. Law breakers are sometimes difficult for police to identify because their faces are covered and victims do not cooperate with detectives.

Wheeler said Portland police officers have always “done what they can do to bring justice” to people bludgeoned at protests — violence which the officers themselves are vulnerable to. “Their job is to enforce the law, not be martyrs,” he said.

Regardless, Outlaw said, the police will not be able to curtail all violence at Portland demonstrations simply by making mass arrests.

“It’s not something that the police are going to arrest their way out of. Never. It’s never going to be that way,” the chief said. “So, I think there is a mistake in putting the onus solely on the Police Bureau as the ones that are going to stop and fix the whole thing.”

Wheeler hinted that city officials may need to change laws to stem the tide of violent protests on Portland streets. But he said it would take much more time than is available before the next protest, which is only a week and a half away.

He said officials are exploring a proposal raised by Outlaw to bar demonstrators from wearing masks, a practice which the Police Bureau has said hinders arrests and prosecutions. Wheeler made no comment about the merit of the idea but said it may not be lawful under the unusually strong free speech protections enshrined in Oregon’s state constitution.

“The bar is very high in the state of Oregon,” he said.

Wheeler said his office was “looking at a whole host of different strategies that could be deployed” in the face of violent protests and did not elaborate.

The mayor said he had also marshaled support from his four colleagues on the Council to publicly “speak out against violence in this community” alongside law enforcement, local clergy and civil rights leaders three days before the demonstration.

“We’re going to speak out with one voice, a broad voice and a loud voice,” Wheeler said.

Portland oil terminal execs gave mayor's staff false information, aide's notes indicate

By Gordon Friedman

August 6, 2019

Executives of oil terminal operator Zenith Energy gave Portland mayoral aides false information about the company's operations during a meeting in March, notes taken during the meeting indicate.

The executives told aides the company's terminal along the Willamette River in Northwest Portland was "not currently handling tar sands" crude oil, according to handwritten notes taken at the meeting by Mayor Ted Wheeler's sustainability adviser, Amy Rathfelder.

Executives also said exports from the terminal had stopped, according to Rathfelder's notes, provided to The Oregonian/OregonLive in response to a public records request.

In fact, Zenith had been receiving, storing and shipping tar sands crude. It continues to do so.

The apparently inaccurate information provided to Wheeler's staff evokes an earlier incident in which Zenith executives misled state environmental regulators in order to dodge requirements to conduct an oil spill preparedness exercise.

Publicly available information directly refutes statements that Rathfelder's notes indicate Zenith executives made about the company's handling of tar sands crude oil and shipments from its terminal.

Technical data the company provided to state regulators show its crude, a form of diluted bitumen called "dilbit," is extracted from the oil sands in Alberta, Canada. That product is commonly known as tar sands.

Reporters and environmental activists have observed rail cars at the Zenith terminal bearing placards indicating the tank cars were filled with dilbit.

State regulators have also estimated the movements of ships to and from Zenith using publicly available data. Those analyses indicate vessels filled with crude oil at Zenith likely unloaded at docks in China and South Korea as well as in California, Washington and Alaska. Zenith does not disclose its shipping data.

One such apparent shipment — to Martinez, Calif., on March 18, 2019 — occurred the day before Zenith executives met in City Hall with Rathfelder, external relations director Jennifer Arguinzoni and the mayor's chief of staff, Kristin Dennis.

A spokesman for Wheeler said Arguinzoni and Dennis were not immediately available to give their recollections of the meeting. Wheeler himself stepped into the meeting briefly to say hello.

A Zenith spokeswoman said in a statement that the company has been consistent with the government, press and public.

The spokeswoman took issue with Rathfelder characterizing shipments as "exports" when Zenith's recent vessel movements have been domestic. Regulators' data shows that of the 11 suspected crude oil shipments from Zenith in 2019, all but one — to Zhoushan, China, on July 3 — have been domestic.

"We cannot comment further on notes we haven't seen reflecting another person's mental impressions," said the spokeswoman, Megan Mastal.

The Oregonian/OregonLive provided Mastal with a copy of Rathfelder's notes but Mastal did not give additional comment. Mastal acknowledged to the newsroom in July that Zenith continues to receive dilbit crude oil by rail.

Rathfelder said in an interview that her notes represent what Zenith executives said at the meeting. She said she is unsure which Zenith representative said the company was not handling tar sands oil and had ceased its shipments.

In the interview, Rathfelder stressed that she needs good information to help the mayor develop city policies.

"It's important for me to have accurate information," Rathfelder said.

She said that is especially so given public concern about the safety of Zenith's earthquake-vulnerable facility and the freight trains carrying crude oil to it through the Columbia River Gorge.

"This isn't small," Rathfelder said. "It's an oil terminal sitting on a liquefaction zone and we're 50 years overdue for an earthquake."

