

The Oregonian

E-scooters, e-bikes have ‘universal potential’ to reduce car trips, especially in Portland

*By Andrew Theen
September 10, 2019*

Electric scooters and bikes have a “universal potential” to provide more efficient, cheaper ways to get around U.S. cities than driving a car, according to a report released Monday, but Portland is one city that could see the greatest benefit.

That’s according to a report from Inrix, a Kirkland, Washington-based transportation data company.

Why? It’s largely because drivers in many U.S. cities are taking short trips and sitting in traffic when they could be taking another transit mode.

Inrix analyzed more than 50 million car trips in cities across the U.S. and determined 48% in the most traffic-clogged urban centers are less than 3 miles. In Portland, 51% of car trips are less than 3 miles long, according to the analysis.

But all cities could reap “substantial benefits” for commuters and the local economy, including by reducing congestion, greenhouse gas emissions and travel times if more shared e-bikes and scooters are made available.

According to its analysis, half of those trips less than 3 miles could be easily replaced by e-scooters, e-bikes or bike rental programs like Biketown.

Portland came in 7th on the list of cities with the most potential to replace short car-centric trips.

Trevor Reed, a transportation analyst, said Portland’s density and urban growth boundary played a factor in its high placement. “It’s a pretty dense city,” he said, “as density increases, the trip length typically decreases as well for car trips.”

Reed says Portland’s bike infrastructure also makes it compatible for accommodating more bikes and e-scooters.

“Scooters and bike shares can really compete with vehicles if given the opportunity,” Reed said. “A big part of that is adequate infrastructure and robust regulations.”

Honolulu, New Orleans and Nashville topped the list with the greatest potential to replace short car trips with other modes.

Portland already has an established bike rental program known as Biketown and is in the midst of a yearlong e-scooter trial period. The city has said it hopes to bring e-bikes to its rental fleet in early 2020.

Dylan Rivera, a Portland Bureau of Transportation spokesman, said the city has spent more than two decades working with the community to have “lots of walkable, ‘Main Street’ style neighborhoods supported by a strong urban growth boundary and one of the nation’s largest networks of bike routes.”

“So, it is no big surprise that INRIX would find that Portlanders take lots of short trips,” he said.

Rivera said city data collected thus far from the scooter companies show most trips are less than 2 miles long.

Reed noted that e-scooters and bikes also have the potential to reduce traffic in European cities, according to the data collected from the agency's cache of in-car navigation systems, freight tracking systems and other data sources.

Reed said that while some of the U.S. cities have inclement weather conditions – a nod to the rainy Northwest and humid deep south – he noted that some of the cities with the best bike infrastructure in the world are in northern Europe or Scandinavian countries.

If biking is faster and cheaper than driving, he said, that is universal. “There’s no reason to think that we’re all that different than a bike commuter in Stockholm or Helsinki,” he said.

Opinion: Cooperation in Cully shows what revamped city code can encourage

*By Tony DeFalco and David Sweet
September 11, 2019*

DeFalco is executive director of Verde, a community-based organization in Portland's Cully neighborhood. Sweet is a board member of the Cully Association of Neighbors.

The Cully neighborhood in Northeast Portland is a special place. --It is home to an ethnically and racially diverse community with active and engaged residents. Cully has an indefatigable spirit that regularly brings the community together to accomplish remarkable things.

Verde and the Cully Association of Neighbors are two of the many place-based community organizations in Cully working together to improve our neighborhood for the benefit of our residents. Our partnership is a model that can be repeated in other neighborhoods.

But while the Cully Association of Neighbors is elevated in city code as a recognized neighborhood association deserving of special status, Verde is not. This disparity ignores the work that we, as partners, have accomplished.

Together, we built Cully Park, transforming a 25-acre landfill into a beautiful community asset. It is available to hundreds of residents who previously had no access to a park. We were the first neighborhood to enact an anti-displacement policy, create a bilingual newsletter, conduct bilingual neighborhood association meetings and provide child care for residents at those meetings. Together, we shut down a site of massive criminal activity, the infamous Sugar Shack strip club. With support from the city, we are poised to bring 141 units of affordable housing into the neighborhood on that site.

We are proud of these accomplishments and others because we have done them together. They represent the needs and priorities of our community. We are just getting started, working to create inclusive economic development, improved transportation infrastructure, and new investments like a redesigned Portland Community College campus. Collectively we are creating a sustainable and inclusive neighborhood that prevents displacement and elevates the voices of people of color and low-income people.

For these reasons we appreciate and wholeheartedly support the efforts of the Office of Community & Civic Life to strengthen the fabric of our civic life in Portland through its proposed changes to Section 3.96 of the Portland city code. If passed, the code changes will create new pathways for our communities to address the challenges we face. These changes reflect and codify Cully's innovative practices of sharing power, close collaboration, and

listening to communities that have historically been disenfranchised from decision-making in our city.

We share the goals of the Office of Community & Civic Life to create room for more voices and a framework for those voices to find meaningful agency. They do not seek to eliminate the neighborhood association system, but rather to broaden the reach of civic engagement. This is a goal the Cully community has worked hard to manifest. We know we're not perfect and have room for growth and refinement. We believe the code changes will help us and our city to grow.

For more than a decade, through the terms of three mayors, Portland has committed and recommitted to the goals of diversity, equity and inclusion. Beginning with Vision PDX in 2008 and continuing through the Portland Plan in 2012 and the Comprehensive Plan in 2018, these goals have guided our vision of our city. The changes proposed to Section 3.96 are another step toward that vision.

