

## **The Oregonian**

# **Portland Water Bureau says filtration plant could cost as much as \$1.2 billion**

*By Everton Bailey Jr.  
November 13, 2019*

Portland water officials said Wednesday that a new water filtration plant to treat the city's drinking water could cost the city \$574 million to \$1.2 billion.

Water Bureau Director Michael Stuhr and others testified about the planned project before Portland City Council. The discussion drew pointed questions from at least one commissioner and criticism from people who live near the planned construction site.

Stuhr told the council that the current best estimate for the project budget is around \$820 million, but "low-confidence estimates" at this point mean the actual price tag could land 30% less or 50% more. He said the numbers will be revised again over the next few years as the water filtration plant is designed.

The price tag has increased twice before. Water officials had forecast the cost in 2017 at \$350 million to \$500 million, then revised the estimates in September to range from \$670 million to \$850 million.

Water bureau officials will appear again before the council next week. Commissions will vote the week after that on whether to take the next steps in the project: to approve the bureau's preferred plans for the filtration project and to move forward with a contract with Stantec Consulting Services to design the plant. The \$51 million contract would last at least five years.

The city wants to have a new water treatment plant operational by 2027 in order to comply with federal drinking water regulations to filter out the parasite cryptosporidium and other contaminants. City officials plan to build the facility on 95 acres of land east of Gresham that it's owned since 1975, drawing opposition from many of the 24 property owners in the rural area.

The city gets its drinking water from the Bull Run Watershed near Mount Hood and has wholesale contracts to sell to 19 area water providers, including the cities of Gresham, Sandy and Tualatin. The water serves more than 950,000 Portland-area residents.

Gabriel Solmer, the bureau's deputy director, said the agency plans to apply for a loan from the Environmental Protection Agency that could finance about half of the filtration plant project. She said the funding would allow the city to phase in water rate increases over a longer period of time.

The city's plans for the filtration plant include technology to remove cryptosporidium from the drinking water and a daily capacity of 145 million gallons of water per day, enough to meet peak demands through 2045, said Cristina Nieves, a senior policy director for Commission Amanda Fritz, who oversees the water bureau.

"We need to plan long term for the increase in folks that will come here," Nieves said. "What we're essentially saying is, while we're required to treat our water, we have an opportunity to plan for that and go above and beyond."

Several neighbors of the planned filtration site have organized as the "Citizens for Peaceful Rural Living" and oppose the plans. They have criticized what they view as a lack of scrutiny and inadequate notification about the city's plans. They have also expressed concerns over the

planned construction, traffic impacts, rising projected costs and the city's desire to have a plant that does more than treat for cryptosporidium.

The neighbors have stopped attending group meeting organized by the water bureau to establish a good neighbor agreement in protest of the project, Lauren Courter told the council on Wednesday. Her family's property borders the planned site.

"The water bureau has not been transparent from the beginning, and they redirect any of our major questions and concerns so that this process follows their agenda," Courter said.

Brent Leathers was one of several neighbors of the treatment facility site who suggested the city reconsider an ultraviolet treatment plant instead of a filtration plant.

"You can always come back and build this in our neighborhood and destroy our lives. You'll always have that as an option," he said. "But take a two or three month hiatus and ask the question, 'can we do this cheaper and quicker?'"

Fritz said earlier in the meeting that the city had already ruled out the ultraviolet method and plan to move forward with filtration.

Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty said she felt she couldn't yet support the \$51 million consultant contract without a more definitive cost estimate for the project. She said she still had questions from a September meeting that water bureau officials still haven't answered, including more details about how they landed on their current plans to move forward with the filtration plant.

If the bureau wants her support, Hardesty said, then officials need to explain to her all of the city's options.

"If they don't want my support," she said, "then they can keep doing what they're doing."

## **Portland expands list of older homes required to be dismantled by hand**

*By Everton Bailey Jr.*

*November 13, 2019*

More Portland homes slated for demolition are now required to be dismantled piece by piece.

The Portland City Council unanimously voted Wednesday to amend city code to require that any home built in 1940 or earlier whose owner plans to demolish it must deconstruct the house to salvage the materials, rather than mechanically knock it down. City regulations since 2016 mandated that homes built in 1916 or earlier be deconstructed.

Historically designated homes of any age also fall under the deconstruction requirement. The new city rule goes into effect Jan. 20.

The current requirements primarily cover homes in areas that lie along historic streetcar lines and extend to 82nd Avenue, city officials said. The expansion is expected to apply to other homes in those areas as well as neighborhoods east of 82nd Avenue.

Bureau of Planning and Sustainability officials said last week that in the last three years, more than 200 houses have been deconstructed instead of razed. Officials say the method has environmental benefits and increases the chances of finding hazardous materials such as asbestos and lead-based paint.

