

NW Examiner



Digging Deep ... Shining a light

INSIDE



p. 3
Remote workers
win, city loses



p. 10
Native sons
return



p. 13
A man ahead
of his time

FEBRUARY 2026 / VOLUME 39, NO. 6 **FREE** SERVING PORTLAND'S NORTHWEST NEIGHBORHOODS SINCE 1986 [f nwexaminer](#)

Olivia Clark has had enough of Peacock

City Council's new vice president no longer holding her tongue

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

District 4 City Councilor Olivia Clark consumes less speaking time at City Council meetings than any of her 11 colleagues. That may be changing

"Don't know if you've noticed," she told the NW Examiner in her first interview as council vice president, "but lately, I think I've been speaking up more. I just hadn't felt the need."

And now she does. She did not stifle her opinion of the council's Peacock caucus, which she thinks has to go.

In our conversation, which has been edited for clarity and brevity, Clark also shared her thoughts on Mayor Keith Wilson's homeless plan, the Northrup Street Shelter rollout, policing and more.

Did you know what you were getting into?

Not exactly. I came out of retirement to run because I really thought we needed people who had experience at different levels of government or in the private sector.

A big surprise was resistance to setting priorities. I was surprised that people who got elected came in with a pretty angry attitude about the mayor, about the administration, about city government, about

Continued on page 6

While speaking less than any other member of the Portland City Council in her first year, Olivia Clark has been listening ... and forming some strong opinions. Photo by Walden Kirsch



Al Solheim looks over the latest artwork by Pippa Arend, who has rented a Pearl studio from Solheim since 2022. Photo by Walden Kirsch

The Pearl according to Father Al

Developer Al Solheim remains optimistic about the district's future

BY ERIN HOOVER BARNETT

A huge framed photograph in Al Solheim's office reminds him of where it started: In black and white, the camera captured the view down Northwest 13th at Hoyt in 1987. Pallets are stacked on the loading dock of the carton service building. Pickup trucks, vans, old sedans and a VW bug are parked on either side of the old train tracks running down the middle of the street, dusted with snow.

What Solheim saw was possibility. All the elements were there: A light industrial triangle and railyard with spacious warehouses, next door to downtown. A defined neighborhood between the I-405 overpass and Old Town, free to build on its own gritty character. The artists were already there — unleashing their visions behind industrial roll-up doors. The time had come.

He and other developers — Homer Williams, Bob Ball, John Carroll, Patrick Prendergast and more —

City considers raising parking costs in Northwest retail core

Neighborhood advisers more concerned about driving customers away

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

The peace treaty ending decades of "parking wars" in the Northwest District was keyed on a basic tradeoff: To relieve parking congestion, on-street parking could no longer be free. Shoppers and visitors would have to feed meters, and residents would buy annual permits exempting them from meter charges.

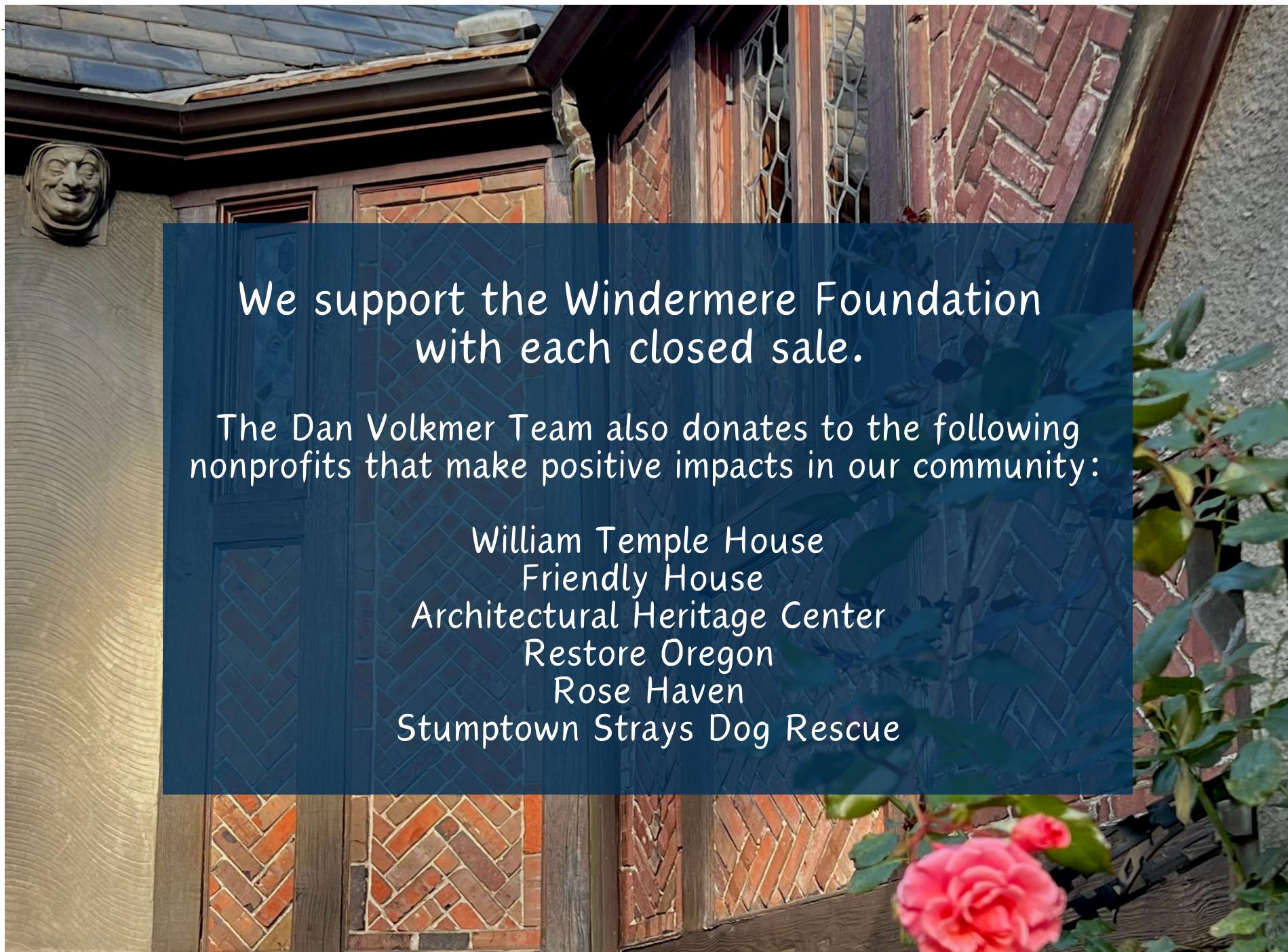
Incentivizing motorists to vacate spaces more quickly would create turnover and more efficient use of available curb space, it was agreed.