She said officials in the mayor's office and other city bureaus have explored avenues for additional oversight of Zenith as well as new city laws on fossil fuels infrastructure.

One way to provide increased oversight would be to attach special provisions to city construction permits.

Officials may soon have the chance: Zenith recently sought assistance from the city development bureau in applying for permits to connect its storage tanks to another riverside jetty via underground pipes.

A letter submitted to the city permits bureau by an engineering firm hired by Zenith states the purpose of the project is to "install piping to transport biodiesel and a liquid intermediate that is used to make products such as polyurethane, adhesives, and sealants."

Mastal said Zenith cannot disclose the name of the liquid intermediate due to a "customer confidentiality agreement."

Zenith's letter states the project "is not related to crude oil in any way."

Asked to verify that, Mastal emailed, "As stated in our application to the Bureau of Development Services, the proposed assets will have nothing to do with crude oil."

Mayor Wheeler and Chief Outlaw's interview with The Oregonian: full transcript

*By Gordon Friedman
August 6, 2019*

The following is a transcript of Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler and Police Chief Danielle Outlaw's interview on Monday with reporter Gordon R. Friedman of The Oregonian. See more coverage based on this interview [here](#).

GORDON FRIEDMAN, Portland City Hall reporter: We're on the record, just so everybody's clear. Thanks again for making time to meet with me.

Mayor, we've talked about this a little bit before and I wanted to circle back. Can you give a bit of an outline of how you see your role as police commissioner, how you've approached that role?

TED WHEELER, mayor of Portland: Sure. This might be somewhat repetitive. I see my role as police commissioner as providing strategic oversight, support and accountability for the bureau.

And to give you an example of what strategic oversight means, for example, last year, prior to the May Day protests we had a convening of federal, state and local law enforcement that included the U.S. attorney, the district attorney, the chief, sheriff and others. And I put down what I would describe as broad strategic directives.

And I've been very consistent in these broad strategic directives since I took office. No violence. No vandalism. Deescalate situations —

FRIEDMAN: These are for protests?

WHEELER: Yes. Protect people's First Amendment rights. Enforce the law. But I don't operationalize those. I rely on the chief and her command staff to actually operationalize those broad strategic initiatives when it comes to demonstrations and protests.

FRIEDMAN: Is that different from how you might give a direction to any other bureau director? You say, Planning Bureau, I want this done?

WHEELER: It depends on the bureau, but generally, yes, it is the same strategy. For example, Bureau of Planning and Sustainability might be a little bit of an outlier because that is a bureau about vision in terms of planning and the environment and sustainability. But the Bureau of Development Services, the work they do around code enforcement, permitting — that is an expertise. It is very detailed and requires training.

FRIEDMAN: You don't tell them how to do their job.

WHEELER: No, no. And to be in law enforcement requires specific training and certification. And I believe it is my responsibility and my role to provide broad strategic oversight. But it is the job of the police chief and the command staff to operationalize that strategic direction.

FRIEDMAN: Is there anything you think the general public misunderstands about being police commissioner?

WHEELER: You know, that's a hard question for me to answer because it requires me to put myself in other peoples' headspace. There is definitely a balance that I have to strike both in terms of supporting the Police Bureau — making sure they have the tools and the resources they need to do their jobs effectively. But I also have an important role to play when it comes to oversight and accountability.

FRIEDMAN: How would you define that oversight and accountability role?

WHEELER: Well, when it comes to oversight and accountability, I am the last stage in the discipline chain. As you know, there are nationwide conversations about policing. And Portland is not immune from those conversations.

First of all, people tell me they respect and they support our Police Bureau. But they want to make sure the Police Bureau continues to be responsive to the needs of our community. That often requires a balancing act.

FRIEDMAN: How has the city been preparing for the August 17 demonstration?

WHEELER: I'll give a general overview and then I'll turn it over to the chief. She's here because she's the operational expert.

First of all, we are starting with the assumption that violence is a possibility on August 17. There is considerable public information out there that leads us to believe that people are at least considering coming from all over the country. Some are being very clear that they intend to come here to engage in violence. Others have indicated that they will be bringing weaponry with them.

So, what we have been doing here at the local level is making sure first of all that we build a coalition of support that we need. We've been meeting with federal, state, regional and local law enforcement partners to make sure we have the resources that we need. We've been developing collaborations to make sure that the men and women of the Police Bureau who are going to be on the ground have the support that they need.

We've been meeting with the district attorney to talk about what it would look like if we have large numbers of arrests. We continue to meet with the governor's staff to talk about resources there. Internally, here at the city of Portland, we've been meeting with our key bureaus to talk about how bureaus could better align and coordinate for August 17.

Importantly, we're bringing together a large coalition. On August 14, we're bringing together elected officials, business folks, institution leaders, faith leaders, civil rights leaders and others.

