

## The Oregonian

# Lime teams with disability groups, Portland to raise awareness of risks of scooting on sidewalks

*By Andrew Theen  
December 3, 2019*

A new public service announcement has a message for scooter riders: Stop making life more difficult for people with disabilities.

One of the world's largest electric scooter companies has teamed with two Pacific Northwest disability rights groups and the city of Portland to raise awareness about the dangers of riding scooters on sidewalks and illegally parking the mobility devices in places that pose a hazard to people with disabilities.

The groups released the video Tuesday, which is the United Nations' International Day of Disabled Persons.

Lime reached out to Rooted in Rights, a video production team based at the nonprofit advocacy group Disability Rights Washington, to produce and edit the video. The scooter giant also contacted a disability rights group in Oregon and the Portland Bureau of Transportation to write, cast and produce the video.

Jonathan Hopkins, Lime's director of strategic development for the Pacific Northwest, said the company hasn't done something like this before. The company has heard "general concern" from the city about the issue, so it "saw the opportunity to do something meaningful here," he said in an email.

Since the on-demand rentable scooters arrived in Portland last year, the top complaints from the public have centered on illegal riders on sidewalks and people not wearing helmets. Since April, the city has issued more than 700 penalties and fines for about that type of behavior.

The video includes real people with disabilities who describe what it's like, in specific real-life instances- to compete with e-scooters for space on Portland's sidewalks. A woman with vision issues said when scooter users park their devices around blind corners, that can make it tricky for people who use those corners as a navigation tool due to their vision issues.

The video is produced so folks with vision or hearing issues can absorb the content. It includes a person using sign language throughout, closed captioning and a person describing what is happening on scene in between narration.

One woman, identified as Johnnie, said scooter riders need to know one essential fact: "The number one thing an older person does not want to do is fall," she said, "so when you come through at a fast pace, that causes us to stumble and if you're on a cane like I am, that's not a good thing."

Last January, a group of disability rights advocates laid their concerns out in great detail to Lime representatives as well as officials from other companies.

Disability Rights Oregon, which partnered with the city on the video, also previously expressed issues with how the city is handling complaints during its ongoing one year trial run.

Dylan Rivera, a city transportation spokesman, said the video is an important way to boost public education about the practical risks of riding on sidewalks.

“We think this video will be one really compelling way to do that,” he said.

Lime said it plans to distribute the video online to all of its markets.

[Here's the video.](#)

## **Portland residents had 3 days to leave city-owned apartment complex with a failing roof**

*By Everton Bailey Jr.*

*December 2, 2019*

Residents from 22 units in a city-owned apartment complex were forced to leave their homes a day before Thanksgiving because of a deteriorating roof.

And authorities say it could be a year before they're allowed back.

Residents on the top floor of Southwest Portland's Headwaters Apartments had three days' notice to be out of their homes because building officials weren't sure the roof could withstand potential snowfall. The four-story, 100-unit complex – built in 2007 for \$14.7 million -- needs a new roof. City officials knew of problems with the roof since the summer.

The complex's website touts that the building on Southwest 30th Avenue provides green and sustainable apartment living.

The city provided staff to help people pack and will cover hotel and Airbnb stays and storage fees, said Martha Calhoun, a Portland Housing Bureau spokesperson. She said the city is also helping tenants find more permanent housing and aims to have them all placed by January.

The city will pay relocation fees for tenants planning to move back to the Headwaters Apartments, she said, once the top floor is deemed inhabitable again.

Calhoun said she didn't know the specific damage to the roof or how it occurred. The full extent of the damage likely won't be known until the interior of the roof is examined in the coming weeks, she said.

“For a building of this age to have this problem, it's unprecedented,” Calhoun said. “It's pretty uncommon as far as any of us know.”

Calhoun couldn't say how much has been spent thus far in relocating residents. Tenants on the remaining three floors haven't been required to move. They have been notified of the roof issues, she said, but they're not in any apparent danger.

The apartments target tenants who earn between 80% and 100% of the area's median income, Calhoun said. According to federal data, that range for a Portland-area four-person household in 2019 would be from \$70,320 to \$87,900.

“We recognize this is not ideal, but we're working closely with all affected residents to make sure they're not figuring this out alone, especially during the holidays,” Calhoun said.

Mayor Ted Wheeler, who oversees the Housing Bureau, said in a statement that the city is “making sure that this transition runs as smoothly and as quickly as possible.”

