

The Portland Tribune

Mapps defies Eudaly on neighborhood groups

By Jim Redden

September 23, 2019

Council candidate used to work in code rewrite office but disagrees with proposal heading to the City Council

Mingus Mapps could be Portland City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly's strongest challenger for reelection in 2020.

Mapps, 51, is the only City Council candidate, so far, to come out strongly against the controversial rewrite of the public engagement code that Eudaly is pushing. The rewrite has split neighborhoods and the council by proposing to take references to neighborhood organizations, including the 95 longtime neighborhood associations, out of the engagement chapter of the City Code.

Mapps says he agrees with the overall goal of the proposal, which is to increase the civic participation of all residents, including those who identify with historically marginalized communities. But he does not believe the Office of Community and Civic Life, which Eudaly oversees, needed to propose removing references to neighborhood associations to accomplish that.

"If neighborhood associations need help, then the city is obligated to help them, and that includes improving outreach. But the city can also improve its communication to new community organizations at the same time," Mapps said.

During the code rewrite process, some of its supporters have criticized neighborhood associations as being dominated by white homeowners fighting change. Mapps cannot be attacked like that. He is an African American renter with first-hand neighborhood involvement experience.

From 2015 to 2018, Mapps served as the executive director of Historic Parkrose, one of eight city-funded Neighborhood Prosperity Initiatives that make small, targeted economic development grants in areas experiencing lagging commercial investments, with a higher than average poverty rate, and a higher concentration of minority-owned or neighborhood-serving businesses. He was praised by the organization's board of directors when he left in 2018, according to a story in the Mid-County Memo.

"Mingus has this way about him that is warm, diplomatic and caring. He has truly been a staple of Historic Parkrose, and he will be dearly missed," the Nov. 18 story quoted President Samantha Montanaro as saying.

More recently, Mapps worked in the very office undertaking the code rewrite, where he came to believe the project was poorly conceived and administered, despite its worthy goal. Mapps said he was abruptly fired after six months for refusing his supervisor's order to discipline an employee for not actively participating in an emotionally wrenching office meeting.

"I was not surprised because the office is in turmoil," Mapps told the Portland Tribune of the firing.

The Portland Tribune first talked to Mapps on the day Willamette Week broke the story that Eudaly sent an email to council members threatening Commissioner Amanda Fritz directly and

the rest of them indirectly if they oppose the code reform. The story described the Sept. 10 email as "incendiary" and a breach of council protocols, suggesting Eudaly lashed out because she does not have the votes to pass the rewrite.

Mapps declined to personally criticize Eudaly over the email, saying instead that it was "unfortunate" and "did not have to happen" if everyone had worked together on the rewrite in the first place.

"This isn't about Chloe," Mapps said of the candidacy. "It's about government needing to do better. Portlanders have lost faith in their government, and I want to help fix that."

Outside his involvement with neighborhood issues, Mapps has other experience in the region. He grew up in California but has family in the area whom he frequently visited. He graduated from Reed College in 1990 before earning a doctorate in political science from Cornell University in 2004 and serving as an assistant professor at Brandeis University and Bowdoin College, and as a post-doctorate research fellow at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

In between and since, Mapps also worked for former Multnomah County Chair Bev Stein, in the county's Department of Human Services, and in the Government Relations office at Portland Public Schools, where he helped lobby the Oregon Legislature to assure adequate funding for the state's largest school district after the state's property tax limitation measures. He also has worked for the United Way of the Columbia Willamette.

Mapps says his education and jobs have given him an understanding of how the different governments can and should work together to address problems like homelessness and the lack of affordable housing.

Mapps moved back to Portland eight years ago when his then-wife, another political science professor, got a job at Portland State University. He has custody of their two young boys. Since being fired by the city, Mapps has started forming a consulting firm to work on intergovernmental affairs and redistricting, which must be done nationwide after the upcoming census.

Mapps says he intends to qualify for Portland's public campaign financing program to fund his race. For a campaign manager, he has retained Ann Sanderson, a small business owner who opposed former Commissioner Steve Novick's proposed street fee and ran unsuccessfully for the council against Commissioner Amanda Fritz in 2016.

So far, Eudaly also is being challenged by campaign finance reform advocate Seth Woolley, renewable energy consultant Jack Kerfoot, and banker Kevin McKay. The filing deadline is March 3, 2020. If no candidate receives more than 50% of the vote at the May 19 primary election, the top two finishers face off at the Nov. 3 general election.

To Bridgeport or Bust - little support for SW MAX to stop at Tigard

*By Bill Gallagher
September 23, 2019*

What's unknown is whether Portland would OK removing traffic lanes from Barbur Boulevard.