The City Council ratified the deal in 2013, and the Northwest Parking Stakeholders Advisory Committee established to oversee the plan came to define 85% occupancy as the functional ceiling. At that level, drivers would likely find a vacant place on any given block.

The arrangement largely succeeded in limiting block-circling searches for parking. However, nothing cleared the streets like the pandemic, although vacant stores and vacant streets were no one's definition of success. The Portland Bureau of Transportation parking revenues also suffered with the loss of activity.

Continued on page 9

Continued on page 8



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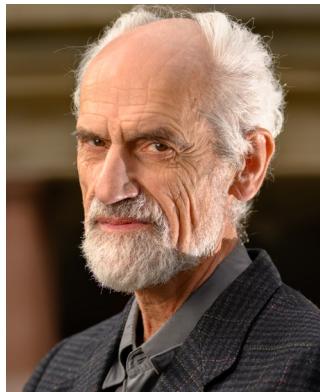
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Remote workers win, city loses

One of Keith Wilson's first big decisions as mayor came after ordering city workers back to their offices. Within a month, he reversed himself due to pushback from city employees and their unions.

Wilson was right the first time. Requiring city employees to show up in person was a good call. As the first step in rejuvenating downtown, bringing warm bodies to populate offices, street life, restaurants and shops was spot on.

It was also in harmony with his broad mandate to end homelessness. Most voters bought into his calls for common sacrifice to fund shelters while also accommodating their impact on neighborhoods.

But the backlash from city staff who didn't want to go back to work was bitter. About 1,400 city employees bared their outrage at a virtual meeting. "This is insulting to all office workers," "I have never been so disrespected by elected leaders" and "remote work opportunities are essential for equity." One union representative demanded that the city's problems not be "laid on the backs of workers."

The last comment leaves no wiggle room. If city workers cannot be directed to address the city's needs and problems, who can? Volunteers?

The workers' insistence on sharing no part of the load is particularly galling. Going to work in person was not an unforeseeable hardship. That's what they signed up for, and then the pandemic gave them a latitude they grew to assume was their right. They weren't asked to give up something they were entitled to; just forgo an unearned temporary benefit.

They argued that they could be more productive at home. Their employer took a broader view of productivity—doing all they could to help save the city. And who should be setting the goals for their employment: the highest elected official in the city or 7,000 workers deciding what fits their schedules?

I'm concerned about the trend in Portland government that gives workers too much job security and excessive leverage over the terms of their employment. It weighs against a full commitment to their mission, the guidance of their supervisors and their "customers," in this case the citizens and taxpayers of the city.

Charter reform, which was supposed to break down the insular silos, has not made a dent in this prob-



The Portland Building has a vacant look these days. Photo by Walden Kirsch

lem. Bureau managers and their staffs remain too often negligent and even hostile toward the public and engaged citizens. Explanations of the long delay in creating a park in Slabtown are only coming out now, but it has to do with staff members who "hid the ball" from neighborhood representatives, not letting them know where and when they might have influenced decisions regarding plans for the park.

When Portland Parks & Recreation managers finally met with the Northwest District Association last month, details spilled out. It became clear that the person who for years has been the point of contact in the bureau was openly hostile to the association, blaming it for holding up the whole process.

Four other PP&R managers heard the comments and did nothing to correct the record then or later. I don't know that any neighbors expected that to happen, though such a step would have come naturally to a capable private sector manager.

But no one saw anything or said anything, and bureau culture was reinforced at the lowest com-

mon denominator. Individuals who least fulfill their duties are protected.

This is only an example. I see similar dysfunction at other bureaus, and it's gotten worse in time. Does it relate to unions that protect the prerogatives of workers who don't want to put themselves out or yield to the directives of their supervisors? Probably, to some degree, though there may be other factors.

What we know is that when a new mayor called his people to serve a higher purpose—the future of the city—they dug in their heels and said no. Mayor Wilson lost some credibility when all could see that his own team members did not respect his orders.

What would have happened had he stuck to his guns and fired those who blatantly defied it? I imagine that his next directive would have met less resistance. And those removed from the city payroll would not have missed long. ■

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Readers Reply

Warming fires not OK

As a Lyft driver, I can confirm that these fires are happening all over Portland [Snapshots, January]. Two nights ago, two homeless men were in a bus shelter on Southeast MLK Boulevard by a roaring bonfire of shipping pallets. The flames were 3-plus feet high, and the fire was filling the whole sidewalk in front of the bus shelter.

Since we are enforcing our no-camping ordinance again, these fires should be

attended to by our Police Bureau and Portland Street Response.

Most Portlanders feel that homeless people are innocent people forced to live on the streets by the vagaries of the current economic situation. But the folks who do not accept the offers of available shelter beds are breaking the law, and many are career criminals who steal anything not nailed down. They may also be mentally ill and need help if they are to survive the winter.

Not responding to these fires is a crim-

inal act performed by the very people that we elected to end the human crisis that is destroying lives and the city. Please write all your elected officials and tell them that ignoring these warming fires is unacceptable. Remind them that we have lost many lives and millions of dollars of property due to unsafe fires in the homeless camps every year since street camping has been allowed.

About half of the calls responded to by our firefighters are because of danger-

ous situations involving homeless persons. These people need either help or involuntary confinement, as each one is a danger to themselves or others.

This type of activity has no place in a civilized society, and we need to keep these incidents in the public eye if we are to save what little we have left of the Portland that I grew up in.

Tim Larson
NW Ferry Rd.