There are 12 companies currently certified to do deconstruction work in the city, which includes being trained in how to deal with lead-based paint and asbestos, city officials said.

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Reforming city government discussed at rare joint forum**

*By Jim Redden*

*November 14, 2019*

**The Portland Business Alliance hosts a presentation on the City Club of Portland's recommendations for changing city government**

Changing Portland's form of government has become such a hot subject, the city's two largest and most established civic organizations held a rare joint discussion about it.

The Portland Business Alliance hosted the City Club of Portland at its monthly breakfast forum on Wednesday, Nov. 14. City Club members have overwhelmingly approved a research report calling for fundamental changes in the city's form of government. Although the PBA has not taken an official position on the report, President and CEO Andrew Hoan made it clear his organization's members are following the issue closely.

"The way government operates impacts all of us," Hoan said at the beginning of the discussion.

Portland's form of government is unique among modern U.S. cities. The mayor and the rest of the council are elected citywide. All council members oversee bureaus assigned to them by the mayor. All council members can also propose legislation that affects the entire city or bureaus overseen by other members, although that has not happened very often in the past.

Many American cities once had Portland's form of government. However, most have now changed over to a system where the mayor is still elected citywide, most, if not all, other council members are elected by geographic districts, and the bureaus are run by a professional manager appointed by the mayor and confirmed by the council.

That is the system the City Club endorsed by a near-unanimous vote on Feb. 25 of this year. Ken Fairfax, who chaired the research committee, said it is more representative and efficient than Portland's current form of government.

"Portland's form of government may have some merits, but it is inequitable and has long since been proven to be inefficient," said Fairfax.

The three other speakers agreed with him. Former City Commissioner Dan Saltzman said council members currently prioritize their bureaus over citywide concerns. Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods Communication Manager Mischa Webley said many Portlanders feel unrepresented on the council. And Sightline Institute Policy Analyst Kristin Eberhard said most city residents don't even know which council members oversee which bureaus.

Saltzman disagreed with some of the City Club's recommendations. The report recommends that all positions except the mayor be elected by districts, while Saltzman felt some should still be elected citywide to provide a broader perspective on issues. And the report recommends increasing the size for the council from the current five to 13 or more, while Saltzman thinks seven to nine would be more manageable.

Despite the interest in the issue, one problem emerged from the discussion — no one is currently working to put a reform measure on the ballot. Changing the form of government requires amending the City Charter, which voters must approve. There are three ways to do it, all of which face challenges.

First, a measure can be referred to the ballot by the council. But the last time that happened, it was sponsored by former Mayor Tom Potter and defeated at the May 2007 primary election, causing some City Hall watchers to conclude voters will not trust any measure referred by the council.

Second, a measure can be placed on the ballot by an initiative petition started by citizens that obtains the required number of city voter signatures. As the City Club sees it, the initiative petition process requires a lot of hard work and money to gather the signatures and run a campaign that builds support across the city. And Fairfax admitted much more research is necessary to turn his organization's report into a detailed measure.

And third, a measure can be placed on the ballot by a citizen Charter Review Committee appointed by the council. The next committee must be appointed no later than 2021. But the City Club believes that even a single council member can subvert the charter review process, meaning there is no easy path to placing such a measure on the ballot.

Under its rules, the Portland Business Alliance cannot endorse any proposal that is not a specific measure.

Despite that, the mood at the breakfast forum clearly favored change. Alliance members complained about the inefficiency of the current system during the question-and-answer period. And Hoan ended the meeting by thanking the City Club for its work and hoping it will continue.

You can find the City Club report [www.pdxcityclub.org/new-government](http://www.pdxcityclub.org/new-government).

## **Wheeler limits campaign contributions to \$5,000 and \$10,000**

*By Jim Redden  
November 13, 2019*

**Mayor says the limits are the same as those for federal candidates and that he expects to receive many small contributions, too.**

Mayor Ted Wheeler's campaign has announced that it will voluntarily limit reelection contributions to \$5,000 for individuals and \$10,000 for unions or organizations.

The campaign had previously announced Wheeler will not seek taxpayer funds for his reelection under the city's public campaign finance system.

Wheeler's limits are much higher than the \$500 limit previously approved by Portland voters. But a Multnomah County Circuit Court judge has struck that limit down as violating the First Amendment free speech rights in Oregon's constitution. The issue is headed to the Oregon Supreme Court, where campaign finance reform supporters hope the limits will be upheld.

The campaign released the following statement from Wheeler on Wednesday, Nov. 14:

"Voters are justifiably concerned with unlimited contributions allowed under state law. That's why we're voluntarily adhering to the same limits as federal candidates — our U.S.