The housing bureau first learned of the roof damage during a routine inspection in August, Calhoun said. The city hired structural engineers to examine the issues and housing bureau officials were told Nov. 21 that the roof would need to be replaced.

Fourth-floor tenants were notified Nov. 24 that they would be moved to temporary housing by Nov. 27.

“We are very sorry that this is happening to you and that it has to happen so quickly,” a letter to fourth-floor Headwaters residents said. “The process to replace the roof is estimated to take nine to eleven months. This may seem like a long time, but we cannot complete this work until after the rainy season is over.”

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **There butt for the grace of receptacles...**

*By Jim Redden  
December 03, 2019*

Local businesses launch initiative to educate Pearl District business owners, residents, and visitors on cigarette bin locations, use, and disposal.

On a brisk November morning, David Mitchell and John Wertzler are doing their part to stop the spread of one of the greatest environmental threats in Portland — cigarette butts.

No, seriously.

Cigarette butts are nonbiodegradable and loaded with toxic chemicals generated during smoking. They include nicotine and heavy metals. Up to an estimated 6 trillion cigarettes are smoked around the world every year and two-thirds of them are discarded into the environment, where they threaten people and wildlife.

"Cigarette butts don't break down easily and are toxic for years," said Mitchell, standing next to The Armory Theater at Northwest Davis Street and 11th Avenue.

So together with Wertzler, Mitchell attached a small metal box to a Portland Bureau of Transportation sign post. It was a receptacle for butts from TerraCycle, a New Jersey-based company that recycles them into safe consumer products, such as plastic pallets and flower pots. The ash and tobacco are separated out and composted in a specialized process.

Mitchell and Wertzler are volunteer members of the Pearl District Neighborhood Association, which has launched an initiative to install 105 of the boxes throughout the district. Association volunteers will empty them out and ship the contents to the company, ensuring the discarded butts will never harm the environment.

The visible sides of the 18-by-4-by-4-inch box are covered with bright red decals announcing its purpose. After the installation, Wertzler christened it with a few butts picked up from the sidewalk.

Mitchell, the program leader and former chairman of the neighborhood association's Livability and Safety Committee, first began pursuing the project three years ago. A nonsmoker, he was increasingly appalled by the butts he saw piling up on streets and sidewalks throughout the district where he lives and wanted to do something about it.

Researching the issue, he discovered that other cities already were working with TerraCycle. Pittsburgh has installed 200 of the receptacles and is shipping 150 pounds of butts to the company every week, said Mitchell, a retired health care consultant.

Launching the program involved more work, including contacting several city bureaus to figure out with whom to partner. The neighborhood association raised \$5,500 to buy the first 60 boxes and mounting hardware. Contributors include neighborhood association donors, the R2C Group, Judie Dunken Real Estate, and the Northwest Neighborhoods Parks and Recreation Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation.

The installations started a few weeks ago and will be completed soon. If all goes well, fundraising will begin for the remaining 45 boxes. Donors will have the opportunity to have their names on box decals.

The 60 tamperproof and fire-resistant boxes are being installed in targeted locations that have a high concentration of cigarette butts, including entrances to apartment buildings, office buildings and bars.

Mitchell personally walked the streets over the past three years to identify the locations, which he has marked on a map of the district. In one location, Mitchell and his wife collected 1,500 discarded butts in one hour.

"It's very labor intensive to pick up cigarette butts. It's much harder than other litter," Mitchell said.

The boxes will be emptied regularly by volunteers with the neighborhood association's Clean Streets program, which was formed to pick up litter in the district six months ago because of concerns about livability.

Boxes in one part of the district will be emptied by employees of Clean and Safe, a program affiliated with the Portland Business Association that helps clean up downtown streets.

Other project partners include the R2C Group, an advertising firm in the district that has sponsored 10 boxes and is developing a donated public awareness campaign that will stress the environmental hazards of cigarette butts. It will include posters and targeted social media advertising.

"R2C Group fully supports PDNA's efforts to remove toxic cigarette butts from our streets and our parks. We're eager to utilize our advertising expertise to communicate the benefits of this program, illustrate where to find the disposal bins, and how to use them," said Michelle Cardinal, CEO and co-founder of R2C Group.

Another partner is Central City Concern, a nonprofit social service agency, which operates residential drug and alcohol treatment programs in the district where clients frequently smoke on the sidewalks.

The program is the most recent of several efforts to better clean up the city. Mayor Ted Wheeler proclaimed Portland should be "the cleanest and most livable city in the United States" in September 2018. He subsequently announced the "Keep it Pretty, Rose City" program that includes the purchase and installation of large-capacity garbage cans throughout town that are emptied more frequently than before.