We urge the Council to adopt the code changes as proposed. We look forward to this updated framework to continue the work of privileging the voices that have been left out, particularly low-income people and people of color. If we delay, if we get caught up in fear of change or sharing power, we will remain stuck in a past that has harmed many through exclusion. Cully shows how a more equitable Portland can be achieved. It is time.

Portland police officer testifies about using chokehold on a suspect who had a gun

*By Maxine Bernstein
September 11, 2019*

Officer Larry L. Wingfield, a 28-year Portland police veteran, took the witness stand Tuesday in federal court to describe how he used a controversial chokehold on a man with a gun last year.

Wingfield had been placed on paid leave after he used the carotid neck hold on Jonathan Armand Harris, a man wanted on a warrant.

The bureau banned the hold in the 1980s after a man died in police custody and today considers it deadly force that requires an immediate investigation if used by an officer.

Harris alleges officers used excessive and deadly force during his arrest in violation of his Fourth Amendment rights against unreasonable search and seizure. He also claims officers failed to adequately advise him of his Miranda rights or recognize that he suffered from mental illness.

The courtroom testimony pulled back a curtain on the contentious police encounter with an armed suspect and revealed for the first time that the Police Bureau had found Wingfield's actions were within its policy.

Harris, 32, claims in court documents that officers didn't give him a reasonable chance to alert them that he had a gun or to safely surrender it. He's now accused in federal court of being a felon in possession of a firearm. He's trying to suppress the evidence and his statements to police.

While in the chokehold, Harris said he feared for his life as other officers hammered him with "kidney punches" while pushing his face into the ground. One other officer threatened, "I'm going to crack your (expletive) skull open" as the struggle occurred, he said.

Wingfield testified he didn't make that remark, but said he heard it come from another officer who was trying to help restrain Harris.

Wingfield said he had taken Harris to the ground. When he spotted a pistol under Harris and couldn't wrangle it away, he said he was worried that Harris would shoot him or his partner, so that's why he used the chokehold.

"I reached over his head and I was choking on his neck, making it harder for him to breathe," Wingfield testified. "I feared it would turn into a shooting. ... It just kind of stayed like that until a third officer got there."

Police handcuffed Harris once there were four officers holding him. The 9mm handgun police finally pulled from Harris had a round in the chamber and one in the magazine.

"Gun was loaded," Wingfield testified. "It was ready to fire."

'That kind of panicked me'

The confrontation unfolded eight days after a police detective distributed a flier on Harris, seeking his arrest in connection with the alleged theft of a Glock 9mm handgun from a former girlfriend, who reported her home had been burglarized. The flier said Harris had a history of drug abuse and mental illness.

Police said they developed probable cause to arrest Harris, based on the ex-girlfriend's statements, neighbor's descriptions of the suspect and a police review of area video surveillance.

On Aug. 31, 2018, Wingfield and his partner Officer Tim Giles were called out to a cul-de-sac at Southeast Ramona Street and 93rd Avenue after another of Harris' ex-girlfriends reported he was at her apartment, refusing to leave. She also reported he had a warrant for his arrest, according to court testimony.

The two officers confirmed through a dispatcher that Harris had a failure-to-appear warrant stemming from a theft charge in Clackamas County, according to prosecutors.

Wingfield and Giles parked about a block away and walked up to the location. They spotted Harris and recognized he fit the description of the suspect, Wingfield said.

Without much conversation, Wingfield said he and Giles just reached for Harris, concerned he might run. They were both in police uniform.

"First chance we got, we just reached out and grabbed his wrist," Wingfield testified.

Once they grabbed him, Wingfield said: "He tensed up. We're like, 'Don't resist. You've got a warrant.'"

According to Wingfield, Harris started struggling. Giles tried to trap him with his knee but was unable to, so Wingfield tried the same maneuver and took Harris to the ground, Wingfield said.

As they were grappling on the ground, Wingfield said he heard Harris objecting that no one had read him his constitutional rights. So, as Harris and his partner continued to struggle, Wingfield said he began to recite to Harris his Miranda rights, hoping that would "calm him down."

Harris freed one hand from Giles, the smaller of the two officers, and tried to push himself up five or six times, according to Wingfield.

"All of a sudden, his arm is under him," Wingfield testified. "That kind of panicked me."

Wingfield saw a tip of a pistol sticking out from under Harris' body. Wingfield climbed on top of Harris, he said, and then reached for the gun, placing his finger over the nozzle.

Wingfield said he warned his partner, yelling, “Giles get out of the way, he has a gun.” Wingfield said he noticed the nozzle of the gun was pointed toward Giles’ back.

“We’re fighting,” Wingfield said. “I reach underneath him, grab a hold of the gun.”

They continued to wrestle with Harris, and Wingfield said he grabbed the frame of the gun but couldn’t get it away. That’s when he decided to let go of it and do a choke hold in an attempt to avoid a shooting, he testified.

“We took you into custody and you resisted arrest,” Wingfield said, when questioned directly by Harris, who was representing himself with a standby lawyer. “It was conduct you initiated, caused it to happen.”

‘Force proportionate to threat,’ prosecutor says

Portland police in 1985 banned the use of the carotid-artery hold – which cuts the flow of blood traveling through the artery to the brain. It followed public furor over the death of Lloyd “Tony” Stevenson, an off-duty security guard who died after police applied the hold while trying to break up a scuffle outside a Portland convenience store.