Representatives and Senators. These limits, capped at \$5,000 per individual and \$10,000 for a union or other organization, help level the playing field but deter outside spending like we've seen in elections in other major cities, where special interests disregard public financing and low limits and spend unregulated sums. This is a standard that is stricter than the other candidates in this race for mayor.

"Every campaign we've run has relied on grassroots donations from people from all walks of life. We'll continue this work, and make sure all contributions are transparent and reported efficiently to ensure voter confidence."

Wheeler's campaign has \$35,000 in the bank after donating \$16,000 in previous contributions from Portland hotel owner and European Union ambassador Gordon Sondland to eight local nonprofits and MoveOn.org, which is supporting the impeachment of President Donald Trump. Sondland recently recanted his testimony regarding Trump and communications with Ukrainian officials.

## Willamette Week

### Portland Mayor Ted Wheeler Sets Lofty Campaign Contribution Limits for Re-Election

*By Nigel Jaquiss*  
*November 13, 2019*

**The mayor will accept checks of up to \$5,000 from individuals and \$10,000 from groups, far in excess of voter-approved limits yet to go into effect.**

Mayor Ted Wheeler today announced the he will observe contribution limits for his re-election next year, although at a level 10 times higher than Portland voters overwhelmingly approved last year.

He'll take checks of up to \$5,000 from individuals and up to \$10,000 from organizations.

A \$500 limit on individual contributions voters approved in 2018 for city elections has not yet gone into effect because of a court challenge, so Wheeler is not bound by it.

#### **Here's Wheeler's statement:**

"Voters are justifiably concerned with unlimited contributions allowed under state law," Wheeler said. "That's why we're voluntarily adhering to the same limits as federal candidates—our U.S. Representatives and Senators. These limits, capped at \$5,000 per individual and \$10,000 for a union or other organization, help level the playing field but deter outside spending like we've seen in elections in other major cities, where special interests disregard public financing and low limits and spend unregulated sums. This is a standard that is stricter than the other candidates in this race for mayor."

Federal contribution limits, shown here, are not exactly as Wheeler states them and in federal races, corporations cannot give directly to candidates in any amount.

He also made a nod to reformers who wanted him to observe a \$500 limit.

"Every campaign we've run has relied on grassroots donations from people from all walks of life," Wheeler added. "We'll continue this work, and make sure all contributions are transparent and reported efficiently to ensure voter confidence."

His campaign also will not accept contributions from certain industries: Pharma, oil, coal, firearms, tobacco, adult entertainment are banned and others could join that list.

Jason Kafoury, a Portland lawyer and a leader of the group Honest Elections, which put Measure 26-200, the contribution limits measure on the 2018 ballot, expressed disappointment in Wheeler.

"On behalf of Honest Elections, we would hope that the mayor would show leadership to all other candidates for city and county positions that they should stand with the 87 percent of his constituents that they want candidates to get big money out of politics and follow Measure 26-200," Kafoury tells WW.

## **A New Advocacy Group Will Advise the Portland City Council On Issues Related to the Local Music Scene**

*By Daniel Bromfield  
November 13, 2019*

**The MusicPortland Policy Council, a group composed of seven local musicians and music industry figures, will advocate for "policies to save, support, and strengthen Portland's music scene."**

A new community group has been established to advise the Portland City Council on policy decisions related to live music.

Local music-industry trade association MusicPortland yesterday announced the formation of the MusicPortland Policy Council, a group composed of seven local musicians and music industry figures, who will advocate for "policies to save, support, and strengthen Portland's music scene," according to a press release.

"There's nothing inevitable about Portland's success as a great music destination," said City Commissioner Nick Fish in a statement. "We are losing too many music venues and affordable rehearsal spaces. We must act intentionally to stop that, or we risk losing the soul of our city."

Though the Policy Council is still holding preliminary meetings to determine its priorities, the press release alludes to "permitting and enforcement, small music business supports, additional musician loading zones, development and design standards, and other music-supportive policies."

MusicPortland executive director Meara McLaughlin argues live music in Portland faces challenges from housing-centric city development policies.

"Where there's a pillow, there's a problem for a venue," says McLaughlin. "You have to strategically value music as part of your cultural reality and figure out ways to allow these things to coexist."

McLaughlin says the council—composed almost entirely of women and people of color, including recording engineer Adam Gonsalves, Doug Fir Lounge marketing director Rochelle

Hunter and event promoter DeAngelo Raines—intends to address issues relating to live music not only in the city center but in working-class areas such as East Portland.

MusicPortland was incorporated in 2017 and launched in 2018. Its recent projects include establishing "musician loading zones" at 16 local venues and organizing Gearfest, a music equipment fair. It's currently undertaking a survey of the economic impact of live music on Portland.