We're going to send a unified message to the rest of this country, which is that we do not accept violence in this community. If you are thinking of coming to Portland, Oregon, to engage in acts of violence, we don't want you. That's the bottom line. We will be making that very clear, that violence is not a Portland value. It is unacceptable.

But if you do come, we will be ready for you. The Police Bureau will have the support and the resources they need to enforce the laws. And they will.

FRIEDMAN: I've heard that you have either been asked to or have made calls to nearby jurisdictions on the mutual aid question. True?

WHEELER: I'm not going to get into all of the specific discussions we've had because I don't want to put us at a disadvantage. But I will tell you we have been broad in terms of our outreach to make sure we have the partners and resources we need on August 17. And we will.

FRIEDMAN: Have you considered asking for National Guard mobilization from the governor?

WHEELER: The National Guard and the Portland Police Bureau have been training regularly on crowd control issues. That is one more potential tool in the toolkit, but I'm not going to get into whether or not we have specifically asked for National Guard support.

FRIEDMAN: So, what can the public expect to be different about this protest, in terms of the city's response, the city's preparations?

WHEELER: They will see — it will be obvious to people that we are prepared and that we are well-resourced.

FRIEDMAN: So, more personnel?

WHEELER: Yes. And they will also have clarity prior to the event, once again, that the directives are clear. We will not accept violence or vandalism. We will protect the rights of assembly and free speech. We will enforce the law.

FRIEDMAN: Why do you think this happens here?

WHEELER: I have a couple of thoughts on that. Well, let me give some context and then jump in to what I believe the answer is. Context: Portland has a long history of embracing the most important of American values. Those are the rights to assembly and the rights to free speech. And we're proud of protecting those core American values. But we have to be honest with ourselves and acknowledge that in recent years things have taken a bit of a dark turn.

There are a limited number of people who on occasion choose to come to our beautiful, our progressive, our vibrant city to engage in acts of violence and vandalism. In other words, they are subverting that right to assembly and free speech for the purpose of committing violence. And that is not acceptable.

Why do they come to Portland? I think they come to Portland because it gives them a platform. They know that this is not consistent with our values. They know that if they come here conflict is almost guaranteed.

What they're looking for is conflict. They know that their message will then be magnified by the international media.

FRIEDMAN: When you say conflict is guaranteed what do you mean by that?

WHEELER: All you need to do is look at social media, at some of the things that are going back and forth, that are being said. There are clearly people who are going to come from all over the country. I've seen information from Florida, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, certainly Washington and elsewhere.

People are at least saying they intend to come here — many of whom are saying they intend to come here armed. Many who are saying they will commit acts of violence.

And, of course, there are people here who are saying if you bring that we're going to meet you in kind.

So, conflict is nearly guaranteed, which puts the men and women of the Police Bureau in the unenviable position of maintaining separation and of maintaining the peace, which I believe they will be well-prepared to do.

FRIEDMAN: I think when people hear you talk about the folks who come from out of town and cause problems here, they feel that it disregards Portland's homegrown antifa movement.

WHEELER: That has been one narrative. In fact, that is an unsubstantiated narrative that's been carried in the last several weeks but some in what I would call extreme media sources.

The fact of the matter is I have been unequivocal and clear that this isn't about people's political beliefs, this is about behavior.

I and others have made it clear we do not accept violence. I have said on many occasions that violence is not the end to a political means. I condemn violence regardless of who is engaged in the act of violence. Violence is not part of Portland's culture. Violence will not be accepted here.

If people are coming here, or people who are already here, think August 17 is an opportunity to engage in violence they are going to be disappointed. Because we will have the resources, we will have the tools, we will have the partnerships and we will enforce the law. And we will enforce it regardless of who it is and no matter what their political beliefs are.

FRIEDMAN: There is a common perception that sometimes the laws have not been enforced. For example, protest permit laws. Or someone can assault someone or hit someone at a protest and run away and, almost with impunity, evade arrest. Is that going to be different?

WHEELER: I'm going to turn that over to the chief, but I've got to say I totally dispute the premise of that question. I dispute that narrative.

There are some situations where the police need to have adequate resources on hand in order to be able to go into a situation safely. Their job is to enforce the law, not be martyrs.

The second thing I would say is that in every instance that I'm aware of where there has been a documented case of violence, the police have done what they can do in order to bring justice to those who were impacted by the violence. And I'll turn it over to the chief.

DANIELLE OUTLAW, chief of police: I think that's a similar question to what Maxine [Bernstein, reporter at The Oregonian] asked me this morning and I'll share with you what I shared with her.

Given that we have social media, information is so readily available and it's so real-time. Depending on who's capturing the information it's just a snapshot of what's occurring. And then oftentimes we'll hear the perspective of whomever that is offering their narrative behind it.