Cont'd on page 5

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Rev. Bruce Strade



Rev. Bruce Strade, a member of Zion Lutheran Church who led a team of parishioners in hosting an Afghan refugee family in 2022, died on Dec. 2, 2025, at age 85. He was born in Milan, Wis., on Aug. 2, 1940, and graduated from Concordia High School and junior college in Sheboygan, Wis. He attended Concordia

Senior College in Fort Wayne, Ind., and graduated from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis in 1966. He moved to Portland for a position at Concordia Junior College. In 1980, he became director of the Washington County office of Lutheran Family Services, later serving as executive director. After retiring from that agency, he served as executive director of Northwest Parish Nurse Ministries. He married Kathleen Kohl in 1967. He is survived by his wife, Kathleen; his daughters, Stephanie and Stacey; son, Sean; seven grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Barbara Hutchison



Barbara Sue Hutchison, who grew up in Portland Heights and graduated from Ainsworth Elementary School and Lincoln High School in 1960, died on Jan. 1 of ovarian cancer at age 83. Barbara Ray was born on July 26, 1942. She graduated from the University of Oregon in 1964. That year, she married Bill

Hutchison. Later, she received a master's degree in education from Lewis & Clark College. She taught junior high school and wrote a textbook on Oregon history. Her claim for maternity leave benefits became a landmark case decided by the U.S. Supreme Court. She was a member of the Multnomah Athletic Club and Waverly Country Club. She is survived by her husband, Bill; daughters Suzi Maddocks, Amie Manske and Lindsey Hutchison Wuepper; and seven grandchildren. A memorial celebration will be held at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral in April.

Mark Miller Jr.



Mark Peter Miller Jr., who lived most of his life in Portland Heights, died Jan. 4 after a 16-year battle with Parkinson's disease at age 75. Miller was born in Portland on June 1, 1950, and grew up in Portland Heights. He graduated from Colorado College and Lewis & Clark Law School. He is survived by his wife, Sally; son, Nick; daughters, Amanda and Caroline; sister, Suzanne; and one grandchild.

Diana Stegner



Diana Stegner, a former substitute teacher at Metropolitan Learning Center and former resident of Portland Heights, died on Oct. 1, 2025, at age 88. Diana Hughes was born on Jan. 21, 1937, in Camas, Wash., and graduated from Camas High School. She graduated from Marylhurst College with a degree in education in 1960. She taught in Portland Public Schools and in Germany. She married Dave Stegner in 1965. She volunteered for the Oregon Symphony Women's Auxiliary, Parent Teachers Association and Marylhurst College. She is survived by daughter, Dina Guppy; son, Dwight; and two grandchildren. Her husband, David, died in 2024.

Jason Hallman



Jason Moore Hallman, who grew up in Arlington Heights and graduated from Lincoln High School in 1979, died on Dec. 2, 2025, from complications of cancer at age 64. Hallman was born on July 17, 1961, in Portland, and attended Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, and the University of Oregon and Mount Hood Community College, where he studied film production. He worked for KPTV and drove delivery trucks for Dave's Killer Bread and Charlie's Produce. He is survived by his brothers, Tom Jr. and Garth.

Joseph Etzel



Joseph Etzel, who grew up in Slabtown and attended St. Patrick's Grade School, died on Dec. 28, 2025, at age 87. He was born on June 20, 1938, in Portland. He graduated from Central Catholic High School in 1956 and earned bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Portland, where he was also an outstanding baseball pitcher. After teaching and coaching at Central Catholic, he began a 21-year tenure as head baseball coach at the university in 1965. From 1970 to 2004, he was also athletic director at UP. He married Judy Kehoe in 1962; she died in 2023. He is survived by his sons, Jim and Tom; daughters, Kathy and Susan; and three grandchildren.

Death notices

JERRY E. MILLER, 90, 1952 Lincoln High School graduate.

CAROLINE (BERG) STURGES, 89, 1954 Lincoln High School graduate and West Hills resident.

PHYLLIS HOPPE, 90, 1953 Lincoln High School graduate.

RONALD W. FAILMEZGER, 91, 1953 Lincoln High School graduate.

NANCY (NEILL) LOOMIS, 82, 1961 Lincoln High School graduate.

PATRICIA (NUNN) MAHONE, 98, former Northwest District resident.

LILAS (STEWART) SCHMIDT, 99, 1944 Lincoln High School graduate.

JOANNE VAN BUREN, 72, employee of KEEN in the Pearl District.

SHARON (BERGREEN) HUNT, 84, 1959 Lincoln High School graduate and member of St. Mary's Cathedral parish.

GEORGIA SCHELL, 84, active in Portland Garden Club.

SYLVIA WHEELER, 93, art teacher at Catlin Gabel School 1967-94.

The Northwest Examiner publishes obituaries of people who lived, worked or had other substantial connections to our readership area, which includes Northwest Portland, Goose Hollow, Sauvie Island and areas north of Highway 26. If you have information about a death in our area, please contact us at allan@nwexaminer.com. Photographs are also welcomed. There is no charge for obituaries in the Examiner.

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Readers Reply

continued from page 3



An intended park at Northwest 20th and Pettygrove was supposed to lead the redevelopment of Slabtown. Instead, it's the last piece and may still be five years away. Photo by Walden Kirsch

Strong stories

I just finished reading the January edition. I have two strong emotions:

Your coverage of the slimy political / financial actions associated with the Slabtown park clearly identified the "evildoers."

The essay by Dr. Don Goldenberg was brilliantly written and emotionally powerful.

Marc Green
SW Vista Ave.

A water spigot would need to be installed. A shed will be needed. Chances are, someone in the area has one they want to get rid of, or materials from a deconstructed building could be acquired for little or no cost.

Everything else, both initially and ongoing, is to be done by volunteers. From spreading the soil that the trucks dump, to building raised beds for those who want them, to day-to-day management. Note that most community gardens in Portland are managed by the gardeners.

Every gardener would have to sign an agreement to the rules, which would have to include the inevitability of the garden's closure in favor of a park. Maybe. Someday.

Meanwhile, if we can do this on the cheap, it might be worth it, even for just a few years. And by doing it ourselves, it could happen in time for this year's growing season.

Bruce Silverman
NW Northrup St.

Interim idea for Slabtown Park

I'm not going to comment on the shenanigans ["Still no Slabtown Park," January]. I'm only going to predict that the park won't be developed for a few years. Meanwhile, here's something positive to consider:

Northwest lacks community garden space. A high proportion of us live in apartments, and we can't garden at home. I propose that the site be converted into a community garden space on the cheap, with minimal city government involvement. We can create a nonprofit organization to contract with the city to manage it.

