

## The Oregonian

# Portland loses another e-scooter option as Shared pulls its vehicles from city streets

*By Andrew Theen  
February 19, 2020*

Portland's e-scooter fleet became a little less funky, and comfy, last week.

Shared, the Tacoma-based startup that had 200 bright white and red seated scooters available to rent throughout Portland, abruptly shut down.

The company notified Portland transportation officials via email Saturday. It was not operating in any other city.

Shared's devices were outliers in the still evolving on-demand electric scooter industry. The scooters weighed 80 pounds and used 12-inch-diameter tires that were 8 inches wide. City officials said they expected the company to remove the scooters from sidewalks and streets as soon as possible.

"I wanted to reach out today and thank you for the opportunity for Shared to operate in Portland until now," Braydon Butungbacal, the company's CEO said in an email Saturday.

"Unfortunately, we'll be closing up our Portland operations at this point due to extreme difficulty in further fundraising to support the venture to continue to grow it."

"It's been an enjoyable journey that we're sad to see end, but a meaningful one," he wrote.

Butungbacal did not respond to a request for comment.

Shared's departure follows on the heels of Bolt's decision in December to leave Portland.

That leaves some 2,665 permitted scooters in town as of this month, with industry giants like Lime, Spin and Bird remaining. Razor scooters, which are also seated devices, still has a fleet in town.

Portland extended the lengthy e-scooter "pilot" program through the end of 2020.

Dylan Rivera, a Portland transportation spokesman, said the city was sad to see Shared go "particularly since their seated scooter with larger tires appeared to make the vehicle more appealing and more useful for more people."

"Additionally, we believe the size of their scooter also generally made sidewalk riding less of an issue," Rivera said in an email.

He added that the city expected to see some companies come and go, given the "market volatility" in the still-changing e-scooter industry.

Portland first allowed e-scooters to operate on city streets in 2018.

Rivera said the city assumes the company will promptly remove scooters from town. As of Tuesday morning, this reporter saw a vehicle still on the sidewalk in the Rose Quarter area. "We are working on establishing a date for them to be required to remove them before it becomes a regulatory issue," Rivera explained.

# Portland Parks Bureau allowed retired golf director to make an extra \$26,000, go unsupervised, auditor says

*By Everton Bailey Jr.*

*February 19, 2020*

Portland didn't supervise the former director of its municipal golf courses when he was allowed to continue working after he retired, and it paid him nearly \$26,000 for hours he wasn't authorized to work, an investigation found.

The City Auditor's Office announced Wednesday that evidence showed John Zoller set his own hours, never had his timesheets approved by a manager despite it being required, worked from home when he wasn't supposed to and sent more than 100 emails from his city-issued account responding to vendors on Craigslist. All of those emails were unrelated to city business.

A call to the Auditor's Office's fraud hotline last September prompted the investigation. The lead auditor was Gordon Friedman, who formerly worked as a reporter for The Oregonian/OregonLive.

[\[Read the investigation report\]](#)

Portland Parks and Recreation spokesperson Mark Ross, whose bureau oversees the city's five golf courses, said the department plans to implement some of the Auditor's Office's recommendations. Managers will be retrained on their responsibilities and the agency will review its policies regarding working from home. He said the bureau has followed the city's administrative rules on employing retirees.

The Auditor's Office said the bureau didn't agree with recommendations that Parks Bureau Director Adena Long needed to be the only person who could approve retirees to keep working and formally document their employment in personnel files and on organizational charts.

Ross said city rules allow Long or someone she designates to hire retirees and that will continue. He said the bureau also doesn't plan to list all its non-permanent hires such as retirees and seasonal workers on an organizational chart "due to the large and fluctuating numbers." He said the Parks Bureau workforce reaches more than 3,000 positions at its peak.

"Portland Parks & Recreation and its golf program are grounded in deep and longstanding community relationships, and we appreciate this anomaly being brought to the city's attention," Ross said.

Zoller worked for the city for more than 30 years before he retired in July 2018 as Portland's golf director, city records show. The auditor's office said he was allowed to continue working within Portland Parks and Recreation for one day a week until that December. But his position was extended until July 2019 "without justification."

He was paid around \$93,000 in 2018, which included his base pay of almost \$68,000 for the first seven months of the year, city records show.

Zoller's agreement with the city bureau was that he would keep working one day a week to ease the transition of current director Vincent Johnson, the auditor's office said. Johnson had been the assistant director of golf since 2016 and began his duties as director in September 2018, city records show.

The lack of oversight led to the city paying Zoller double what he was owed, according to the Auditor's Office.

A city audit in 2019 found Portland's publicly-run golf courses needed a \$800,000 bailout from the city's general fund to stay solvent in 2017. It also found that many of the factors that led to the funding shortfall remained in place. The five courses cost \$9.6 million to run in 2018 and were supposed to generate at least that much in revenue from players, the audit said.

## **City takes legal action to bar police union from using ex-Portland human resources manager for contract talks**

*By Maxine Bernstein  
February 19, 2020*

Contract talks have broken down almost before they had a chance to start between the city of Portland and the police union in a dispute over who's sitting at the negotiation table.