There's not much support among seven decision makers for the Southwest MAX light rail line project to end the line in Tigard rather than at Bridgeport Village in Washington County.

But there is a desire from some of them to hear Portland's answer to the question, "What about Barbur?"

A major decision on where Southwest MAX will go if it ever gets built — and the route it will take to get there — will be made by the Southwest Corridor Project Steering Committee next month.

The project is still years from a final decision on whether it will be built, but is nearly \$400 million over a preliminary proposed budget of \$2.375 billion. One way of cutting costs in this early stage would be to shorten the line. Another way would be by removing a traffic lane in each direction on major sections of Barbur Boulevard. That would eliminate the cost of widening Barbur to accommodate trains as well as the current two lanes of traffic in either direction.

At its meeting on Monday, Tigard Mayor Jason Snider was the only one of the six members of the Steering Committee who were present who spoke out for a shorter line that would only go as far as Tigard. He is one of four members of that committee who are elected representatives from Washington County. He proposed the shorter route so Barbur would maintain all its lanes. The other three members want the line to go all the way to Bridgeport Village.

City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, Portland's representative on the committee, was not present. Her representative, Chris Warner, director of the Portland Bureau of Transportation, was noncommittal on the length of the line.

Because running the light rail line the full 12 miles to Bridgeport would probably mean reducing traffic lanes on Barbur, Mayor Gary Schirado of Durham, a town of 1,500 people located between Tigard and Tualatin just west of Bridgeport, said, "Getting to Bridgeport is pivotal to the success of this project. I want to hear what PBOT's position is. It may not matter what Durham thinks but it does matter what Portland thinks."

Washington County Commissioner Roy Rogers replied to Warner, "It's your road (Barbur) and I don't have a clear message what you want to do with it.

"We need a signal and leadership and vision. What does Portland want? That's my ask of you."

Barbur Boulevard is currently under the jurisdiction of the Oregon Department of Transportation but will be transferred to Portland when the project is completed and trains are running, according to Warner.

Warner told the Steering Committee that the possibility of removing lanes on Barbur as a trade-off for going all the way to Bridgeport is, "Conceptually a different way of looking at this. I will be discussing it with the mayor in coming weeks."

He said he wanted more information on how reducing traffic lanes on Barbur would affect local neighborhoods and the impact on residents, businesses, bicyclists and pedestrians along Barbur.

After the meeting, Warner said, "Our hope is to expose them (Portland City Council members) to it because it's still really in the planning stages so we have not had the initial conversation with them about this. Commissioner Eudaly is the one who's going to begin the conversation. She'll be talking to them."

At this point, Warner said, there are no plans to bring the current Southwest Corridor Project issues to a City Council meeting before the Steering Committee decides what to do about Barbur Boulevard.

Neighborhood association representatives from Southwest Portland testified against the plan to "skinny" Barbur by taking out one traffic lane in each direction.

"This is a horrible idea which would have major impacts in my neighborhood," said Maryanne Fitzgerald of the Crestwood Neighborhood Association. She cited the amount of traffic that would divert off of a "skinnier" Barbur Boulevard onto local streets.

The steering committee will schedule a meeting in late October or early November to decide the budget and route questions and the ultimate plan for Barbur Boulevard should light rail trains ever travel on it.

Willamette Week

City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty Blasts Portland Police Actions at Friday Climate Rally

*By Nigel Jaquiss
September 23, 2019*

Echoing Urban League president, Hardesty says cops "unnecessarily escalated a situation."

City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty this afternoon joined in the criticism of Portland Police Bureau actions at a massive student climate march on Sept. 20.

"I want to take a moment to address the videos of Portland Police officers who, during a nonviolent protest last Friday, unnecessarily escalated a situation by pushing through a crowd of youth to single out two youth of color, ultimately leading to the arrest of several teens," Hardesty said on Twitter. "What does it do to our community when we treat our youth this way? What does it teach our youth when behavior like this is allowed?"

Hardesty echoed the sentiments expressed earlier to WW by the Urban League's President and CEO Nkenge Harmon Johnson.

The police bureau issued a statement after the march on Friday night, saying the arrest of one of the student marchers followed police requests for them to get back on the sidewalk.

"After numerous requests, orders, and warnings that he would be arrested, the marcher still refused to get down," the statement says. "He was observed leaning out into the traffic lane causing vehicle drivers to abruptly apply their brakes. Officers were concerned about the extremely unsafe circumstance and saw arrest as the only option."

A spokesman for Mayor Ted Wheeler said the mayor would reserve comment until he has more information about the incident.