We could leave the asphalt and concrete in place for the park builders to deal with later. Get a few truckloads of clean soil to spread on top of the paving. Two or three feet is deep enough for most garden crops. It would also create a shallow water table, which would be good for the plants. Some developer might donate the dirt.

Equity, social decay linked

Your paper is a treasure I have enjoyed since coming to live in Portland. You are an outstanding researcher and writer, and an even better publisher.

It will be a happy new year if we see some of your great investigations and stories yield benefit to our Northwest community. Never mind the sneering champions of equity and social decay (the two are inseparable!)

Bon courage!

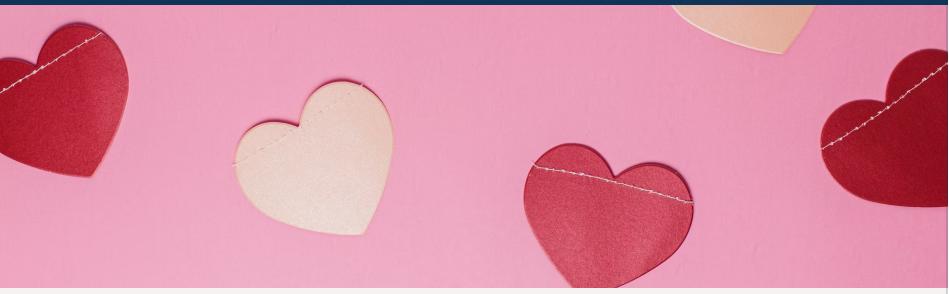
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whatever it is. They were just angry. I was surprised that there was such animosity.

How do you feel about a de facto political party on council? Is that a good or bad thing?

I think it was an unfortunate thing. And I think that they've been called to task about it. I do believe that. I'm hoping that what the new council president [Jamie Dunphy] has said, and other members of that caucus have said, that the caucus will no longer function that way, that people are leaving, that they're not going to be doing that anymore. The proof will be in the pudding.

I think the new council president had an interesting way of explaining it: There were people of a certain affinity that were just trying to organize themselves and figure out how to make things happen. OK, fine. That was then, but this is now. You don't need that anymore. We do not need that caucus anymore.

"I think that is coming to an end. I hope it does. That did not serve the city very well, and I think the Government Ethics Commission is looking into that."

Why are you often the "silent one" on the Council?

I don't feel like I need to express an opinion or pontificate on everything that comes up. There are other people that take up so much airtime.

What do you think District 4 needs most?

I was going to say, flippantly, that we need some sort of spiritual healing. ... Things are getting better. Eric [Zimmerman] and I both put money out

of our office budget into PEMO [Public Environmental Management Office] to clean up the I-405 corridor. We need a lot more of that.

What we really need—and not just in District 4—is more police officers. We are so short. We have the same number of officers that we had in 1994 or '96, and we've grown by 175,000 people since then. That's part of the reason that we have such a slow response time on 911. And that's why we have so much overtime. There aren't enough officers that day to staff a precinct. ... We need to be able to enforce the laws that we have on the books, and that would really help District 4 because of all the open-air drug use. It's still a real problem for us.

Are you still on board with the mayor's homeless plan?

I think that we've all given the mayor the benefit of the doubt. We've all supported him because we know that homelessness and housing affordability is number one on people's minds. He's done what he said he was going to do, and now we're waiting to see what the next step is. He's just made his announcement about a certain number of affordable units. I think he's done a great job in what he said he was going to do.

What do you learn from the rollout of the Northrup Street Shelter?

Neighbors have to be vigilant and report what they see. It's very difficult for this city to meet all the obligations that the mayor set out on his engagement zone: public safety, stop the drug use,

stop the loitering, clean the trash up, etc.

Do you think the city bureaus are more responsive to the community now that council members don't run them?

We're not there yet. We had 26 bureaus that were all independent silos. Now they've been grouped into service areas, and they're being tasked with professional city management to work across bureaus, to work with each other, and they're going through tremendous culture change. This is a different way of doing business. They no longer have a politician managing them. They have professional city management. And so there's going to be greater expectations and more accountability and more working across bureaus to solve problems. ... There's a lot of change to come. A lot of what I would call culture change among city employees. And that's aggravated by what they see coming in the budget.

How so?

We have a budget deficit. What is that going to mean for me? Am I going to have a job? So there's a certain amount of anxiety. But I've certainly found the bureaus that I've been working with responsive. When I have a community issue, they've been responsive.

Are you meeting with neighborhood groups as regularly as you had hoped?

I think I'm doing more than I ever imagined. My priority is to make sure that the city continues to support the neighborhood associations. I'm hoping that when the mayor sits down with each of us, like he did last time, when he crafted his budget. He met with each

"The caucus will no longer function that way ... people are leaving."
—Olivia Clark

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As vice president of the City Council, Olivia Clark will have a more central role in guiding the often-divided body in 2026. Photo by Walden Kirsch

of us at least three times to hear about our priorities. And I think he intends to do that again. And I'll make sure that funding the neighborhood associations is on my list of priorities.

It's invaluable to the city to have active neighborhood associations that are conduits of information, both going to the city and from the city, and that they keep people engaged in their community.

In our District 4, it's tough because you had a very organized northern part and a pretty organized southern part. Across the river — Sellwood, Eastmoreland, Westmoreland — had their own organization that really didn't want to be a part of the District 4. I think Mayor [Ted] Wheeler just said, sorry, you're in it. But I think that we've been able to manage that, or at least I feel I have, by being available to all of them, finding mutual issues.

What about your campaign? How do you say, you need to elect me?

I think I've done a pretty good job as a first-term councilor. My priorities reflect the district's public safety at the top of the list, dealing with homelessness, supporting the neighborhood associations. I think I've done a good job. As chair of the

transportation committee, the first thing I did out of the box was talk about asset management. That should concern everyone because all of us own something like \$80 billion of assets that the former city councils for the last hundred years have really not cared for.

We are so far behind in taking care of what we own. I will continue to beat that drum. I put some money from my budget to set up a system for an asset management plan across all the bureaus.

How are we going to take care of what we have — parks, fire stations, 100-year-old water pipes? Really basic local government things. I'm one of the most boring people on the city council because I'm all about taking care of business: keeping us safe, making sure we have clean drinking water, that it's safe. That's the kind of person I am.