## **Snow Plow Operators Are the Unsung Heroes of Portland's Worst Winters. We Spoke to a Veteran Driver About the Hazards and Rewards of a Job Few People Fully Understand.**

*By Daniel Bromfield*  
*November 13, 2019*

**"I loved the plow," he says. "I loved the views at night. I loved the whole deal."**

Ted Harvey knows operating a snow plow in Portland seems a little absurd.

"People think we're crazy because we're out with snow plows in sunny, dry weather," he says. "They say, 'What are you guys doing? How are you spending our money?'"

But on those rare occasions when the snow does come down here, there might not be a more important job. Harvey would know: He spent 13 years behind the wheel of a plow, retiring from active duty in 2017 to serve as a mentor to younger drivers that come through the Portland Bureau of Transportation each hiring season. And as Harvey will tell you, operating a plow is no casual roll through winter wonderland.

"You can't relax in our seat when you're in downtown areas or in a real high-end or busy residential area," says Harvey, 60, a stocky man with calloused hands and a goatee. "You're on heightened alert because you are constantly splitting your peripheral, what people are doing, what's going on."

The bureau has 112 employees trained as plow drivers. If snow comes, it's on them to take up a shift of up to 12 hours in a vehicle so heavy that if a pedestrian gets in its way by accident, it's more prudent to try to crash into a parked car or a building than steer out of the way.

Since there's no guarantee snow will come to Portland on any given year, there is no one in Portland whose job is exclusively to move snow. Harvey works primarily as a concrete finisher, but he signed up as a plow driver in 2003 for overtime and found himself enjoying it more than he expected.

"I loved the plow," he says. "I loved the views at night. I loved the whole deal."

Each plow driver is designated a day or night shift and certain areas of town. Drivers focus on "primary streets"—busy thoroughfares served by buses and streetcars—before turning their attention to smaller, residential "secondary streets." PBOT surveys about 1,750 miles of Portland roadway in total.

Harvey's haunts were Northwest Portland, home to many high roads that become treacherous in winter, and what PBOT calls the CBD—the Central Business District, or downtown.

Downtown pedestrians are often snowed off the sidewalk and are forced to step into the street—the path of the plow. That's just one of the many dangers to which drivers are constantly on heightened alert: cars pulling out in front of the plow, tree limbs and wires covered in ice with the potential to fall, all on slippery streets with low visibility.

"It gets hard to see," says Harvey. "We have our lights flashing. They reflect off buildings, reflect off vehicles. We have the front flashers going, we have the back ones going, we're constantly looking around."

Then there are the victims of winter hazards drivers occasionally encounter—especially on Germantown Road, that tree-lined, serpentine street that winds up to Skyline Boulevard a thousand feet above sea level.

"There are so many vehicles that run off that road, I can't tell you how many," says Harvey. "Within an hour or two, you'll have four or five vehicles."

In one case, Harvey had to call the police to rescue a car that had veered off the side of the road.

"They landed against a tree that stopped them from going another 50 or 100 feet down to a creek below," he says. "We were already traveling on that lane, and we come back around again and we noticed this dirty snow and tracks, so we stopped and we looked down and they were over the edge. They weren't injured, but they were freezing."

Such hazards explain the intensive yearly training. PBOT maintains an obstacle course for plows at Sunderland Yard in Northeast Portland. The vehicles—which are trucks with modifications, not the romantic little machines we know from the "Mr. Plow" episode of *The Simpsons*—run it fully equipped.

Plow drivers relearn every October and November how to put on various chains and sanders and operate each of the three sizes of trucks used in plowing. If routes change or new roads are added in the city, they're considered in the obstacle course. The yearly event is as much about PR as training—PBOT encourages news crews to cover the course and even allows civilians to take the wheel from time to time, to encourage Portlanders to appreciate the difficulty of driving a plow and the dangers posed by a truck loaded with gravel and heavy machinery.

But plowing also has a humanitarian aspect: clearing paths for emergency responders, making wheelchair ramps accessible, even helping out the homeless. Harvey brought coffee, extra sandwiches, and extra boots ("I get a boot allowance") on his trips in case he encountered someone in need.

"That guy, you could hear the yell from your office," he says of one homeless man he helped out. "He was so dang happy running down the street with the boots on his feet."

Moments like that might help explain why someone would want a gig requiring taking long shifts with little warning and an alarming risk of accidents. But Harvey offers a different explanation: "Maybe I like being on the edge."



# **Sarah Iannarone Forced the Mayor to Relinquish Tainted Cash. She Now Aims for Much Bigger Victories.**

*By Nigel Jaquiss and Rachel Monahan  
November 13, 2019*

**"We don't see people like me being the mayor of Portland a lot."**

Sarah Iannarone started running against Ted Wheeler in the 2016 Portland mayor's race and she's never really stopped.