Mitchell applauds the new cans, but says smokers know not to throw their butts into them.

"I've talked to many smokers during the course of researching this, and they know they're a fire hazard," Mitchell said.

Wheeler has endorsed the butts project, and so has Commissioner Nick Fish.

Other cities already working with TerraCycle include Seattle, St. Louis, New Orleans, and Vancouver, British Columbia. Mitchell said he hopes other neighborhoods in Portland will be inspired to launch similar programs.

"Cigarette butts are a problem everywhere," Mitchell said.

## **Putting South Portland on the map**

*By Bill Gallagher  
December 02, 2019*

Getting ready for an address change with the Sixth Sextant as leading zeroes get dropped

It's a change that's been in the works so long you'll be forgiven if you forgot that thousands of people who now live in Southwest Portland will begin a mass migration to South Portland in about six months.

Not physically, of course. There won't be caravans of migrants on Barbur Boulevard. But eventually these resettled people will have to decide if they're okay with saying they live in South Portland, rather than Southwest Portland.

Because that's what their official address will be. If you live on Southwest Corbett Avenue now, get ready to shorten that address to South Corbett Avenue (or S. Corbett Ave.) beginning in May, 2020.

Two major institutions are affected. Oregon Health & Science University South Waterfront outpost will be at 3301 S. Bond Ave. rather than Southwest Bond Avenue. Lewis and Clark College will no longer be found at 0615 S.W. Palantine Road, but at 615 S. Palantine Road.

Not only is Lewis and Clark losing its southwest designation, it's also losing its "leading zero." In June of 2018 the Portland City Council approved this plan to clear up confusion caused by the thousands of addresses between Southwest Naito Parkway/Southwest Barbur Boulevard and the Willamette River that begin with a zero. Emergency dispatchers and delivery services had been complaining to the city for years.

In doing so, the Council created a new section of Portland. Since 1931, the city has been divided into five "quadrants": Southwest, Southeast, Northwest, Northeast and North Portland. Back then there were so few people living in what is now officially South Portland that it got lumped in with Southwest Portland. The South area is now also known as the Sixth Sextant.

The first visible sign of the change you'll see is when new street signs start going up in May. The Portland Bureau of Transportation is having 867 new signs made to be installed at 318 intersections. The old signs won't be removed for another five years.

The U.S. Postal Service will continue to deliver envelopes and packages addressed using either the old or new directional system.

As for new digital mapping technologies, PBOT says Geographical Information Systems used in mapping apps are being updated along with the Portland address database.

For a full, official explanation of what's called the South Portland Addressing Project and to see if your address will change see [www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/673632](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/673632)

# Lacking permit, Free Hot Soup meals persist in Director Park

*By Zane Sparling  
December 02, 2019*

## **Oregon Justice Resource Center, volunteers sue Portland Parks & Recreation over new Social Service Permit policy.**

A new lawsuit claims Portland Parks & Recreation created unconstitutional restrictions for the volunteers who routinely gather in a city square to distribute free food to the homeless.

Parks & Rec, however, is in no rush to begin enforcing its Social Service Permit, which plaintiffs say they were told would start on Sunday, Dec. 1.

Free Hot Soup convened at Director Park, 815 S.W. Park Ave., for the first time since then on Dec. 2. At the downtown scene: a dozen helping hands, mouthfuls of turkey, pasta salad, veggies, chicken noodle soup and pie — and about 150 hungry eaters. No permit, no problem.

"We can't cook for ourselves, you know," said one participant, a man who declined to give his real name, saying he was recently incarcerated and is now trying to get a tent. "It's a blessing."

Standing farther down in the line for food was David Bailey, who experienced homelessness for six years. He now lives in public housing, but has no income due to his medical issues. Walking with a cane, he can't always make it to the Portland Rescue Mission, where the cafeteria is cramped and the food, he says, isn't as tasty.

"Why can't we have our soup?" he asked. "It's just a policy of prejudice."

Founded about five years ago, Free Hot Soup isn't a registered charity or formal government program. A core group of roughly 150 volunteers coordinate the meals through a Facebook group that has 2,200 members. There is no set menu, but volunteers bring their own food and rely on donations from local businesses.

Organizers say they were shocked to learn that a new Parks & Rec policy would require them to obtain food handler licenses and pricey event insurance in order to operate.