A city attorney late Wednesday took legal action to bar Anna Kanwit, Portland's former human resources manager, from continuing in her role on the union's bargaining team.

Kanwit retired in November 2017 and was closely involved in most aspects of the city's prior negotiations with the police union. The Portland Police Association hired her to serve as a union "consultant and negotiator." She has her own business called Constructive Solutions LLC.

The union earlier Wednesday filed an unfair labor practice complaint against the city with the state Employment Relations Board.

"After only a short bargaining session, the City has already broken its promise to bargain in good faith," union president Officer Daryl Turner wrote in a statement to union members. "What the City is up to is clear: The City wants to bully a member of the PPA's bargaining team out of the way. I believe the City fears the PPA. I also believe the City is scared of Ms. Kanwit. Or, perhaps the City is scared to live up to its words."

The union complaint argues that the city has no right to decide who can be on the union's bargaining team.

Portland's Chief Deputy City Attorney Heidi Brown contacted Kanwit last Friday and informed her that the city objected to her work on behalf of the union and likely would take some type of legal action if she didn't withdraw, the complaint says. Brown contacted Kanwit a second time on Tuesday, the complaint says.

The city is seeking an immediate injunction in Multnomah County Circuit Court, alleging Kanwit has breached an agreement with the city that she wouldn't disclose confidential or sensitive information, even after she left her city job.

The city has asked a judge to prevent Kanwit from "advising, consulting with, negotiating on behalf of, and providing any other kinds of assistance or work" for the police union, Deputy City Attorney Fallon H. Niedrist wrote.

The city is concerned that Kanwit has used and disclosed information to union members and their lawyer in violation of state law, a city rule and contractual nondisclosure provisions.

The city cites a state law that says a public official can't use or benefit financially from business obtained as a result of their official position or office.

The court filing references a city document Kanwit signed in October 2011 called a "Records Security Form," which says that "even after termination of my employment," she's not to

disclose to anyone any confidential or sensitive information, documents or material of any kind obtained through her city job, without the authorization of the city's human resources director.

City lawyers argue that Kanwit's experience bargaining for the city in the past "would be indispensable" to the union "to gain bargaining advantage over the City," according to their court filing.

The union said in its complaint, "The City's assertions are baseless." The city hasn't identified what sensitive city information Kanwit possesses or has disclosed to assist in the union's negotiations, according to the union.

The two sides met for the first bargaining session on Feb. 7 to set ground rules for the talks. Kanwit sat beside Turner at the union's bargaining table.

The union complaint demands the city cease interfering with the makeup of the union's bargaining team and face a civil penalty or fine of \$1,000 for each violation.

While Kanwit sat with the police union, Robert King, former president of the Portland Police Association, also attended the talks, sitting in the public section and in the city caucuses as the public safety policy adviser to Mayor Ted Wheeler.

In 2017, the city of Portland agreed to pay Kanwit \$195,000 to step down as head of the Bureau of Human Resources after 5 1/2 years in the post. Wheeler moved to replace her with the Human Resources Bureau's assistant director, Serilda Summers-McGee.

The city hired labor lawyer Steven Schuback to serve as its lead negotiator with the Portland Police Association. Schuback is a former Multnomah County prosecutor who entered labor law in 2002 and is currently a lawyer with the management labor and employment law firm Peck Rubanoff Hatfield in Lake Oswego.

The two sides are set to meet for their second bargaining session from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Feb. 24 in the Portland Building's Room 108. The city-hosted session is open to the public.

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Metro postpones homeless services measure vote**

*By Jim Redden*

*February 19, 2020*

**At issue: Last-minute confusion over how much a tax measure heading to the May 19 primary election would raise.**

The Metro Council will postpone voting to refer a homeless services funding measure until next week, following last-minute confusion over how much money its current proposal would raise.

The council had been scheduled to refer the measure to the May 19 primary election ballot during its weekly meeting on Thursday, Feb. 20. But on Wednesday afternoon, the elected regional government pulled the item from the agenda.

During a Tuesday work session, the council was told it would raise \$175 million per year. But after the session, the council learned it would raise only \$135 million per year.

As a result, the council will consider discussing the proposal with supporters and will take it up again next Tuesday or Thursday, according to Metro spokesman Nick Christensen.

The HereTogether advocacy organization has requested a measure to raise up to \$300 million per year for a variety of homeless services, including rent subsidies and social services, such as addiction and mental health treatment to help keep the chronically homeless housed.

Metro has been considering a 1% tax on the personal incomes of individuals earning above \$125,000 per year, and couples earning more than \$250,000 per year. The council was told that would raise \$175 million per year at the Tuesday's work session, which would be well short of HereTogether's \$300 million goal.

That figure was dropped even further to \$135 million per year after the session.

Metro President Lynn Peterson blamed miscommunication by staff working on the measure for the problem. She promised to keep working with the HereTogether coalition on the measure.