I cannot think of — and obviously I'm not everywhere at once and that's the whole point we're making. The police can't be everywhere at all times.

If something happens it's not that we stand there. That perception and that narrative basically says that we just stand there with our hands in our pockets and allow these things to occur.

With the last one, on June 29, it was brief. Very brief. And yes, there are different circumstances depending on what's going on at the time, depending on the resources we have available — meaning personnel — to address it.

The response isn't going to be the same each and every time. Just because an arrest isn't made right then and there — that means we have to go after the fact, conduct an investigation and make an arrest on the back end. The challenge with that is that we've talked about being able to identify.

But we also have to be realistic and recognize that there's a culture within those who are out there who — they know who these folks are. But they're not necessarily going to come to the police and say, 'Hey Portland Police Bureau, I know who this person is.' We would like for them to. But ultimately, that person gives a statement, that person testifies in court, so on and so forth. So, there's a lot of different factors as to when and arrest or why an arrest would or would not take place.

But I think it's not accurate to pinpoint snapshots in time from a few or a handful of incidents and say the Police Bureau sits back and does nothing, because we have managed hundreds of these things and there are only a handful that have gotten attention.

FRIEDMAN: Allow me to push back a little bit.

OUTLAW: Please.

FRIEDMAN: There's several examples like the scuffle outside Kelly's Olympian. Or — I can't pick a specific date out of my head — but the protests I have personally covered or those that my colleagues have covered, spending hours on the ground right where the police or other participants are, there will be scuffles where people hit each other or use weapons against each other. As soon as the police start closing in, oftentimes they run away. People are wearing masks.

WHEELER: The police run away? Who runs away?

FRIEDMAN: No, no. The demonstrators will run away. The people who were beating each other up run away and they're not arrested. That is the perception of not intervening. Does that make sense?

OUTLAW: It kind of does. But you kind of answered the question too. When we go back and talk about resources — and I don't want to get too down in the weeds because we're planning tactically, we have people who are planning to counter our tactics.

But it's a huge, wide chasm between 'the police do absolutely nothing' and 'the police closed in.' So, the police were there. The police did close in. And they ran away.

It sounds like I'm hearing you say, 'But you guys didn't run after them.' So, my questions would be: Did we have the ability to go after them at that time? Did we put out something out over the air — 'Hey we just witnessed this, this and this, here's the descriptions' — and there was a subsequent investigation that began and now we're having issues with identification? I don't know.

FRIEDMAN: Is that difficult for the police to do — to chase after those people or identify them afterward?

OUTLAW: Yes. Yes. The answer is yes. Initially, again I'm just —

FRIEDMAN: You can generalize.

OUTLAW: Yes, let's generalize. If the police are assigned to a certain area here, to be right here.

[Outlaw taps at the table.]

And those specific resources now take off. This is all hypothetical, not related to the example that you're giving. It now moves those resources from where we needed them in the first place, which is why it's important to communicate over the air and explain what you have so hopefully if — if — there are other or additional resources to address those who took off —

FRIEDMAN: So, an officer somewhere else?

OUTLAW: Exactly. But if we don't have an officer somewhere else because everyone's assigned to a very critical position, that gets left for follow up.

But I will acknowledge, I'm not completely naïve in knowing how these things have evolved over time.

There's also, and I explained this with Maxine this morning as well, we're the entryway, we're the front gate to the criminal justice system. The discussion that was had some time ago around mutual combat, what you're talking about is a culture of interpretation of what the laws are.

There was room — and I'm glad the conversation came out around mutual combat so there's clear definitions of what the legal interpretations are of what mutual combat would be, what will be charged, enforced, so on and so forth. So, when you mention the indecent at...

FRIEDMAN: Kelly's Olympian? The bar?

OUTLAW: Yes, at Kelly's Olympian. I think that's when the conversation really came out and was had. And I remember specifically after that, we didn't put out pictures right away, but we did respond. That was an after-the-fact thing.

But the question, as a community member, I would be asking is, 'Is there a sense of urgency to follow up and investigate?' The answer is yes.

But I think after that event it made it clear that we needed to heighten our level of urgency even though there were groups of people who came and chose to fight each other.

FRIEDMAN: Moving on from that, on August 17 if there are people who are protesting and it's not permitted, will they be cited for that?

OUTLAW: We will do everything that we have in our toolbelt to make sure that it's enforced.

FRIEDMAN: Mayor, do you see a situation in which you can support the anti-masks proposal the chief has talked about?

WHEELER: We're looking at it. As you well know, Gordon, the Oregon Constitution through Article 1, Section 8 has the most expansive First Amendment rights ascribed to individuals. It's much stronger than the U.S. Constitution. So, the question that we're looking at is whether or not some version of that could pass constitutional muster here in the state of Oregon.