Last week, she landed an early uppercut in the 2020 rematch, when Wheeler announced he would give away \$16,000 in previous contributions from President Donald Trump's embattled ambassador to the European Union, Gordon Sondland.

She says it shouldn't have taken until Sondland became a central witness in Trump's impeachment hearings for Wheeler to cough up the former Portland hotelier's money.

"What is the right thing to do and when is the right time to do it?" Iannarone asks. "I called that one, and there have been others."

Iannarone, 46, finished third in the 2016 primary, behind Wheeler and former Multnomah County Commissioner Jules Bailey, but neither she—nor some voters—accepted that result as final.

"People would say, 'Sarah, there's this homeless camp that's being swept,' or 'Sarah, there's this dangerous intersection,'" she says. "It was like my Twitter account was almost serving as a mini-City Hall for trying to address the problems Portlanders were facing."

This time around, she's qualified for public financing of her election campaign—a big change from her cash-strapped 2016 effort. And she's staked out positions far to Wheeler's left, hoping to surf the progressive wave that propelled Commissioners Chloe Eudaly (2016) and Jo Ann Hardesty (2018) to victories over more moderate opponents.

We caught up with Iannarone for an interview that has been edited for clarity and brevity.

## **WW: What is Mayor Wheeler doing wrong?**

Sarah Iannarone: It's a top-down leadership style. It's a disconnect from the daily lives of Portlanders and a failure to listen to the people whose opinions and expertise matter most. A great example is the protest policy [which attempted to restrict when and where protesters could gather]. What would it have meant for him to listen to experts on that?

## **You've said TriMet should stop charging fares. How would you make up the lost revenue?**

You could look at everything, including a congestion parking fee. We need to think about how we want to provide socialism in urban space. Right now, we have a high degree of socialism for the privately owned automobile. All over the city, there's free parking and free access to roads. There are people who could be taking trips downtown by transit, but if it's cheaper to park downtown than it is for a day pass on TriMet, then which option do you think people are going to take?

## **The first part of your platform you've published is your climate plan. Why have you made that a higher priority than housing and homelessness?**

I don't think it's a higher priority. I think it's the overarching priority. If you talk to any Portlander, they're going to tell you the same things. Housing's too expensive. Traffic's too bad. I

know those are the issues that are on Portlanders' minds, but when you talk about how we're going to address these things, making sure that we're taking an equitable approach and applying a climate lens to everything we're doing is how we're going to frame the solutions.

**What's your assessment of Commissioner Eudaly's attempt to remake the neighborhood associations system?**

It's noble in its aspirations. I do think dismantling structural racism is something Portlanders need to focus on explicitly and with urgency. The consequences for the neighborhood associations maybe snuck up on them. I think they were a little blindsided, and when you've got the most cohesive, politically empowered and vocal contingencies feeling under threat, you're going to have pushback. It's almost inevitable.

**Your website says, "I'm uniquely positioned to be the visionary leader our city needs at this critical time." Please explain.**

Well, I'm ordinary. We don't see people like me being the mayor of Portland a lot. I'm not entrenched in any particular party politics. I'm not entrenched in establishment decision-making. I earn the median household income. I try to get around on my bike or by the bus. I send my kid to Portland Public Schools. I've lived the life Portlanders live, so that makes me uniquely positioned to make decisions that will work for everyday Portlanders.

**Which Portland mayor do you hope to emulate?**

Vera Katz, but without the police brutality. Kinder, gentler policing but with Mayor Katz's urban vision.

**But you said you're an ordinary Portlander. She spent her entire career in politics. Did that help her be a better mayor?**

Vera's leadership style was, "How do we try to get people on the same page, how do we know when there's enough process and when there's not and how do we move from A to B in a way where we can get as many people as possible as happy as possible?" Does political experience help with that? Yes, but so do other kinds of experience.

**Why would your presence on the City Council make a difference?**

It's about the kind of leadership you want, right? Maybe being a person who can run a room of five toddlers is more important than having been treasurer of the state of Oregon when it comes to wrangling how things are going to go down in that building.

I had a child care co-op and a food co-op in my early days when I was trying to survive as a mom. And so I know what it means to try to reach an outcome where everyone is happy even if along the way there were a few disagreements.

**Is there anything you and Ted Wheeler agree on?**

I think we both agree we need more affordable housing.

**Do you think he secretly wants you to win?**

I do not aspire to know what Ted Wheeler secretly wants about anything.

## The Portland Business Journal

# New affordable housing high rise is Portland's largest in 50 years

*By Christina Williams  
November 13, 2019*

**With a party on Thursday, Portland welcomes the largest new affordable housing building to open in the city since 1969.**

The 240-unit Louisa Flowers is welcoming new residents who make 60 percent or less of Portland's median income and are moving into 88 studios, 109 one-bedroom units and 43 two-bedroom apartments on Grand Avenue in the transit-connected Lloyd District.