The city adopted a settlement agreement in 2014 in response to a U.S. Department of Justice investigation that found Portland police used excessive force against people suffering from mental illness. As part of the agreement, the bureau included a revamped deadly force policy with a reference to the carotid neck hold as a type of lethal force that would demand an immediate investigation.

Deadly force is defined by the bureau today as “any use of force likely to cause death or serious physical injury, including the use of a firearm, carotid neck hold, or strike to the head, neck or throat with a hard object.”

Officers can use deadly force, according to bureau policy, to “protect themselves or others from what they reasonably believe to be an immediate threat of death or serious physical injury,” but “reckless or negligent use of deadly force is not justified.”

Immediately after Harris was taken into custody, Wingfield said he recognized his use of the chokehold would require an investigation and he alerted a sergeant. He was on paid leave for about two weeks while an internal inquiry got underway and a grand jury reviewed the case.

Wingfield said he received a letter a month ago that an internal investigation found his actions were within bureau policy. Lt. Tina Jones, bureau spokeswoman, later confirmed the outcome. Wingfield returned to duty on Sept. 17, 2018.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Greg Nyhus argued that the force used by police was proportionate to the threat the officers faced.

“As defendant struggled with the officers, the gun was lying under him and the officers reasonably feared it could be fired at any moment,” Nyhus wrote in response to the motion to suppress. “Given the officer safety and public safety concerns, the degree of force used by the officers in arresting defendant was objectively reasonable.”

After the hearing ended for the day and the judge had left the bench, the prosecutor offered Harris an informal plea offer of five years in prison if he pleaded guilty to charges pending against him in Multnomah and Clackamas counties and federal court.

“Negative,” Harris responded, and he was led away by a deputy U.S. marshal.

The hearing will continue with additional witnesses later this month.

The Portland Tribune

Code reform could eliminate references to all groups

By Jim Redden

September 11, 2019

The City Council will be asked to create a work group that could recommend not naming any organizations in the public engagement section

Despite the promise of involving many more Portlanders in city affairs, the controversial proposed civic engagement reforms would only initially recognize six new community-based organizations.

That compares to nearly 150 existing neighborhood-based organizations that would continue to be officially recognized by the City Council, which is now scheduled to consider the proposal on Nov. 14.

The discrepancy could completely disappear, however, if the council ultimately agrees to eliminate references to any specific organization from Chapter 3.96 of the City Code, which creates the Office of Community and Civic Life to oversee the public engagement process. The office — formerly known as the Office of Neighborhood Involvement — has been directed by the council to rewrite the chapter to better involve all residents in civic affairs.

The initial difference is so great because the office is planning to only ask the council to first recognize those community-based organizations currently participating in its Diversity and Civic Leadership program. That program helps a limited number of organizations representing marginalized communities to train members to become more involved in civic affairs.

The current list includes: Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization; Latino Network; Momentum Alliance; Native American Youth and Family Center; Unite Oregon; and Urban League of Portland.

In contrast, the public engagement section of the code has long recognized the neighborhood-based organizations, which include 94 neighborhood associations, seven district coalitions and 46 business district associations.

As part of its proposal, the office also will ask the council to approve a resolution creating a multi-bureau work group to make more comprehensive recommendations for how the city can modernize its approach to serve more Portlanders. That could lead to the elimination of any list of organizations served by the office.

Organization still would be referenced in other code chapters.

"Adding funding or groups to this structure without defining its purpose and direction is not a responsible approach, which is what the code change aims to address by creating a unified framework under which all programs would operate," said Winta Yohannes, an aide to Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, who oversees the office.

There is no doubt that many non-governmental organizations in the city represent marginalized communities. In addition to some of those currently involved in the office program, more than a dozen others participated in the Aug. 14 anti-violence rally organized by Mayor Ted Wheeler before the most recent far-right protest. They ranged from the Coalition of Communities of Color to the Mental Health Association of Portland and Weird Portland United. Even more joined in too late to be formally acknowledged.

The council directed the office to rewrite section 3.96 of the City Code to increase public participation in civic events. The council said Portland had changed since it was last reviewed, and many residents now consider themselves parts of communities that are not defined by geographic boundaries. Only recognizing neighborhood-based organizations is a barrier to people's involvement in public affairs, the council said.

One difference is funding. The district coalition officers will receive \$3.1 million in city funds this fiscal year, compared to just \$900,000 for the community-based organizations.

The rewrite project became controversial when word began circulating about removing all references to neighborhood-based organizations from section 3.96 of the code. Many longtime association members worried that would diminish the organization's well-established roles in city land use and other matters. They also wondered how it would affect the annual payments the city has made to support the district coalitions over the years and the insurance coverage the city provides for community events sponsored by the organizations.

Reform supporters responded that the neighborhood-based organizations would not be abolished, but would be recognized in an administrative rule along with new community-based organizations.

The list of organizations proposed to be officially recognized was first released on Friday, Aug. 30. A link to it was posted on the office's website and included in an emailed newsletter from the office. Other links connect to the proposed rewrite of the public engagement provisions of the City Code and frequently asked questions about the project. The resolution has not yet been released.

Find out more

You can learn more about the project at www.portlandoregon.gov/civic/77951.

Ceremony, blood drive mark 9/11 anniversary

September 10, 2019

Firefighters honor fallen New York comrades during morning program, daylong blood donation event.