On Nov. 29, nonprofit law firm Oregon Justice Resource Center filed an 11-page lawsuit in Multnomah County Court, asking a judge to block the rules on the grounds that they're an unconstitutional breach of the volunteers' First Amendment right to freely assemble.

It's also alleged to be an unconstitutional breach of the 14th Amendment's equal protection clause.

"It's very apparent they're only targeting the people who serve in Director Park," said Jo Foraker, a gleaner for Help 4 Houseless, and one of the 12 plaintiffs against the city. "They're trying to cover their butts."

The chief of staff for Commissioner Nick Fish, who oversees the Parks Bureau, declined to comment, saying their office learned about the suit on social media. A spokeswoman for the parks bureau says the permit rule actually went into effect in October, but for now the emphasis remains on "education and outreach rather than enforcement."

"The City and organizations who use our parks have a shared responsibility," said the spokeswoman, Nicola Sysyn. "We are both accountable for the health and safety of our

community's shared spaces, and we ask all those who use our parks to help make sure they are taken care of for the Portlanders who treasure them."

Court records indicate the suit has been filed but has not yet been served to defendants, including Fish and Parks Director Adena Long.

City Hall has argued the permits will ensure accountability and that everyone follows the same rules, but Free Hot Soup suspects the owners of swanky nearby businesses tipped the scales. Documents uncovered by Willamette Week pointed a finger at Travel Portland, whose employees reported feeling unsafe while working at the Visitor Center in Director Park.

In a written response to the Tribune, the nonprofit tourism agency said its complaints were directed at "bad street behavior" committed by a few people, and were not aimed at Free Hot Soup.

"Generally speaking, Travel Portland supports organizations that give help where it is needed in a safe manner that follows established protocols," said Jeff Miller, Travel Portland's president and CEO. "We have no comment on the new permitting system, but believe the city strives to create a fair system that is easy to navigate while organizing these types of outreach."

Plaintiff Austin Bennington says most of Travel Portland's problems occurred in the morning, not during the 6 p.m. meals provided each weeknight.

For him, serving the hungry is an unalloyed public good.

"It makes a difference," said Bennington. "You can tell that what you're doing is helping somebody, and that's not always easy to find."

## **OPB**

### **Despite HUD Visit, Wapato Jail's Future Still Unclear**

*By Rebecca Ellis  
December 3, 2019*

The fate of North Portland's never-used Wapato Jail remains up in the air after owner Jordan Schnitzer's latest round of tours Monday afternoon.

One thing's confirmed, though: The facility will not be turning into a HUD-run homeless shelter anytime soon.

For a brief period, it seemed a Trump cabinet member might spare Wapato the fate of bulldozers. Emails obtained by Willamette Week showed Schnitzer told local officials last week that Ben Carson, the U.S. secretary for Housing and Urban Development, had expressed interest in using the facility as a "pilot project for homeless," and had invited HUD's regional administrator on a tour.

Jeffrey McMorris, HUD's regional administrator for Oregon, Alaska, Idaho and Washington, attended Monday's tour, along with what he estimated were 150 other supporters of Schnitzer's vision to convert the long-vacant jail into a homeless shelter. OPB was not among the visitors as the tour was closed to the media.

McMorris said the purpose of his visit was not to suss out the viability of a pilot project at the behest of Carson.

“To me, a pilot project means we have something we’re looking to put there,” he said. “And that’s just not the way HUD works.”

In a typical year, HUD awards about \$25 million to the Portland and Multnomah County. But the agency leaves most decisions on how to use those taxpayer dollars to continuums of care – local bodies that coordinate federal funding for homeless individuals. McMorris said HUD administrators usually listen to local preferences.

McMorris said he accepted Schnitzer’s invitation to tour Wapato to get a sense of the place should local groups decide to channel funding toward the facility.

“It was worthwhile for us to actually see it and have more awareness of what it is, where it is and how different providers might be able to use it,” he said.

But he said HUD will be making no next steps toward converting Wapato unless the will is there on the local level.

“If the local community sees the vision, I think that’s fine,” he said. “But it’s really not our place to make that call.”

It’s not clear Wapato would be the priority for Portland-area groups that serve people experiencing homelessness. Many advocates have joined city and county leaders in expressing reluctance to place homeless men or women in adapted jail cells 11 miles from Portland’s downtown core.

When Schnitzer announced in October that he planned to demolish the facility unless he could find funding right away, Multnomah County leaders said they were pleased Schnitzer had “reached the conclusion that he can’t afford to warehouse people in this remote jail.” It was obvious, they wrote, that Wapato was “the wrong building in the wrong place.”