I'm also been working on issues specific to our district: the downtown, Keller Auditorium, the Zoo Train. Potholes are something I've been talking about a lot. Council passed my resolution on looking at other finance mechanisms for transportation, since the feds have backed out of things and the state's not helping us right now. My resolution was to ask the City Budget Office to come back to us with ideas



for how to raise revenue. They came up with 20 ideas. They've selected four that are most relevant. We are discussing that in my committee. Should we move forward? If there isn't support for that, fine. But I think we're going to have some vigilante pothole fillers.

The city has revenues for capital expenditures but not for maintenance or operations.

Exactly. Multiple city auditors over the years have issued audits saying you're chasing shiny objects when you're not taking care of what you have. I really attribute that to the form of government that we had for 100 years when you had politicians managing bureaus. We have a long way to go, and that's why I did the asset management resolution. That's why the city's coming back with an asset management plan. ■

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nwexaminer.com / Northwest Examiner, FEBRUARY 2026 7



Al Solheim, sometimes called the *Father of the Pearl*, looks out from his office window at Northwest 12th and Hoyt and sees signs of revival, specifically a new restaurant in the former Oba! space. Photo by Walden Kirsch



Al Solheim sees the "streets getting busier during the day." Photo by Walden Kirsch

"The Pearl" cont'd from page 1

invested. The city collaborated. Stars aligned. And a thriving district of artists' studios and galleries, home design stores and clothing boutiques, white collar offices, restaurants, condos, parks and hubs like the Brewery Blocks was born.

But like most business districts, the Pearl took hits during the pandemic and afterward, as homelessness worsened and the sight of—and interaction with—human suffering became commonplace.

When iconic businesses like the Pearl Bakery closed in 2019, filling vacant spaces got harder. The number of retail vacancies in the district rose to more than 100. Condo values dropped. Jamison Square, once a magnet for residents, visitors and, in the summers, children

drawn to its wadeable water feature, became overrun at times by people in various stages of addiction.

The neighborhood is still wobbling toward equilibrium as it navigates balancing livability interests with being part of the solution to homelessness. But Pearl residents and business leaders are leaning in. The Northwest Community Conservancy launched in December 2022 to focus on neighborhood security, advocacy and livability. Its first executive director, Chase McPherson, came on in 2024. And the Pearl District Neighborhood Association has gained an energetic new leader in Bruce Studer.

"There's a lot of people who really care, and we have the ability to do things because we have a focused area with a lot

of committed people," Solheim said.

Today, lean and lanky in his signature Patagonia vest and untucked oxford, he looks out his office window on Northwest 12th and Hoyt and sees signs of revival.

A small-business boom

Directly across 12th from Solheim's office is the terra-cotta building once home to Oba! The popular Latin-themed restaurant and bar abruptly closed in 2017 and the building has stood empty since. Today the spot is a hub of construction activities as James and Brian Malarkey, the brothers behind Bend's Hawkeye & Huckleberry Lounge, reimagine the space into a destination steakhouse opening in June.

The new restaurant is only a fraction of what's popping in the Pearl. Solheim and his communications and marketing sidekick Susanne Orton created a map of new businesses in the last year. They're up to 29. It's a mix of established Portland businesses relocating to the Pearl or opening an additional location there as well as new businesses opening.

"I watch our parking lot fill up now right across the street here, and the streets are getting busier and busier during the day," he said.

Tandy Leather moved from out by the airport to Northwest 13th and Irving. Grand Prix Motors is moving this year from Goose Hollow into the Northwest 14th and Kearney space REI vacated in 2024. Hunt & Gather, in addition to its event space at Northwest 12th and Glisan, has opened HG Provisions, a deli featuring items like sprouted green wheat salad and flat iron steak sandwiches. And if you want to get into the newest Frank's Noodle House at Northwest 10th and Davis, show up when they open at 11 a.m. and get in line.

When The Joinery's lease on the Yamhill transit mall behind Nordstrom ended last spring, the handcrafted furniture making team began looking for a place with more foot traffic and fewer impacts related to homelessness, drug use, mental illness and crime. A few team members floated leaving the city, but owner Jon Blumenauer stood firm.

"We're a Portland company and I have deep roots and ties to the city itself," Blumenauer said. "We want to play a role in the city's recovery."

The opportunity to lease the iconic Pearl Bakery, which had stood empty for six years, felt like a fit. "To have a chance to go in and reactivate that space in particular was really gratifying," Blumenauer said.

The Joinery, which moved in May, is enjoying the healthy competition and the synergy with other high-end furniture, home goods and interior design shops. In its showroom, The Joinery displays carpets from SMG Collective and art from Laura Vincent Gallery and is partnering with neighbors like Elizabeth Leach

Gallery to develop Art & Design on 9th, a sip-and-stroll event through art galleries and design shops on Feb 12, 5 p.m. to 7 p.m.

"There is a lot of cross-collaboration and promotion," Blumenauer said. "It's great."

Meanwhile, he continues meeting with city councilors and Mayor Keith Wilson to share thoughts on ways to shore up downtown and the rest of the city.

"Their jobs are challenging and they have a complex set of challenges to navigate and I want to be a good partner," he said. "It will take time, but we are on the right track."

HDR Engineering is among mid-size employers moving to the Pearl. With the likes of the new Multnomah County Courthouse in its portfolio, HDR moved in the fall from Southwest Sixth and Main into 35,000 square feet in the Pearl West at Northwest 14th and Irving. Their 180 team members work in the office three to four days a week.

"When our lease ended, we saw an opportunity to reimagine our workspace and create an environment that better supports collaboration, innovation and future growth," wrote Tracy Ellwein, HDR Oregon area operations manager, in an email. "The Pearl District offers vibrant amenities — coffee shops, breweries and restaurants — that foster connection and community beyond office walls."

Reoccupying the city

Just like back in the '80s, new-to-the-area artists showed up early.

Pippa Arend moved her art studio and office to the Pearl from inner Southeast in February 2022 as Portland was still emerging from the pandemic. "I felt a personal responsibility to reoccupy our city," said Arend, who is also a philanthropic consultant and co-founder of the homeless youth program p:ear.