Portland firefighters mark the 18th anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks with a ceremony and a blood drive Wednesday morning.

Portland Firefighters Association and Portland Fire & Rescue host a ceremony honoring 343 New York firefighters who died while trying to save people in the World Trade Center, 11 a.m., at the Eastbank Esplanade, 5 S.E. Madison St., near Fire Station 21.

"Our members believe it's our duty and honor every year to pay tribute to the men and women who lost their lives 18 years ago trying to save others," said Alan Ferschweiler, Portland Firefighters Association president.

Beginning at 7:30 a.m., Portland Fire & Rescue and the American Red Cross host the sixth annual Sept. 11 Memorial Blood Drive at Fire Station 1, 55 S.W. Ash St. The blood drive continues until 5:30 p.m.

"For the past six years, Portland Fire & Rescue has hosted a September 11 blood drive because we wanted to offer an avenue of action for people to acknowledge this day of deep significance for first responders," said Fire Chief Sara Boone.

"We appreciate Portland Fire & Rescue responding to the call to help patients in need year after year," said Amie Rawson, director of Donor Recruitment for the Red Cross Pacific Northwest Blood Services Region. "The annual Sept. 11 Memorial Blood Drive offers a way for area residents to support these local heroes and help save a life by giving blood."

Willamette Week

Chloe Eudaly's Neighborhood War: The Populist Commissioner Hits Back Against Critics Who Say She's Strangling Portland Democracy

*By Rachel Monahan and Nigel Jaquiss
September 11, 2019*

"We have to serve all Portlanders. Neighborhood associations are not serving all Portlanders."

Chloe Eudaly rarely shies from a fight. But on a pleasant July evening, she cried.

The first-term city commissioner had been invited to address a Pearl District art gallery fundraiser called "Neighborhood Associations Rock." Her topic? A new proposal for how City Hall interacts with average citizens.

Eudaly, 49, is a former small-business owner who's lived her entire adult life in Portland. One might think she would be in sync with the scrappy neighborhood groups responsible for this city's national reputation for civic engagement.

But that night, Eudaly was as welcome as Steve Bannon. Audience members interrupted her speech and shouted her down.

"What are you afraid of?" Eudaly asked at one point, as part of her prepared remarks.

"You are dividing us," came a reply.

Eudaly argued that she only wanted to expand the kinds of voices that City Hall listens to. Grumbling filled the room.

"I did not come here to burn down your neighborhood network," she concluded. "We are not dismantling the neighborhood system. That is patently false."

After concluding, Eudaly declined to take questions. One heckler called after her: "You're not getting re-elected."

Eudaly says she then went to dinner—and broke down in tears.

"Dear God," she recalls, "I was interrupted, insulted, mocked, yelled at. It's just incredibly stressful to be standing in front of a room of people emanating hate towards you."

Eudaly ran for the City Council in 2016 as a take-no-prisoners populist.

She was a long shot, a penniless zine shop owner challenging the well-connected, better-financed incumbent Steve Novick, a darling of the media and labor unions.

Yet she upset Novick handily, in part by appealing to an untapped power bloc: renters furious at the rising cost of apartments.

Eudaly immediately challenged the city's most powerful interests: landlords. In her first month in office, she passed a relocation ordinance requiring them to pay the moving costs of displaced renters. It was unique in the U.S.

Eudaly then spent two years forcing landlords to loosen their tenant screening criteria and reforming their handling of security deposits. She won again.

Now, however, she's challenging a more diffuse power base: the volunteer boards that represent Portland's 94 neighborhood associations.

She's touched off a grassroots revolt that threatens her hold on office (she's already drawn four challengers for next year) and energized a seething army of some of the city's most engaged residents.

"She's trying to cut the legs out from under neighborhood associations," says Libby Deal, 33, a member of the King Neighborhood Association board. Deal attended the Pearl District event.

"We were eager to hear what the commissioner had to say," Deal says, "but she insulted everybody in the room. She was hostile and unprofessional and basically said everybody in neighborhood associations is an old, rich white person." (Deal says she's none of the above.)

Reforming Portland's form of civic engagement isn't a new idea. Former Mayor Tom Potter spent considerable energy on it a decade ago, and much of what Eudaly wants to do builds on Potter's efforts.

A scathing 2016 audit of the city's Office of Neighborhood Involvement, which oversees neighborhood associations, prompted Mayor Ted Wheeler to target the bureau for an overhaul. The audit found ONI was failing to engage a broad swath of Portlanders and that they felt a growing sense of alienation. "Residents are increasingly pessimistic about their ability to influence city decisions," the audit said.

This year, Eudaly set out to fundamentally remake who gets a say in city policy. The goal, she says, is to increase equity.

Her proposed ordinance would expand the pool of groups that receive city funding and are designated to participate in official budget, land use and development discussions.

Right now, such recognition goes only to geographically based neighborhood groups. Under a draft of the proposal, six identity-based groups—including the Urban League, the Latino Network, and the Immigrant & Refugee Community Organization—would also be recognized. (The City Council is slated to hear the issue in November, but the proposal is not yet final.)

Eudaly says neighborhood associations too often represent white homeowners and exclude renters, people of color and immigrants. And, she says, they serve as gatekeepers who stand in the way of denser development and the construction of more affordable housing.