And I just want to be clear, the bar is very high in the state of Oregon. That's not because of anything we do here. It's because of Article 1, Section 8. I would encourage people to take a hard look at it.

But we're looking at a whole host of different strategies that could be deployed. None of them could get through the City Council between now and the seventeenth. As you know, at a minimum it would take us — there's more conversation. But my bottom line for August 17 is we'll be ready.

FRIEDMAN: Why do you think the Council has been silent?

WHEELER: I'm not going to speak for the Council. I've been very transparent. I have been very available. But I cannot speak for my colleagues.

FRIEDMAN: Is it hard to build support from them to speak out and get behind some sort of policy or message?

WHEELER: They will be standing with the rest of us on August 14 as we speak out against violence in this community. We're going to speak out with one voice, a broad voice and a loud voice. They'll be there.

FRIEDMAN: There's been a question in my mind — the free speech argument for these events seems to be tenuous. When you go to one, when you observe one, it almost always becomes a brawl.

Do you buy the free speech argument that these people are actually trying to say something and exercise their speech, or do you think they're more like organized brawls under the pretext of it being a free speech event?

WHEELER: The people that I'm concerned about on August 17, as I said, they are subverting, in my opinion, these core American values of the right to assembly and the right to free speech to come to our community, to commit acts of violence and vandalism.

There's no question in my mind that some people are hiding behind the protections of the First Amendment but whose clearly stated intentions are to come here to commit acts of violence. Violence is not protected by the First Amendment.

FRIEDMAN: Right. How are we doing on time?

EILEEN PARK, Wheeler's communications director: I was just going to tell you. Time check, four minutes.

FRIEDMAN: OK. Thank you. I just wanted to go back to one thing —

WHEELER: I just want to underscore it. Violence on our streets is unacceptable regardless of who perpetrates it.

FRIEDMAN: Do you think any police force in any other major metropolitan city in America would allow this to continue as long as it has?

WHEELER: What do you mean by that?

FRIEDMAN: It seems that this is the only city in the United States where this happens with regularity. I'm trying to figure out why that is.

WHEELER: I want to go back to what I said earlier. There were over 200 demonstrations in this city last year. Two hundred. We have a long history of demonstration and counter-demonstration. And of those 200 demonstrations, 200 plus, we had in the last year only a handful ended up in violence.

That's not to in any way condone the violence that we did have. The violence is completely unacceptable. We do not accept violence.

The key for us to make sure the Police Bureau has the tools, the resources, the training, the partnerships and the options that they need to be able to enforce the law. That means no violence. No vandalism. Don't let people shut the city down because people need to be able to conduct their lives and go about their business. And protect the rights of people who are engaged in legitimate, peaceful free speech activities.

OUTLAW: But Gordon —

WHEELER: Let me just finish, chief. The why it happens is just what I said earlier. We are a successful, thriving, progressive community.

This is taking place in a much larger context where hate speech, generally, has escalated tremendously in the last few years. We saw violence in other parts of the country this last weekend that fit into that conversation. Some of the same kind of hate speech that fuels the bloodshed we saw this past weekend is what is also incentivizing people to come to Portland, Oregon.

FRIEDMAN: It's a cycle.

WHEELER: It is. And so, the way we stop it — that's a really good way of looking at it. It spins itself up.

The way we stop it is number one, we make it clear that we will not accept acts of violence. And if you are going to come here to commit acts of violence, we don't want you. But to state again, if you do come, we'll be ready. We don't accept violence and we will enforce the law.

OUTLAW: I was just going to say though, the question as it's asked intimates that the Police Bureau are the only ones that are responsible for keeping these things from happening. And I don't think that's the case.

WHEELER: Good point.

OUTLAW: This is a collective response. This is not only a city response. This is a Police Bureau response. It's a community response. Public safety is a community concern. It's not solely that of the Police Bureau.

Especially when you talk about events and the uncertainty and how they can go outdoors — it's much easier to contain or enforce when you're in a contained environment. But we're talking about situations that can go mobile at the drop of a dime. Planned, unplanned, all of that.

It's not something that the police are going to arrest their way out of. Never. It's never going to be that way. So, I think there is a mistake in putting the onus solely on the Police Bureau as the ones that are going to stop and fix the whole thing.

WHEELER: That is a really important point and I'll tell you what I'm hearing from my constituents. They're tired of it. They don't care who's perpetrating the violence. They're tired of it.

Whether it's people who live here or people who are coming here from elsewhere to engage in acts of violence, the bottom line is at the end of the day, everybody goes home, but the people of this city, more generally are stuck with the consequences. That's why I think the chief is completely right.

This is a broad coalition. And that's why it's so important on August 14 we're asking people to come and stand with us at Pioneer Square to send a very clear message to people here and all across the country that we oppose violence and that we will not tolerate it.