"The Metro Council is clear they are dedicated to addressing our region's homelessness crisis. A miscommunication led to an inaccurate estimate of what a regional income tax on high earners would raise," Peterson said Tuesday night. "The goal remains the same: To provide supportive housing services for every person experiencing chronic homelessness in our region, and help as many people as possible who are on the brink of homelessness around greater Portland."

The Portland Business Alliance opposes the income tax but has proposed a payroll tax that could raise \$250 million or more per year for homeless services.

Metro councilors have, so far, dismissed that idea.

## **Willamette Week**

### **Another E-Scooter Company Has Dropped Out of Portland's Pilot Program**

*By Shannon Gormley  
February 19, 2020*

**Shared will soon removed its seated scooters from Portland streets.**

Those clunky, red-and-white, sit-down scooters are about to disappear from Portland streets.

On Saturday, e-scooter company Shared notified city officials that it will no longer participate in Portland's pilot program, The Oregonian first reported. That leaves Bird, Lime, Spin and Razor, which also makes seated devices, in the program.

In an email, Shared CEO Braydon Butungbacal wrote that the Tacoma start-up is pulling its scooter from Portland's streets "due to extreme difficulty in further fundraising to support the venture to continue to grow it."

Portland is the first and only city where Shared launched scooters. The company joined Portland's second e-scooter pilot program last June, deploying a fleet of 200 seated scooters.

In December, Portland Bureau of Transportation extended its e-scooter pilot to the end of 2020, and Florida-based company Bolt suddenly pulled its scooters from the program.

Due to criticisms of the first pilot program in 2018, PBOT required companies participating in the second round to outline equity and safety plans. Shared's scooters, with their chunk wheels, front suspension and cushioned seats, promised accessibility to a wider ranger of riders.

Without Shared and Bolt out of the picture, Portland still has over more than two thousand e-scooters on its streets, most of which belong to industry giants.

## **Two of Portland's Eight Traffic Fatalities in 2020 Appear to be People Who Were Sleeping on the Sidewalk**

*By Tess Riski  
February 19, 2020*

**So far, 2020 is on pace to match last year's 50 traffic fatalities.**

Portland's wave of traffic deaths has continued into the new year, with eight people killed by cars since Jan. 1. That's on pace to match last year's 50 traffic fatalities—and includes a bleak new factor.

Twice this year, Portland drivers struck people apparently sleeping on sidewalks.

The first death was Jan. 24, when a man near Montavilla backed out of his driveway and unintentionally ran over a woman sleeping on the sidewalk.

On Feb. 14, a truck pulled into the parking lot of a Sellwood-Moreland convenience store and ran over a man lying on the sidewalk. Police tell WW they have "reason to believe he may have slept outside at times."

No arrests were made in either incident.

Portland has spent more than \$100 million on a plan called Vision Zero aimed at eliminating traffic deaths on city streets. It hasn't worked yet. Meanwhile, regional government Metro is considering a measure that would tax the wealthiest Portlanders to fund homeless services.

## **OPB**

## **Metro Council Delays Referring Homeless Service Measure To Ballot Amid Revenue Confusion**

*By Rebecca Ellis  
February 19, 2020*

The Portland area regional government, Metro, has delayed referring a homeless service measure to the May ballot after estimates came to light showing the measure would bring in \$135 million — about half what advocates were hoping for.

Last month, HereTogether Oregon, a coalition pushing for a regional response to the homelessness crisis, asked Metro to refer a ballot measure that would bring in between \$250 million to \$300 million a year for services targeting chronic homelessness, such as mental health support, addiction services and rental assistance.

The vote to refer the measure to the ballot was originally scheduled for Thursday, but Metro is struggling to decide what kind of taxing mechanism should accompany it. The favored approach is a 1% tax on high-income earners — individuals earning more than \$125,000 or couples making more than \$250,000.

At a work session Tuesday, Metro council heard for the first time how much that mechanism was likely to raise: \$175 million. The council was later told that number was \$40 million off. The measure under consideration would actually bring in \$135 million, according to staff. The mistake was first reported by Willamette Week.

Metro spokesperson Nick Christensen said the mistake was based on council staff misunderstanding a conversation with consulting firm ECONorthwest, which is helping crunch numbers for Metro.

The council says they now need more time to reconsider what kind of tax to propose — and has delayed a vote on whether to refer the measure to the ballot.

“A miscommunication led to an inaccurate estimate of what a regional income tax on high earners would raise,” Metro Council President Lynn Peterson wrote in a statement. “I want to apologize to the coalition for the confusion and look forward to following up and getting it right.”

In a report, ECONorthwest put a price tag on how much it would cost for the region to address chronic homelessness “at a scale unmatched by other communities along the West.” The report, which draws on past studies from Portland State University and the Corporation for Supportive Housing, says the measure would need to generate between \$69 million and \$119 million to provide supportive housing units to all who need them in the tricity area. Providing preventative services for the households most at risk of losing their housing — 17,500 households by the report’s count — would cost almost \$300 million annually.