Eudaly is challenging an institution central to city policymaking since 1974. Neighborhood associations played a key role in blocking construction of the Mount Hood Freeway, a proposed interstate highway that would have bulldozed much of Southeast Portland.

Now Eudaly is seeking to outflank those neighborhood associations from the left.

She has been met with intense criticism, called a "demagogue," and caricatured as an evil queen atop an enormous throne by the NW Examiner newspaper.

Critics within the neighborhood associations say they are eager for increased participation but think Eudaly's proposed changes—such as the office director's new authority to unilaterally

choose new groups for recognition; the elimination of requirements that groups adhere to open records and meetings laws; and spreading \$3 million in annual city funding across more organizations—will decrease accountability and effectiveness.

"Neighborhood associations are messy and not always perfect," Deal says. "But in the council form of government, where there's no representation by district, they are a form of true democracy."

It didn't help Eudaly's efforts when The Oregonian last month published text messages between one of her staff and a member of the mayor's staff. "We need our neighborhood associations in their place. They get too much power and voice," Eudaly's policy director, Jamey Duhamel, wrote to Wheeler operations manager Mustafa Washington. "So. Much. Privilege."

Mingus Mapps, a former employee of the Office of Community and Civic Life, is one of those now challenging Eudaly for her City Council seat. He says she misunderstands what neighborhood associations do.

"These are the people who organize our street fairs, our neighborhood cleanups, our anti-graffiti programs," Mapps says. "They are not the enemy. They're part of the solution. The fact that city leadership doesn't know that is deeply disturbing."

To her opponents, Eudaly is seeking to demolish an institution as central to Portland's identity as the city's 13 bridges. She says she's merely trying to make Portland responsive to everyone, not just those fortunate enough to own property. And she points out that at least one neighborhood association and several community groups support her.

In the two months since the bruising event in the Pearl, Eudaly has remained unusually quiet. She's mostly operated behind the scenes, allowing the dispute to play out in committee hearings run by bureaucrats.

This month, that changed.

She came to WW to defend her plan, assess how she and her colleagues are performing, and justify a personal style that has been the subject of relentless criticism since she took office.

WW: Commissioner, what is the public's greatest misconception of you?

Chloe Eudaly: Of me? Maybe that I don't listen.

Why do you think people have that?

Because I don't agree with them.

I mean, I've learned a lot of lessons in this role. One is, most people say they want change but most people really don't want to have to make change. It's my job to advance change.

Why do you want to change the neighborhood association system in Portland?

It's not just me. I inherited a bureau that had been audited shortly before I came to office. The audit really highlighted the fact we were not serving all Portlanders equitably. While it may not be evident, because we've heard so much from critics and opponents, there is a considerable amount of demand and support for this change. [But] this process has been really challenging.

Are you surprised by the intensity of opposition to your plan?

How this has unfolded is an illustration of what's wrong with the system. Because we have a handful of very vocal opponents spreading misinformation and rumors and theories about what we're doing well in advance of it ever having been finalized.

It's frustrating and disappointing that so much time is being taken up just trying to dispel myths and misunderstandings. We really haven't gotten to the heart of the matter, which is that we have to serve all Portlanders. Neighborhood associations are not serving all Portlanders.

So what's the misunderstanding?

Oh, that I'm dismantling the neighborhood system and destroying democracy.

But you are, in effect, trying to weaken the influence of neighborhood associations.

I'm not saying they don't deserve the privilege. I'm saying everyone deserves the privilege. I'm not taking it away from them. I want to give it to other people.

What are the harms to groups that are currently excluded from the neighborhood association process?

I think neighborhood associations are very well intentioned. But I challenge this notion that some people have asserted, which is that this group is open to anyone. And if they're not coming, it's a failure on their part.

That's a real lack of understanding of how marginalized and excluded certain communities feel. If you're a renter and you sense a prevailing attitude in a neighborhood association that renters are a scourge of the neighborhood, ...these are attitudes that exist.

The NW Examiner has run a cartoon showing you running people down with tanks, like in Tiananmen Square. What about this policy change threatens people so much?

I have the same question: What are they afraid of? How do they think their neighborhoods are going to suffer by giving equal voice to communities of color, immigrants and refugees, renters, people with disabilities, young people? They feel attacked. They feel criticized. If I got a little taste of what it's like to be a member of a marginalized, underrepresented group: good.

Is this the most controversy you've encountered in office?

[I've gotten] vile responses [for] supporting a sanctuary city, speaking out in defense of immigrant and refugee communities. But even that was not as controversial as code change.

Let's turn to the Aug. 17 visit from the Proud Boys. Did the mayor and the Police Bureau handle the visit better than previous exercises in protest?

Yes. I see people I know on social media—smart, engaged people—asking why the mayor keeps letting these people come to Portland, and I just wonder how they think we can stop them. I have wished that those interstate bridges were under Portland Bureau of Transportation control and I'd just pull a Chris Christie and they couldn't come across. But I would never do that, and they don't belong to PBOT.

Speaking of national politics, do you have a presidential candidate you're supporting?

Damn it, you guys. I'm a big fan of Elizabeth Warren. And I was a Bernie supporter last time around. I would wholeheartedly support him if he were the nominee. I'm just, at this point, more impressed with Warren.

You're aware the mayor has pretty high negatives in this town right now. Is it simply because nobody, no mayor, could make this city happy? Or is there something about his performance?

Well, I mean, the fact that we've had a run of one-term mayors, I think, answers your first question, that it is a really hard job.