The Portland Tribune

Sources: Wheeler supports homeless services bond - in theory

*By Jim Redden
August 07, 2019*

Plus, Commissioner Chloe Eudaly has yet to draw a challenger and LCDC affirms Metro's UGB expansion

Mayor Ted Wheeler said last week that he supports a measure on the November 2020 general election ballot to provide more homeless services.

No one is actually working on such a measure at this time and several other measures already are in the works — including a transportation funding measure from Metro to finance congestion, and safety projects in the region, including a share of the Southwest Corridor MAX project. But, during a news conference after the most recent homeless count was released Thursday, Aug. 1, Wheeler told Willamette Week the No. 1 issue in Portland now is homelessness.

Wheeler told the Tribune editorial board the same thing earlier this summer.

The federally mandated Point in Time count said that overall homelessness in Multnomah County fell 4% since 2017, the last time it was taken. But the count also found that people living without safe shelter had increased 22%, primarily because the number of chronically homeless is up.

The count is not scientific and is based on a one-night survey by social service providers and volunteers. But it is the only such count taken on a regular basis and frequently is cited by elected officials, social service providers and the news media.

Will anyone run against Eudaly?

The biggest question about next year's City Council races right now is whether anyone will run against first-term Commissioner Chloe Eudaly.

No one has stepped forward to challenge Eudaly in the May 2020 primary election. That's surprising, since she squabbled with liberal activists shortly after taking office and has since angered some neighborhood advocates by supporting changes to the civil engagement process that would eliminate references to neighborhood associations, neighborhood coalition offices and neighborhood business districts.

In contrast, Mayor Ted Wheeler already has drawn three opponents. And two candidates, so far, have announced for the council seat that will be vacated when Commissioner Amanda Fritz retires at the end of her current term. There is still a long time to go, however. The filing deadline for city offices is not until May 10 of next year.

Agency affirms boundary expansion

The Land Conservation and Development Commission has unanimously affirmed Metro's expansion of the urban growth boundary by 2,100 acres to support up to 9,200 new homes.

The expansion had been challenged by two advocacy organizations, 1000 Friends of Oregon and Housing Land Advocates, for not guaranteeing enough units affordable to low-income groups, among other grounds.

The commission considered the challenges on Friday, July 26. The hearing included presentation by the four cities that requested the expansions: Beaverton, Hillsboro, King City and Wilsonville.

The commission agreed with the analysis by the Department of Land Conservation and Development that Metro did not have to prove the expansions complied with federal fair housing laws. But the commission also agreed that Metro is requiring the cities to include affordable housing in the developments, and that the commission could enforce the requirement, if necessary.

The commission's approval can be appealed to the Oregon Court of Appeals.

Wheeler: 'Things will be different' for Aug. 17 protest

August 06, 2019

Mayor says planning is underway to prevent a repeat of the street fights that have broken out at competing protests in the past

Portland officials are taking seriously a planned protest for Aug. 17 between far-right groups and counter-protesters that could become violent.

A rally against anti-fascists planned for that day is expected to draw far-right groups such as the Proud Boys, Oathkeepers and Three Percenters to Portland.

Rose City Antifa issued a statement asking counter-protesters to defend Portland from a "far-right attack."

"We call on the people of Portland to come out to let the fascists on the streets and in the White House know we will continue to defend our community from the rise of fascism," the statement said.

Police Chief Danielle Outlaw said last week that social media postings indicate some people who plan to attend plan to engage in criminal activity and police are preparing for that possibility.

So far, no group has requested a permit for Waterfront Park for that Saturday.

In a one-on-one interview with KOIN 6 News reporter Lisa Balick, Mayor Ted Wheeler said, very clearly, the response to this planned protest "will be different" than at previous protests.

City officials already have plans in place with regional law enforcement, the Oregon State Police and federal officials. They've been in contact with Orwfo Gov. Kate Brown's office to determine what they can provide.

But his single, clear message is this: Don't come to Portland if you only want to spawn violence.

Here, in the mayor's own words, is what the city is doing to keep the peace on August 17:

"I want to be very clear about this. My directives to the police bureau have been very consistent since I took office. The directives have been followed:

"Number 1, no violence. Number 2, no vandalism. Number 3, make sure the city doesn't get shut down. Number 4, allow people to peacefully exercise their 1st Amendment rights. Number 5, enforce the law.

"So we're all looking towards August 17 as being a potentially big event with a lot of people coming from outside the community, a lot of people are already sharing on social media they intend to come here to commit acts of violence.

"Here is our plan: If people still choose to come here in spite of our request to not come here and commit acts of violence, we'll be ready for them. We'll have the personnel, the resources we need in order to maintain the public's safety, we'll have the partnerships in place — federal, state and local law enforcement partners — we've already been engaged in conversations with the governor's team about what public support from the governor and the state could look like. We've had conversations with the (Multnomah County) District Attorney about how we could potentially handle larger scale arrests, if necessary. And we're also coming together as a community.