The building she settled on at Northwest 13th and Davis was sparsely occupied, allowing her to negotiate a favorable lease. Now the building is nearly full — with artists, interior designers and a tech startup that moved in a few months ago.

"It's a fantastic old bricker, with a big, industrial elevator, wood floors and ceilings, huge timber beams from a different era of construction," said Arend, who now enjoys evolving her new expressionistic painting style, "Splash Portraiture," in what she describes as "the Rembrandt-like light through the old pane windows."

Solheim enjoys walking the bustling streets on a sunny day, noticing more new businesses to add to their map and stepping into HG Provisions for a bite. Solheim is sometimes called the Father of the Pearl for his role in developing it, and indeed he takes a fatherly pride.

"I think it's coming back," he says. ■

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As business operators take encouragement in more activity along Northwest 21st and 23rd avenues, the Portland Bureau of Transportation seeks to depress parking congestion with higher rates and longer hours of enforcement. Photo by Walden Kirsch



"City considers" cont'd from page 1

PBOT is floating an idea that would boost parking revenues, which it touts as also helping the neighborhood by limiting congestion in the commercial heart of the district.

PBOT hired transportation consultant William Reynolds, who proposed dividing the district into three zones, one of which he called "extremely constrained." That would be the area around Northwest 21st and 23rd Avenues south of Lovejoy. Reynolds produced a study indicating that daytime occupancy is 83% and evening occupancy 87% in this subdistrict.

"There's high daytime peak-hour demand, and there's very high evening-peak hour demand," Reynolds told the committee.

His solution? Charge more per hour to park in this subdistrict and extend the hours of meter enforcement into the evening. Other possibilities would be limiting permits for workers or residents.

"All of those are on the table in addition to ... changing the hourly rate," he said.

"It does make sense to extend paid hours—at the

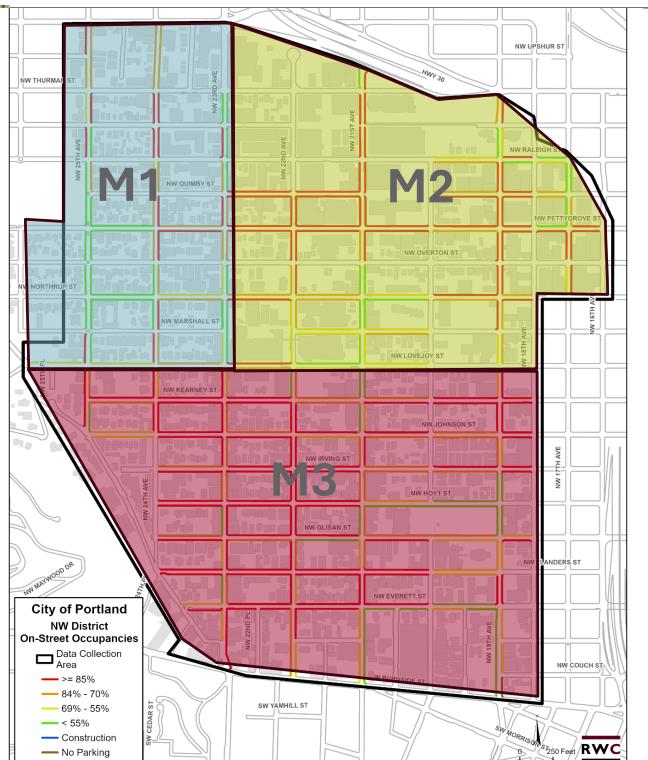
very least—south of Lovejoy. That's the area of highest demand in the evening hours when it's free. And by extending those pay-to-park hours, you are now at least starting to address some of that high demand that you're seeing among visitors."

But neighborhood advisers are skeptical. Was this a solution in search of a problem, or were declining revenues the paramount problem in PBOT's eyes? Some do not see the congestion problem Reynolds is talking about, and they fear increasing rates here would discourage the customers local businesses depend upon.

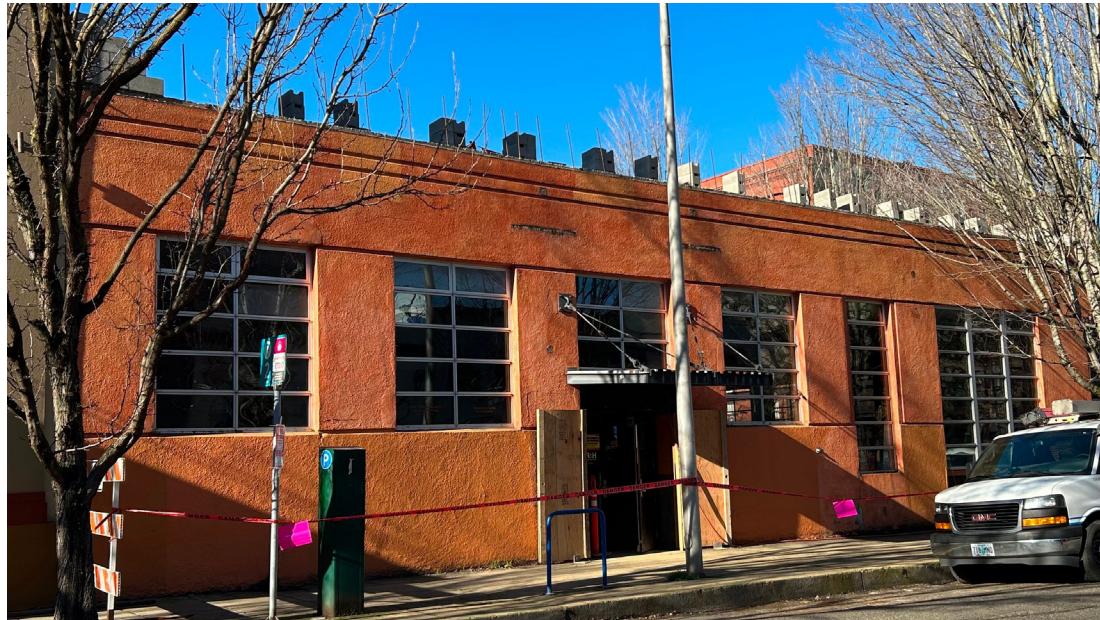
"You're potentially perceiving a problem where—as a neighborhood—it may not be perceived as a problem," Amy Spreadborough told Reynolds.