Though far from meeting Portland's gaping need for affordable housing, the Louisa Flowers, named for the matriarch of the first African-American family to settle in Portland, is a notable addition to the portfolio of the region's housing authority, Home Forward.

"It's a huge deal because it's such a large building," said Julie Livingston, senior project manager for Home Forward and chair of the Portland Design Commission. "It's on a site that was previously vacant and the architects were focused on making a strong, urban building — and they knocked it out of the park."

The building project had an all-women project management team representing O'Neill Construction Group, Walsh Construction Co., LEVER Architecture and LRS Architects.

"We had four female project managers on this job. That's notable and something we take pride in, but it's also becoming more commonplace," said Meghan Herteg, project manager with Walsh Construction Co.

Herteg has been working on the Louisa Flowers project for three years and said she is excited to see it finished and fully integrated with the surrounding neighborhood.

The ground level of the building houses 7,500 square feet of retail space yet to be leased. An internal passageway connects through the ground floor interior, creating a courtyard space that is open to the sky featuring Japanese Maples, a green wall and an impressive 60-foot mural by artist Baba Wague Diakite.

"The courtyard creates a connection from Hassalo to Holladay and it will be open during the day. People can come have lunch in that courtyard," Herteg said. "It really does start to create a sense of place that the residents can own in that area."

On the 12-story building's top level, a community lounge and kitchen offer views of nearby natural landmarks: the west hills and the Willamette River. The building has 126 long-term bike parking spaces in a dedicated basement room, with an additional 240 spaces located within the units. The building is pursuing a LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification for housing and is on track for LEED Gold and stretching toward Platinum.

Originally planned as mixed project with both market-rate and affordable units, Livingston said the finances didn't pencil out — operation and maintenance costs for affordable buildings are more cost effective because of the tax benefits — so Home Forward opted to go for all affordable units.

The Louisa Flowers cost just over \$74 million to build, with \$28.7 million coming from the state through Oregon Housing and Community Services' Low Income Housing Tax Credits, \$21.8 million from Home Forward, and the land plus \$5.1 million in gap funding from the Portland Housing Bureau. A loan and \$500,000 from Multnomah County made up the balance of the project cost.

While the apartments don't feature sleek stainless steel appliances, they do sport an open-plan design, quartz countertops, high-end rubber bathroom flooring and other contemporary finishes. "Everything we select is the best we can afford," Livingston said. "We're looking for durability so we can better manage our operations budget."

The Louisa Flowers comes online as bond money from the City of Portland and Metro regional government is becoming available to further subsidize affordable housing construction. The bond money predates Louisa, which was built using traditional tax credit incentives, but puts it at the front end of a wave of affordable housing construction.

But Livingston said there will not be many more high-rise additions to Portland's affordable housing roster.

"This is an uncommonly large building. Based on when we financed it, the sweet spot for the number of units was really high," Livingston said. "I'm not sure how that's going to play out in the next generation of housing. Construction costs and market rates tend to squeeze projects down into smaller buildings."

Other partners on the Louisa Flowers project include Northwest Infrastructure, DOWL engineering consultants, KPFF Consulting Engineers, Glumac and PLACE landscape architects.

Twenty of the units at Louisa Flowers will be reserved for people fleeing domestic violence. The team managing services for these residents includes the Multnomah County Domestic Violence Coordination Office, the Gateway Center, the YWCA and others.

The original Louisa Flowers arrived in Portland with her family in the 1880s and, with her husband Allen, was one of the first black families to own land in Portland, including a 20-acre farm about 10 blocks from the site of the apartment building that bears her name.

Louisa was a leader in her community, served on the Bethel AME Church deaconess board, was a member of the Rosebud Club, and was a charter member of the Williams Avenue YWCA.

## **OPB**

### **Patriot Prayer, Proud Boys Continue Violence Even As Legal Consequences Mount**

*By Jonathan Levinson  
November 14, 2019*

On a drizzly Portland day this past September, members of Vancouver-based Patriot Prayer gathered at Portland's Pioneer Square for what they called a prayer march.

About 30 of the members were greeted by a handful of counterdemonstrators, a contingent of Satanic Portland Antifascists among them.

Members sporting helmets and video cameras documented the verbal sparring. One Patriot Prayer member told a black counterprotester to “go back to Africa.” The occasional passerby yelled for them to “go back to Washington” or “no one wants you here.”

Patriot Prayer is a far-right group that has attracted racist and violent followers. The group is similar to the more well known Proud Boys, another violent extremist group.

For the past three years, scenes like this have played out nationally as groups have made a habit of holding conservative rallies in mostly liberal cities – Portland, Berkeley, New York and many others.