And are you endorsing him in his run for re-election?

I'm not endorsing any seats that aren't open, and that's been a rule since I've been there. He hasn't asked. I mean, no one has asked.

But it sounds like you'd give him a good grade.

I have to work with the mayor. I'm assuming he's going to get re-elected. Of course, there are things I disagree with him on that I would do differently. We are extraordinarily different people. He is much more fiscally conservative than I am. He's a nerd. Sorry, mayor. You know you're a nerd. And I don't think he necessarily understands or appreciates some of the issues that I think are really important. But he has come along on a lot of them, and I have to give him credit for that.

How are your relations with Commissioner Hardesty? We've heard there is discord. Not true?

There have been a couple instances where I've been really taken aback by some of her comments on the dais. And she knows that and we've talked about it. But I'd say disagreeing about an issue or policy or a project doesn't mean we have a contentious relationship. It means we disagree.

One issue you've openly disagreed about: policing drunken drivers. Does Portland need more DUII enforcement from the Police Bureau?

There's just no denying we need more enforcement, period. I've lived and driven in the city for over 30 years, and I cannot believe the flagrant disregard for laws and human life that I see almost every day. There's a lot of factors other than enforcement. But people are dying and drivers are seeing people breaking the law, so why shouldn't they? There are no consequences.

Can you talk about key successes you've had in delivering on your vision for what you want Portland to be?

For at least a couple years before I came to City Hall, any conversation about rent control, or really any meaningful tenant protections at the state level, was just dismissed out of hand. No one was interested in it. No one recognized it as really an urgent issue. And because of changes we've made, for better or for worse, our state Legislature has been inspired to make their own. Sometimes it feels like a good thing. And sometimes it feels like they're trying to beat us to the punch.

How about efforts to make housing more affordable by increasing infill development, by allowing duplexes and fourplexes on lots now designated for single homes? It looks like the city is slow-walking this.

[Laughs] Maybe just a little. The biggest issue I see with it is that it's not going to deliver a benefit to average Portlanders, average homeowners. We can change the zoning and let you do an internal division or build an accessory dwelling unit or two, but the average homeowner doesn't have the capital to do that. So I'm really concerned that the only benefit an average or low-income homeowner can reap is by selling their property to a developer who's going to tear the house down and build something unaffordable.

I have multiple friends that would love to build ADUs. They have higher-than-average income, and unless you have access to \$150,000 or \$200,000, you're not going to be able to build one. Maybe lots of rich people build yoga studios in their backyards or hobby Airbnbs. But the people who really need it won't have access.

So I've been hell-bent on coming up with some kind of loan product an average homeowner could access. We want homeowners to be able to take into account the revenue they would get from building one or two ADUs, which will allow more people access to adequate funding to build ADUs. It's taken me a really long time to sell the mayor on it because he thought I was proposing this subprime loan product, which I'm not.

Can you talk about your social media presence and the whole issue of what the public should have access to and what they shouldn't?

It's really changed a lot in the two-and-a-half years I've been in there. I mean, I was, Facebook was really, kind of, a lifeline for me as a single parent raising a medically involved kid. I was often housebound with a sick kid, and that's how I stayed in touch with friends. That's how I got support when I needed it. It's also where I started the Shed [a housing affordability group], which ultimately led to me running for City Council. I'm hesitant to admit how many hours a day I put into moderating that group. But it was a really healthy, mostly positive, engaged group of people learning together.

And social media was absolutely essential in my first campaign, so I continued doing my own social media with very vague guidance from the city attorneys. At some point, I posted something about "a day without immigrants." Seems pretty harmless. I got trolled by right-wing lunatics from all over the country saying terrible stuff. Off-topic, personal attacks. I felt perfectly justified in blocking these people. They were not my constituents. They weren't even Oregonians. Come to find out that I'm not allowed to block anyone on the city page, and so we unblocked everyone.

The upshot is, I rarely do my own social media posts and I rarely read the comments and I even more rarely respond because it's just such a toxic environment.

Would you agree with the statement that "Commissioner Eudaly has a more contentious relationship with the press than anybody else on the City Council"?

I was a bookseller for 22 years, and one of the reasons I opened my store was my commitment to independent media and to journalism and a deep concern with the consolidation of media into a handful of multinational corporations. So I take journalism really seriously. I also take it pretty personally when I feel misrepresented in the media.

Do you think I have a more contentious relationship with the press?

Yes. Do you think there's anything about your style that has created issues with the media and maybe the very same issues with the neighborhood associations?

You seem to be skating dangerously close to what many women hear from men, which is: "It's not what you're saying, it's how you say it."

If you think that's the case, then you should say that.

I have experimented with this theory, and I have realized that no matter how I say it, if you don't like the message, you're not going to receive it well.

The Portland Mercury

Portland is Leasing Sellwood and Fulton Community Centers to Private Organizations

*By Alex Zielinski
September 10, 2019*

This year's round of budget cuts left a considerably large gash in Portland's Parks and Recreation department—cutting around 55 full-time jobs and putting several beloved community centers on the chopping block.

In its final budget, City Council swore to help transition threatened community centers to a “new operating model” after keeping them open through the summer months. It looks like they've begun making good on that promise.

In the past week, the city has finalized leases with two recently defunded community centers, Sellwood and Fulton Park. While the deals allow these facilities to remain open for the short-term, it effectively hands formerly public spaces over to the private sector.