Spreadborough represents the Northwest Business Association on the committee.

"What I don't hear a lot is complaining from residents that 'I can't find a place to park,'" said Todd Zarnitz, who is president of the Northwest District Association and represents business interests on the committee.



New steakhouse coming to the Pearl



Far left: Portland native Chef Brian Malarkey returns to his hometown after building a national following.

Left: The Malarkey brothers plan to open a steakhouse in the former Oba! space this summer.

Space has been vacant since Oba! left in 2017

The building where Oba! Restaurant died in 2017 is being fixed up to make way for a flashy steakhouse. The concept is an ode to Portland, according to a source named "Secret Sauce."

The restaurant's owners are James and Brian Malarkey, the brothers who own Hawkeye & Huckleberry Lounge, a "modern cowboy" themed steakhouse in Bend that draws Central Oregon's bedazzled jeans and bolo tie set, Hawk and Huck, as it's called, sources its meat from the

Malarkey farm located in Tumalo just northwest of Bend.

On Friday, a new roof was going up onto the building, located at 555 NW 12th Ave., which had been a neighborhood eyesore and frequent target of vandalism.

The new restaurant should open in June.

The Malarkeys have four other restaurants in San Diego and a vast food portfolio.

The charismatic Portland-born and Bend-raised Brian

Malarkey may be familiar to fans of Bravo's "Top Chef," on which he appeared during Season 3. Malarkey also co-hosted ABC's "The Taste" along with Anthony Bourdain.

Attempts to reach the Malarkeys were unsuccessful.

The Malarkey's website states that "the group will debut its second highly anticipated concept in Portland, continuing its expansion into the Pacific Northwest."

NOBBY NEWS

Vol. 32, No. 2

"News You Can't Always Believe" February 2026

Watch the Olympics in all its forms

The Winter Olympics are around the corner, and in nowhere has the anticipation grown higher than at the Nob Hill Bar & Grill, where sports fans know no boundaries.



Nobby patrons will be playing their own games while watching the big screens all around them. There will be Tater Tot curling, beer coaster figure skating, rubber band target shooting and ketchup bottle bob-sledding.

Hockey, of course, will be a major competition, though not on the usual surface. ICE is not allowed this year.

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Briefly . . .

IPNOSI, a women's clothing boutique at 616 NW 23rd Ave. owned by Lyndelle Light, closed recently.

DAVE'S HOT CHICKEN, an Oregon chain with five Portland area restaurants, will open at Northwest 23rd and Kearney streets in March.

A **THAI BAKERY** is coming to the Gregory building on the corner of Northwest 10th and Glisan streets in about three months. It has the same owners as Zab-Pinto, the Thai restaurant on the same block.

THE HORIZON BUILDING, 406 NW Glisan in Old Town, had a soft opening Feb. 1. The four-story space will open in late February and include a coffee shop, basement jazz club called "the downbeat," and a gallery and maker space.

BARTINI, 2108 NW Glisan St., is closing. **URBAN FONDUE**, located next door, 2114 NW Glisan St., is also closing.

NORDSTROM RACK, 245 SW Morrison St., closed Jan. 31.

FANCY BABY, 1204 NW Glisan St., will reopen in February with a new name as well as a new bar/restaurant concept focused on salumeria, or cured meats and cheeses.

STUDY & SOCIETY will open soon in The Wyatt, 1128 NW 13th Ave., next to Sisters Coffee. According to its Instagram page, it will be "a quiet and intentional space for focus and connection."

San Francisco-based **Baggu**, maker of boldly patterned zipper bags and puffy laptop sleeves, is opening a brick and mortar store at Northwest 23rd and Kearney in the former MudPuddles Toys location.

BLUE STAR DONUTS' flagship location at 1701 SW Jefferson St. is up for lease. A spokesperson said "our hope is very much to stay" in Goose Hollow.

The **LEGACY-COHEALTH URGENT CARE** at 13th and Marshall streets has closed.



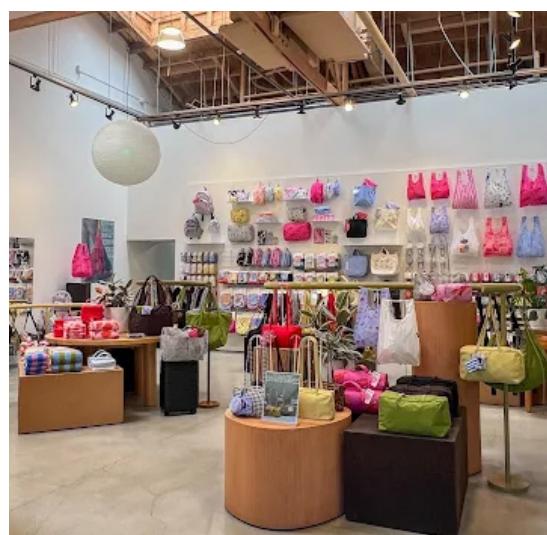
Study & Society, opening soon in The Wyatt.



The Horizon Building is owned by Creative Homies, which markets the project as "a niche space that is explicitly designed for our BIPOC fam to rest, play and flourish."



Fancy Baby, reopening in February.



Baggu (Los Angeles shop above) will open in The Pearl.

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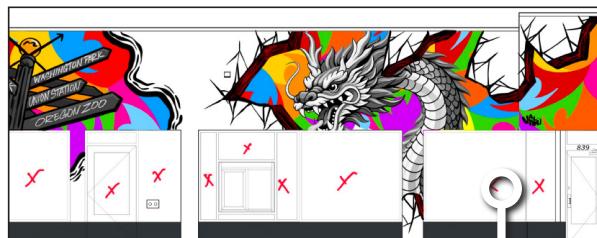
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GREATER NORTHWEST PORTLAND DEVELOPMENT MAP

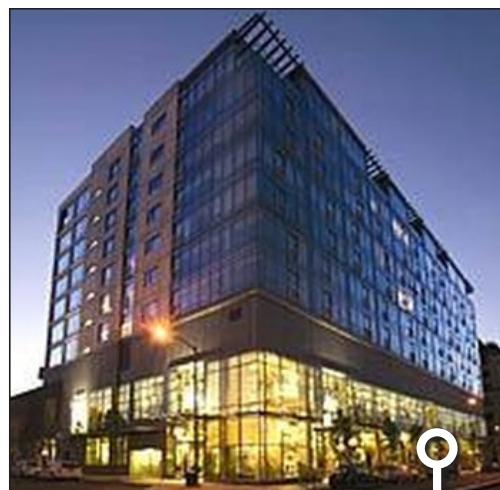
DAVE'S HOT CHICKEN

Dave's Hot Chicken plans to open in March in the former Santa Fe Taqueria location at Northwest 23rd and Kearney streets. Development partner Josh Veentjer told neighborhood representatives it will have a walk-up window and a mural on the north side.