Law enforcement, meanwhile, has struggled at times to contain violence that can occur at those rallies, and has faced criticism for being friendly with far-right groups. But even as Portland and other police departments have brought more charges against people who engage in street fights, it’s not clear if they alone can quell political violence occurring across the country.

As recently as Sunday, Proud Boys members were videotaped grappling with and punching a person on an overpass in Portland.

Portland in particular has been a leading example of how law enforcement has struggled to grapple with toxic political discourse playing out in the streets. Every few months since 2017, the city has grabbed national attention as far-right groups and counterprotesters throw milkshakes, douse each other with bear spray or engage in street fights.

“I think early on in these events ... there wasn’t necessarily a priority or emphasis on working those cases post protest,” said Lt. Franz Schoening, the commander of the Portland Police Bureau’s Rapid Response Team.

Schoening said in the early protests, cases that arose were assigned to detectives who had a regular case load, so misdemeanor assaults or harassment were low priority when compared with regular cases they worked, like felony assaults or sex crimes. But as the police bureau learned more about the nature of these street clashes, they changed their approach.

“I think it took us a while to realize that these events were ... cumulative,” Schoening said. “If there wasn’t an arrest made or an investigation and arrest done post event, it added fuel to the fire so that the next event was even worse.”

And as those events got worse, law enforcement started to respond to a public demand that street violence be taken seriously. In October 2018, there was something of a turning point in New York. Nearly a dozen Proud Boys assaulted a handful of antifa protesters there, but this time law enforcement took the political violence more serious.

Ten Proud Boys were eventually arrested. Some have received years in prison. At one sentencing hearing, State Supreme Court Judge Mark Dwyer explicitly referenced the unique threat political violence poses to society.

“I know enough about history to know what happened in Europe in the ‘30s when political street brawls were allowed to go ahead without any type of check from the criminal justice system,” Dwyer said.

Oren Segal, director of the Anti-Defamation League’s Center on Extremism, isn’t confident prosecuting extremists will completely stop the violence.

“Is it possible that arrests may mean that less milkshakes may be thrown or fewer Proud Boys will go seek out a fight during an event?” Segal said. “I mean, it’s possible.”

But arrests may not be entirely effective because the clashes aren't a byproduct of the demonstrations, he said. The clashes have become the reason for the demonstrations.

"It's no longer just a pro-Trump rally or a free speech rally," Segal said. "They're now having rallies literally in opposition to those that they know will show up and oppose them."

Schoening said there are other dynamics at play that exacerbate the violence. The groups, on the surface, support the police and say they want to work with them to keep an event safe. But, he said, the dynamic is more complicated than that.

"One group is using the police to stand behind and engage in inflammatory rhetoric knowing that if they don't assault the police, chances are they're gonna provoke the other side into assaulting the police and causing the police to take actions," Schoening said.

That dynamic might explain why, until recently, most of the arrests at Portland demonstrations had been antifa protesters charged with low level offenses.

Provoking counterprotesters also plays well online and helps feed a victimization narrative, according to Segal.

"So when antifa throw stuff at them ... Proud Boys and Patriot Prayer are able to say, 'See, they are trying to silence us and stop our freedom of speech,'" he said.

The camera-toting, Facebook livestreaming far-right agitators at these demonstrations speak to how important social media is for their movement. They feed off the YouTube videos and Facebook likes. Schoening, the Portland police officer, said when their events capture the attention of the national news media — such as when right wing writer Andy Ngo was attacked in Portland — turnout and volatility for the next event can be even higher.

"I think that when the event becomes a spectacle and the media focuses their attention on it, it drives some of the level of the rhetoric we see at those events," he said.

This year, Portland law enforcement followed New York's lead in bringing stronger criminal charges against members of groups like the Proud Boys and Patriot Prayer.

After 2019 May Day demonstrations, Patriot Prayer leader Joey Gibson led his group to a Portland bar, where they engaged in a street fight. It was like many of the fights before it — but this time, prosecutors pursued felony riot charges against Gibson.

Adding to his legal woes, the bar owner filed a \$1 million civil suit against him, and this month an attorney filed another federal civil rights lawsuit against Gibson for his part in a violent 2017 protest at Evergreen College in Washington.

Proud Boy and former Patriot Prayer brawler Tusitala "Tiny" Toese is also facing felony and misdemeanor assault charges for a 2018 attack in Multnomah County.

Despite facing millions of dollars in damages and as much as five years in prison, Gibson said he's undeterred.

"I haven't seen things get harder for me. I have seen more support from people seeing how serious this is," he said. "I'll get like 3,000 extra subscribers the day that I get charged."

Segal said even though more charges are being brought against group members, the rhetoric being used online and in-person at protest events is still divisive and pervasive. It's in our political discussion, on our TVs, in our social media, and in public spaces.