"A few days before we're asking the business community, elected leaders, institutional leaders, people of faith and others who are concerned in this community to come and join us and say, 'Hey, look, Portlanders. We're the kind of people who have each others' backs. We support you. We support coming together. We denounce violence in all its forms.'

"If you're coming here to commit acts of violence we do not want you here.

"I give the police bureau broad strategic directives — no violence, no vandalism, enforce the laws, don't let the city be shut down, protect peaceful demonstrations, the 1st Amendment rights of those who come here to demonstrate peacefully — but we will operationalize those strategic directives in the police bureau.

"So, here's what we're saying: First and foremost, we don't care what your politics are but if you're coming to Portland to commit an act of violence — this is true whether you live here or whether you're coming from afar — we do not want you here.

"There are things that will be different on the 17th. The police bureau will have the people, they will have the resources and they will have the tools that they need to get the job done. The partnerships in place to help us achieve those goals and I have great confidence that they will be able to keep the peace on the 17th.

"We had over 200 demonstrations on the streets of the City of Portland last year and only a very small handful led to any kind of violence. Operationally we have said this is a tool that's in the toolkit along with many others. If we see a circumstance where people are getting out of control, people blocking streets, we absolutely have the authority to enforce the permitting requirements.

"Technically (those without a permit are) breaking the law and, again, this is an operational question and I leave it up to the chief and the commander to decide where and when and how to engage with people who are violating the law. But it's my expectation that we will enforce the laws."

Willamette Week

Developer Randy Rapaport Has an Unusual Bone to Pick With City Hall: He Say It's Failed to Keep Portland Weird.

*By Rachel Monahan
August 7, 2019*

His crusade to keep artists in a former auto body shop has gained the sympathy of disgruntled luminaries of Old Portland.

For at least 15 years, Randy Rapaport has been an idiosyncratic developer with a nose for Southeast Portland trends. But since February 2018, he's been racking up city fines.

That's because the former auto body shop he owned in the Montavilla neighborhood is being used as an artists collective—he converted it into artist studios. City officials have fined him more than \$13,000 for, among other things, improperly converting a commercial space to a new use.

To express his displeasure with the fines, Rapaport last week lobbed a bomb of an email at City Hall, pledging to evict everybody and mocking the city's commitment to artistic, ethnic and racial diversity.

"I wanted you to know that I'm planning on kicking everyone out of the building—the artists, a purple-haired vegan sticker maker and a blond dude who photographs beautiful people using a digital camera," he emailed the Bureau of Development Services and a city commissioner on July 31. "I will also be removing the small cart pod—which has been there for a very long time—serving the African American and stoner community with Jamaican food, the Mexican community with a taco cart, a Thai cart serving the Thai community, and a Hawaiian cart mostly serving skinny white stoner dudes.

"I will phone your office myself as soon as everyone is out so you may inspect a deserted, soulless place—devoid of life and creativity," he added.

Rapaport says his fury is in response to a sea change in the city. A decade ago, he says, his plan for a temporary artist collective—allowing artists to bivouac there with his permission while he prepared to develop the site as affordable apartments—would have gone off without a hitch. "This could have happened because nobody would have turned you in," Rapaport says.

The number of tenants who could face eviction is small: Five people live in the building and 10 rent artist studios. Rapaport has already made hundreds of thousands of dollars off the property—so he can hardly complain the city is robbing him.

So what's he so upset about?

He's furious the city doesn't think his artist community—and others like it—should be allowed wiggle room around the rules to protect creative spaces that are vanishing amid new development. "I want this to be a case study for city policy to adopt to have exceptions for limited periods of time when there's something that's good for the culture," he says.

But his complaint goes deeper—it taps into the resentments of a generation of Portlanders who once were the city's coolest cats, and now feel its free spirit has been lost to real estate, while its residents haggle over the rules and who gets priority.

His crusade has attracted old-school luminaries of Portland's arts scene.

"I'm with you," emailed Thomas Lauderdale, bandleader of Pink Martini, in response to another Rapaport email to the city about the fines. "This city is barely functioning. When journalists ask me about Portland, I don't answer the question because I can't think of a single thing that is happening in this city that I think is amazing. It's just a series of bumbled, missed opportunities. We've joined the rest of the country, I'm afraid."

Lauderdale, who has previously considered running for mayor, also complained about the closing of a downtown MAX station, blaming "no real leadership from the City Council or from organizations like Travel Portland and Portland Business Alliance, not to mention 'Prosper' Portland."

WW asked Lauderdale to elaborate. "I don't know that I really want to add to the poop-lobbying," he replied via email. "The city is in so much trouble as it is, and unless one has something inspiring to say, I don't think it's actually constructive to fan the fires."