According to Everett Wild, a policy advisor for Commissioner Nick Fish, the L'Etoile French Immersion School has signed a 10-year lease with the city for control of Southwest Portland's Fulton Park Community Center. While L'Etoile already runs its elementary program out of the community center, it currently shares the facility with rooms that can be rented through the city for community groups or private events. Those will no longer be available to reserve through the city.

L'Etoile, which will be responsible for building maintenance and repair, will pay an estimated \$908,000 in rent over that 10-year period. Wild says current building repair costs, which the city estimates costing up to \$600,000, might be reduced from this rent.

The Sellwood Community Center (now called the Sellwood Community House) has been leased to the new non-profit Friends of Sellwood Community House for \$1. The lease is only for one year, but will be up for renewal next September. At the moment, the Friends of Sellwood Community House are hiring part-time instructors and seeking volunteers to take over classes formerly led by paid city employees.

Wild says the city is still seeking proposals for an organization to lease the Hillsdale Community Center, another casualty of the sweeping Parks budget cuts. As for Montavilla Community Center, the fourth community center gutted by cuts, Wild says the city has transitioned the facility's focus to teen-only programming, “for the time being.”

The Portland Observer

A More Peaceful Holladay Park

*By Beverly Corbell
September 10, 2019*

Community celebrates reduction of crime

A small group of neighbors joined officers from the Portland Police Bureau and volunteers from several nonprofit agencies last week for hotdogs, snacks and snow cones at Holladay Park to

celebrate a successful collaborative effort to reduce crime and questionable activity in the park which is bordered by Lloyd Center and a MAX Light Rail station.

Although Portland police came up with the idea, the Holladay Park Safety Plan relied heavily on community involvement, and more than a dozen nonprofits stepped up to help. They included Because People Matter, Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church, SOLVE, Portland Parks & Recreation, Office of Youth Violence Prevention, Multnomah County District Attorney's Office, Portland OIC, Portland Public Schools, Transit Police Division, Bonneville Power Administration, Federal Protective Services, Portland Police Bureau, Providence Health Care, Connect, Church of Scientology, Portland's 5 Centers for the Arts, Lloyd EcoDistrict, and Oregon Youth Authority.

Over the past few months, many groups have added events and activities in the park to strengthen its community use, and increased police patrols have helped protect the space as a public resource.

The results show a dramatic 50 percent decrease in 911 calls over the summer months compared with last year, along with a 44 percent decrease in thefts, 30 percent decrease in disturbance calls, 22 percent decrease in unwanted persons, and a 34 percent decrease in assaults.

The point of the safety campaign is to keep wholesome activities going in the park, said Capt. Anthony Passadore of Portland police. He said the model has been successful and he's working with security personnel in nearby Lloyd Center Mall to bring the effort indoors as well.

"It's community involvement to occupy spaces with positive activities," he said.

As he munched on chips and talked with volunteer Lisa Klein, who was handing out chips and other snacks, Ray Turner Jr. of Portland 5 Center for the Arts agreed that utilizing city parks is important.

"If we don't, someone else will," he said.

Serving snow cones for the celebration was Steve Dilworth of Because People Matter, leading a group of young people who have taken a snow cone machine and performed music at parks in Portland and Gresham that have been impacted by violence or higher crime rates.

Portland police and the mayor asked us to show up with our snow cones and music," he said. "Our people bring joy to the park and that lessens negative behavior."

Some groups, like Connect, simply walk the parks on a regular basis and others, like SOLVE, work to keep the parks clean. Park rangers have also ridden along with police officers on patrol.

Despite improvements, the news isn't all good. Although reports of assaults and disturbances have fallen since May, calls about stolen vehicles and collisions have increased.

Passadore said police are keeping a close eye on crime statistics as a team of one sergeant and four officers shift their focus not only to Holladay but to other hotspot parks in northeast Portland.

"Our goal is to measure our success, learn from it and create a long-term strategy," he said.

OPB

Portland Nonprofit Bomberos Latinos Trains Latin American Firefighters

*By Jenn Chavez
September 8, 2019*

In 1999, José Troncoso had an idea.

It came while the veteran Portland firefighter was in Guadalajara, Mexico. The capital of the Mexican state of Jalisco, Guadalajara has been one of Portland's sister cities since 1983. As part of that sister-city relationship, Portland was donating a fire engine to the Guadalajara Fire Department at the time. Then Portland Fire & Rescue Chief Ed Wilson asked Troncoso, who is Mexican American and bilingual, to accompany him to Mexico as a translator.

As part of their visit, Wilson and Troncoso got to tour Guadalajara's fire stations and observe the Mexican bomberos — firefighters, in Spanish — at work.

“We noticed that their equipment was way behind ours, and that they were doing some techniques that we had long ago abandoned, being that they were unsafe,” Troncoso told OPB's Weekend Edition.

It got him thinking about what he and other firefighters could do to help. On the flight home, Troncoso drafted what he called a “grandiose plan.” He'd collect equipment to donate to Guadalajara's fire department, and then update the department's training with the latest fire and rescue techniques, translated into Spanish and tailored to the needs of the region.

“I was very surprised that Chief Wilson loved the idea, and said he would give me anything necessary to make my dream a reality,” Troncoso said.

That was 20 years ago. Today, his dream lives in the form of the nonprofit he founded, Bomberos Latinos, which works in partnership with the Portland Guadalajara Sister City Association. With Troncoso at the helm, Spanish-speaking firefighters from across the U.S. have participated in 60 international training trips, not just to Mexico, but throughout Latin America.