Segal said he places much of the responsibility for ending political violence on our political leaders, not the police.

“I don’t think it’s unreasonable to have that expectation that those who are leading the public discussion model good behavior,” Segal said.

But until then, he said, it’s going to be on law enforcement to hold back the deluge.

## **Portland City Council Hears Concern Over Water Filtration Project Costs, Delays Design Vote**

*By Amelia Templeton  
November 13, 2019*

The Portland City council heard public testimony Wednesday on a \$50 million contract for design and engineering work on a proposed filtration plant to treat the city’s drinking water.

It’s the next major step in the decades-long project to build the plant, and the council’s first opportunity since the water bureau revealed in September that the cost estimate for the project had ballooned – from \$500 million to \$850 million or more.

Commissioner Amanda Fritz urged her colleagues to approve the contract and keep the project on schedule, while critics argued the council should put the brakes on the process and reconsider whether filtration remains the best option to treat the city’s water for a microscopic parasite, cryptosporidium.

“We’re all in a very difficult place. Both the neighbors and the city and the ratepayers, as to the expense of this project,” said Commissioner Fritz, who oversees the water bureau.

“We have to do it, and we have to do it on a certain timeline.”

Since 2017, testing has repeatedly detected very small amounts of cryptosporidium in the Bull Run watershed, which provides drinking water to nearly 1 million Oregonians.

There is no indication the parasite is making people sick, but the EPA stringently regulates all cryptosporidium because of the risk it can pose, particularly to people with weakened immune systems. The city committed to building a filtration facility on an aggressive 10 year timeline after the EPA and the Oregon Health Authority revoked a deal that had previously allowed the city to provide minimally treated drinking water.

In a brief presentation, water bureau Director Mike Stuhr apologized for underestimating the cost of a filtration system, and said it was the result of quickly developing an estimate for the council in response to the detection of cryptosporidium in 2017.

“Of all the numbers I’ve regretted for 16 years of sitting at this table, I regret that \$500 million number. It was the best we had at the time,” Stuhr said.

A dozen community members urged the council to reconsider the plant and delay approving the design contract.

Opponents wore blue t-shirts that read “nursery plants, not industrial plants.” Many are neighbors of the 95 acre parcel on rural Carpenter Lane, east of Gresham, where the water bureau plans to locate the filtration plant.

They characterized it as an “unaffordable mega-trophy plant,” and noted that other cities, like San Francisco, Seattle, and New York – have pursued a different technology, ultraviolet light treatment, to comply with the EPA’s regulations of cryptosporidium in their drinking water systems.

Lauren Courter, who lives on a blueberry farm next to the site, said she and her neighbors are boycotting the water bureau's efforts to craft a good neighbor agreement.

"The Portland Water Bureau never once consulted with our community or evaluated the negative impacts to our neighbors or the agricultural community," Courter told the city council.

"Please delay your decision. Take a two-to-three month hiatus and ask, can we do this quicker and cheaper?"

Staff for the water bureau noted that the city had purchased the land in 1975 and set it aside in case the city needed to build a filtration facility.

"It allows us to continue that elegant design of a gravity fed system into town," said Gabriel Solmner, the Deputy Director of the water bureau.

Dr. Paul Lewis, the Public Health Officer for Multnomah County, also spoke in favor of the filtration approach, arguing it would reduce disinfection byproducts in the water and guard against other health risks like toxic algae blooms, along with protecting the population from exposure to cryptosporidium.

"I, and the county, do continue to support this strongly support it from the health standpoint," Dr. Lewis said.

In response to the testimony, Commissioner Amanda Fritz said the council is not planning to reconsider its vote last year to pursue a filtration plant.

"We're not revisiting the decision of filtration versus ultraviolet. We have to keep moving on this," she said.

But other members of the council signaled that they have questions with the project and the bureau's aggressive attempts to keep it on schedule.

Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty said she had concerns about the project, and the bureau's self-described "low confidence" estimate of the cost.

"I feel like this is way too much money for us to spend without us knowing clearly whether or not we get what we're getting paid for," Hardesty said.

"If the water bureau wants my support, they need to come and sit down and talk to me, and they need to explain what all our options are. If they don't want my support, they can just keep doing what they're doing."

The council agreed to continue the debate until next week, and postpone voting on the design contract for at least another week.

The \$850 million to \$1.25 billion version of the plant staff is recommending to the council includes several features the bureau says will improve water quality and the water system's resilience. It combines water filtration with treatment with ozone, a common disinfectant, and has two main conduits running in and out of the plant.

The bureau has selected Stantec Consulting for design and engineering work on the filtration plant. It's a national firm that's worked on water treatment plants in Tacoma and Grants Pass.

The \$51 million contract would last five years and does not include design work on the new pipelines the bureau will need to connect the plant to its main conduits.