What exactly has been lost is hard to define: Rapaport described a disappointment with City Hall that only adds to the cost of living with increasing red tape. Rising home values made him money but pushed artists out of the city.

For city officials, the issue is much simpler: They told Rapaport he isn't allowed to let tenants live there without making required upgrades.

The city's Bureau of Development Services "has evaluated all information and worked with Mr. Rapaport to the best of our ability to provide a clear path to legalize the current operation and correct the cited violations," says bureau spokeswoman Emily Volpert.

Rapaport, who grew up in Miami, was a school psychologist for six years before turning into a developer. He developed the Belmont Street Lofts, the old Stumptown Coffee location in Sunnyside, and the Clinton Condominiums just off Southeast Division Street, where he still has a home.

Originally, Rapaport planned to develop the former garage at 518 SE 76th Ave. into affordable housing within six months. (He never formally applied to the Portland Housing Bureau for funds, the bureau says.) But the arts collective's life has been extended another two years because Rapaport's project never took off.

In June, he sold to a nearby property owner, but says he would help keep the artist spaces until the end of the year, if the city stopped fining the building.

In decades past, artists would have been allowed to take over the spot until development happened, Rapaport contends. The city wouldn't have noticed, because no one would have complained.

"It's complaint-driven," he says. "That's why they even knew. If they didn't hate us—the minority—we'd be fine."

But neighbors did turn him in—as early as August 2017. Rapaport's property was reported for hosting an illegal Airbnb, city records show, which Rapaport readily admits. But he says it was only once. "We had a gay Parisian chef dude who makes chocolates," says Rapaport. "It was great. He spent one night there."

Once inspectors visited to investigate the Airbnb complaint, the city says they discovered other problems. Along with citations for letting people live on a commercial property, Rapaport was cited by the city for parking on unpaved portions of the property, for having a wall mural without a permit, and for converting the auto body shop into an artist studio without obtaining the required change to occupancy.

An architect hired by Rapaport says the city erred in several of its more technical citations.

"Things have gotten adversarial," says architect Jason W. Kentta. "Relatively inexperienced people [at the Bureau of Development Services] are looking to pick fights."

The city stands by its fines. "BDS never agreed with Mr. Rapaport's position," says Volpert.

Meanwhile, Rapaport has made money. He bought the property for \$1.5 million in March 2017 and sold it for \$2.1 million in June. He says adjacent property owners were willing to pay extra for a larger parcel to redevelop.

He estimates he made \$300,000 in two and a half years. While the rent from the artists has mostly covered his costs for the past six months, it took a while to come together and he's invested in projects and events at the Pegasus Project.

Last week, Rapaport offered a tour of the imperiled space, called the Pegasus Project. (Afterward, he would fly to Las Vegas—where he was to play high-limit roulette to test his extrasensory perception. "It's a controlled-environment art project. Think of it as time-based art with Veuve Clicquot.")

Inside the small purple building at the corner of Southeast Stark Street and 76th Avenue, Pegasus art director Joshua Wallace, who got his start with graffiti under the tag Sasquatch 23, showed off his "hash tag"—a drawing, or "tag," using paint made from hash oil.

Pegasus Project hosts a weekly open-mic night and yoga classes. Classes for kids are planned in the future. A sticker maker has rented one of the studios, a photographer another.

"The neighborhood has been needing a space to be creative," Wallace says, citing an outpouring of interest at a recent street fair. "I wanted people to come here and feel accepted and inspired without any money or capitalistic venture, especially in a time of such political and social disarray. I wanted to create a spot that was safe, welcoming and just really helped people heal. At a time when the world is getting bigger and scarier, you can just come here and be yourself."

Portland's Homeless Numbers Are Flat. But the Number of People in the Most Dire Condition Keeps Growing.

By Rachel Monahan

August 6, 2019

About 67 percent of people living on the streets are chronically homeless. That's up from 55 percent two years ago.

Thirty-seven percent.

That's the size of the increase in the past two years of the number of Portland-area homeless people whose presence on the streets has probably been the most visible.

In counts tallied by Multnomah County, these people are classified as "chronically homeless." That means they've been without housing for more than one year in the past three years and have a disabling condition.

In 2017, 1,290 homeless people in Multnomah County—on the streets, in shelters or in traditional housing— fit that definition. By this February, that number rose to 1,769.

That begins to explain why Portland's homelessness seems more prevalent, even though the number of people without homes has actually declined by 3.9 percent since 2017. Even as numbers remain basically flat, the share of people in the most dire condition has grown.

About 67 percent of people living on the streets are chronically homeless. That's also up from 55 percent two years ago.

Elected officials say they need more money for mental health and addiction services to go along with affordable housing. "A lot of people, the people called out in the Point-in-Time count, need more than just the keys to an apartment," says Multnomah County Chairwoman Deborah Kafoury.