Hardesty said what she's seen in videos is disturbing.

"Every encounter with the public is an opportunity to show community trust, yet this is how these officers chose to interact with children peacefully engaging in direct action," Hardesty said. "I am so proud to have witnessed the power of our youth at last Friday's Global Climate Strike and it's unfortunate that the conduct of Portland Police officers during the protest—rather than the amazing show of power and resolve our youth showed that day—is what we are now talking about."

The Daily Journal of Commerce

Portland climate progress stalls thanks to rising transportation emissions

By Pete Danko
September 20, 2019

Greenhouse gas emissions reductions have stalled in Multnomah County, and how people and goods move around is to blame.

"Transportation sector emissions are increasing dramatically, currently 8 percent over 1990 levels, and 14 percent over their lowest levels in 2012," Portland's Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, which tracks city and county progress in meeting climate goals, reported this week.

That trend helped arrest a more or less steady decline in overall GHG emissions that ran from 2000 to 2012. Since 2012, emissions have bounced around in a narrow range, fluctuating based on how much rain and snow falls in the region, which drives hydropower production, a key factor in the electrical sector's carbon footprint.

The net result is a decline in overall emissions of 15 percent since 1990.

The new data put the county — home to about one-fifth of Oregon's 4.2 million residents — in the same boat as the rest of the state, where transportation emissions have emerged as the most daunting climate challenge.

Forty-two percent of county emissions were in the transportation sector in 2017, just a bit above the Oregon figure of 39 percent for 2016. Two years earlier, emissions were 35 percent of the statewide total.

The local report noted progress in some regards, with GHG emissions per gallon of transportation fuel falling, thanks to a state requirement to blend 10 percent ethanol into gasoline and 5 percent biodiesel into diesel. The Oregon Clean Fuels Program has begun pushing down the carbon intensity of fuels as well, demanding a 1.5 percent drop this year from a 2015 carbon-intensity baseline. That requirement will grow stricter over time, hitting 10 percent by 2025.

But with vehicle miles traveled per person "relatively flat" and the county's population growing from 583,887 residents in 1990 to 807,555 in 2017, total emissions reductions have been hard to come by.

"The increase in total transportation sector emissions is largely the result of more people moving to Portland and driving vehicles on our roads," the report said.

Portland makes up about 80 percent of the county's population. The city created its first climate plan in 1993, and the most recent Climate Action Plan came out in 2015.

With the release of the report, officials said the city is working on a Climate Emergency Declaration, a concept pushed at the national level by Rep. Earl Blumenauer, calling it "one of many actions that Portland City Council will take in the coming months to protect and enhance our home for present and future generations."

OPB

Portland Water Bureau Warns Earthquake Could Leave City With Major Shortages

*By Rebecca Ellis
September 24, 2019*

If a major earthquake were to hit Portland tomorrow, city analysts predict the disaster would cause up to 3,000 pipe breaks across the region's water system.

The number raised eyebrows in the audience Monday afternoon as Michael Stuhr, the director of the Portland Water Bureau, outlined how the city could ensure residents have access to clean water in the event of a devastating earthquake caused by a rupture along the Cascadia subduction zone.

In a presentation on emergency preparedness hosted by the Columbia Corridor Association, Stuhr said the water bureau had analyzed the more than 2,200 miles of pipe snaking through the system to assess the likelihood of infrastructure breaking during a massive tremor. The results show between 1,500 and 3,000 pipe breaks could occur.

The bureau's service area covers 225 square miles, providing water to Portland along with 20 suburban cities and water districts.

To avert disaster, Stuhr said the city is working on a "backbone plan," which focuses on fixing pipes that transport water to the region's "critical infrastructure facilities," such as hospitals and fire stations.

"There isn't enough money on this planet to replace every pipe in this system," Stuhr told the audience. "But the truth is some pipes are more important than others."

Some of the most critical pipes? Those running across the Willamette River and transporting water from Portland's east side to its west.

Stuhr said the decades-old pipe crossings are vulnerable, as they lay in shallow trenches at the bottom of the river. But the city is currently in the design phase of a multi-million dollar project to lay new earthquake-safe pipe 80 feet beneath the bottom of the Willamette River.

Construction is expected to start in the spring and wrap up in 2022.

Until then, Stuhr told the audience, the city's water supply is in a precarious position.

"If the big earthquake happened tomorrow, would there be no water available whatsoever? Without meaning to be flip, the answer ... is yes," he said.

Stuhr said the city's modeling shows three out of the five pipes that currently cross the Willamette River will break in the event of an earthquake, making it impossible to guarantee all residents will have a water supply post-disaster.