In the program's infancy, Troncoso traveled to Guadalajara to assess the equipment inventory at every fire station. He opened every fire engine and ladder truck.

“The next thing we had to do is look at the world in which they live,” Troncoso said.

Just as it wouldn't make sense to train the Guadalajaran bomberos on equipment they couldn't use, it wouldn't make sense to train them to work in conditions that didn't apply to the region.

“For instance, here in Portland, we have hydrants on every corner. We have unlimited water. In Guadalajara, and basically throughout all Latin America, there are essentially no fire hydrants. So they bring the water in a tanker.” When it runs out, they bring a new tanker and switch the supply lines, Troncoso said.

Not only the infrastructure, but the construction of buildings is different in Latin America. For example, in the United States, many homes are wood-framed and have pitched roofs. During a fire, firefighters often go onto the roof and cut a hole with a chainsaw, to help the heat and smoke vent out of the building. But in Latin America, many residences have flat roofs made of concrete, impossible to cut through with chainsaws.

“So we had to not only translate the language of our training, but also adapt it so that it applies to them,” Troncoso said.

After a few years of successful trainings in Guadalajara, word got out about the sessions Troncoso was leading. Soon, he was fielding requests from other countries. While firefighting conditions in Mexico are different from those in the U.S., Troncoso said they’re largely universal throughout Latin America. That meant the Bomberos Latinos trainings developed for Guadalajara could easily be applied elsewhere in the region.

“They started contacting us, saying, ‘Hey, is there any way you could come down to Peru, down to Chile, down to Ecuador?’ So, we expanded and started going out there,” Troncoso said.

Bomberos Latinos’ website lists training topics including rapid intervention, high-angled rescue, wildland firefighting, incident command, hazardous materials and more. Donations have included a thermal imaging camera, radiation detection equipment, a fire engine and ladder truck, and — crucially, said Troncoso — air packs.

“The most important tool a firefighter has are the air packs that we wear. We’re going into rooms full of smoke, full of fire, elevated temperatures ... most people who die as a result of a fire die from inhaling the smoke, not from burns,” Troncoso said.

Almost none of the departments Bomberos Latinos have worked with had air packs. So Troncoso gathered donated air packs, delivered them and trained firefighters to use them.

“It was very rewarding for us to get notices from departments saying, ‘We went in a building, and we pulled a child out last night, and this child’s alive today,’ and they couldn’t have done that if they hadn’t actually had that equipment,” Troncoso said.

In addition to saving lives in the community, new equipment and training has saved the lives of firefighters themselves. In Guadalajara, several firefighters had died on the job in the years prior to Bomberos Latinos’ work with the city’s fire department. But in the 20 years since, Troncoso said, not one firefighter has died in the line of duty.

The Guadalajara Fire Department has also changed the way fire stations are distributed throughout the city, based on Portland’s model of fire service. In 1999, Guadalajara had only four fire stations citywide, to serve a population of millions.

“The reason here in Portland that we have 30 fire stations is, we try to keep to a response time of four or five minutes ... because if someone is having a heart attack or if there’s a fire, those minutes are critical,” Troncoso said.

Bomberos Latinos suggested to department leadership in Guadalajara that they add smaller stations into more neighborhoods throughout the city.

“20 years later, Guadalajara now has 17 stations ... and now their response time has been cut drastically, and they’re able to save a lot more lives,” Troncoso said.

In September 2017, Troncoso got to see some of the rescue personnel he’d trained leap into action. He was in Guadalajara on the 32nd anniversary of a massive earthquake that hit Mexico City in 1985. He’d just completed a training the day prior. On his free day in Guadalajara, he was invited to a simulation and earthquake drill taking place in the city, like others held across the country to mark the anniversary of 1985 ‘great quake.’ During the simulation, Mexico City was hit with a real, 7.1 magnitude earthquake, powerful enough to be felt more than 300 miles away in Guadalajara. Troncoso said Guadalajara’s urban search and rescue team, members of which he’d both trained and worked alongside, quickly departed and were some of the first boots

on the ground in Mexico City. They spent over a week there doing rescue work in the aftermath of the quake.

Seeing the positive results of the trainings and donations he's helped facilitate over the years has been gratifying for the Portland fire lieutenant. He spoke of how it fits into his broader role as a Latino firefighter, and as a Mexican American in particular.

"I grew up in East L.A. My father is from Mexico. He was a Spanish professor his entire life, until he retired. We grew up speaking only Spanish in the home, because my father knew we would pick up English ... I'm forever indebted to my parents for raising us the way they did," Troncoso said.

His bilingualism and the program he founded have taken him to 14 different countries, and on dozens of international training trips. Troncoso said he looks for ways to give back to the community, out of gratitude for the opportunities he's been given in his own life.

"Just having the language open[ed] doors for me to be able to help other people," he said.

Bomberos Latinos has three more trainings scheduled this year, and has received requests for 15 trainings in 2020. Troncoso wishes he had the time to fill all the requests they've received. But, he said, he's looking forward to retiring in the not-so-distant future. After that, he'd like to step up his nonprofit work even more, with a goal of doing a training per month. The work brings him joy.

"I feel very enriched by the experiences of having gotten to know these people, my brother and sister firefighters throughout Latin America, and the experiences I have are unforgettable and a treasure to me."