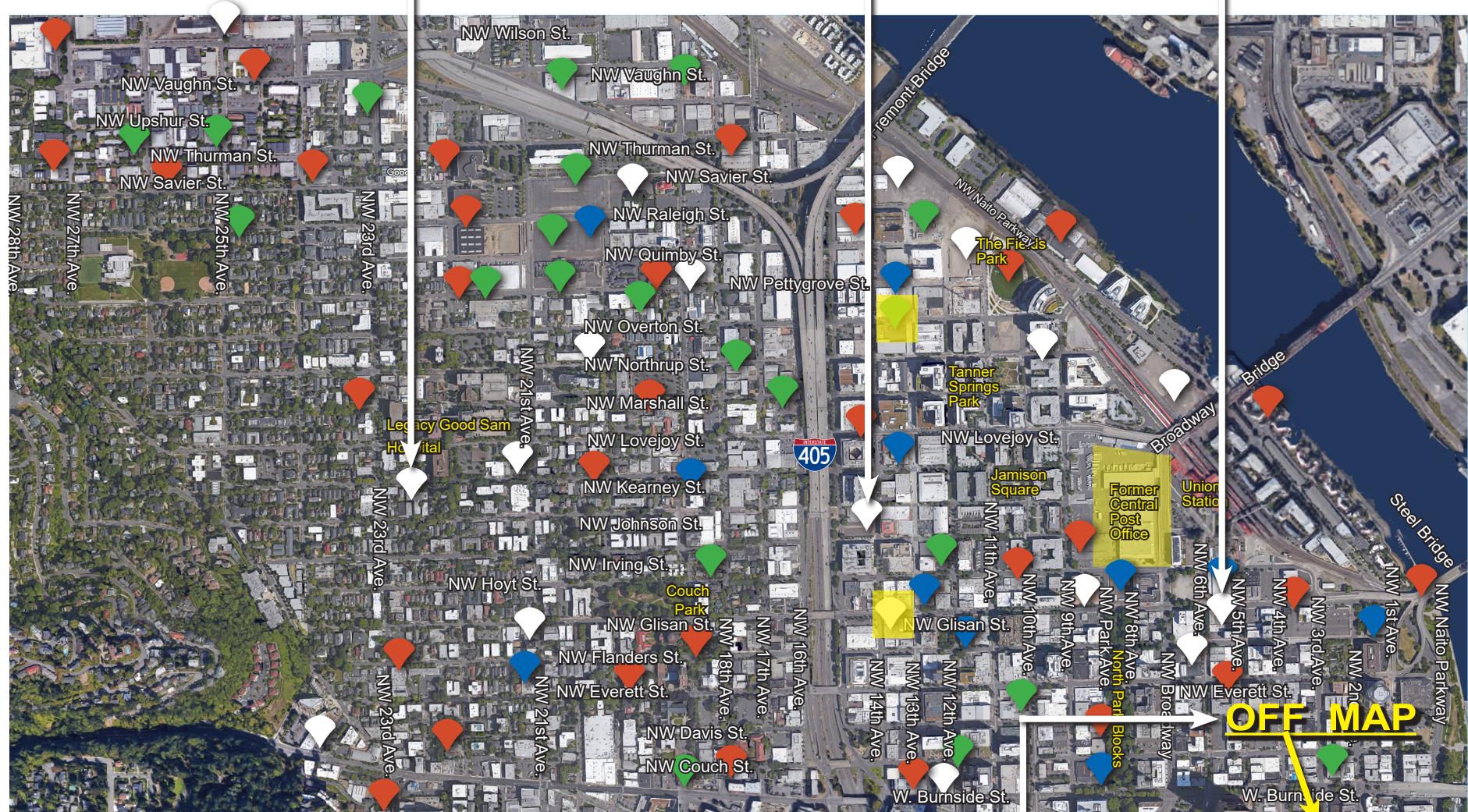
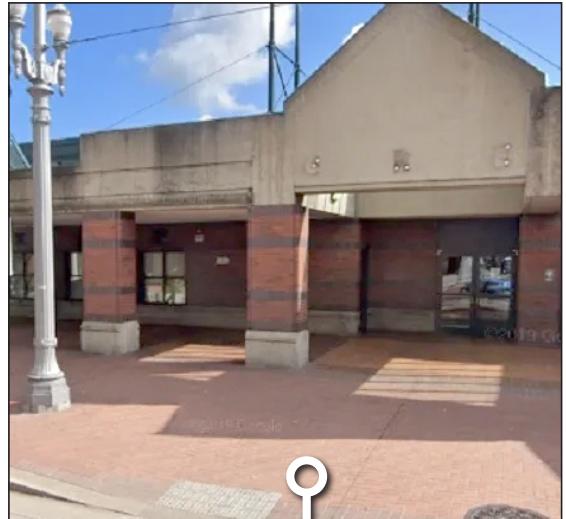
GRAND PRIX MOTORS

Grand Prix Motors has put its longtime home at Southwest 16th and Jefferson streets up for sale as it plans to move into the former REI space at Northwest 14th and Johnson in April. The two-level REI space and parking garage sold at auction for \$6.65 million last August.



GREYHOUND STATION

TriMet intends to purchase the former Greyhound bus station at 550 NW Sixth Ave. in Old Town and to use as a layover for transit buses. The 2-acre site could house up to nine full-sized buses.



PSU RESIDENCE HALLS

Efforts to save two historic residence halls on the Portland State University campus have collapsed as both the Architectural Heritage Center and the Downtown Neighborhood Association said the cause is futile. PSU plans to demolish Montgomery Court and Blackstone Hall this fall to build a five- or six-story dormitory in the center of the campus.

KELLER AUDITORIUM

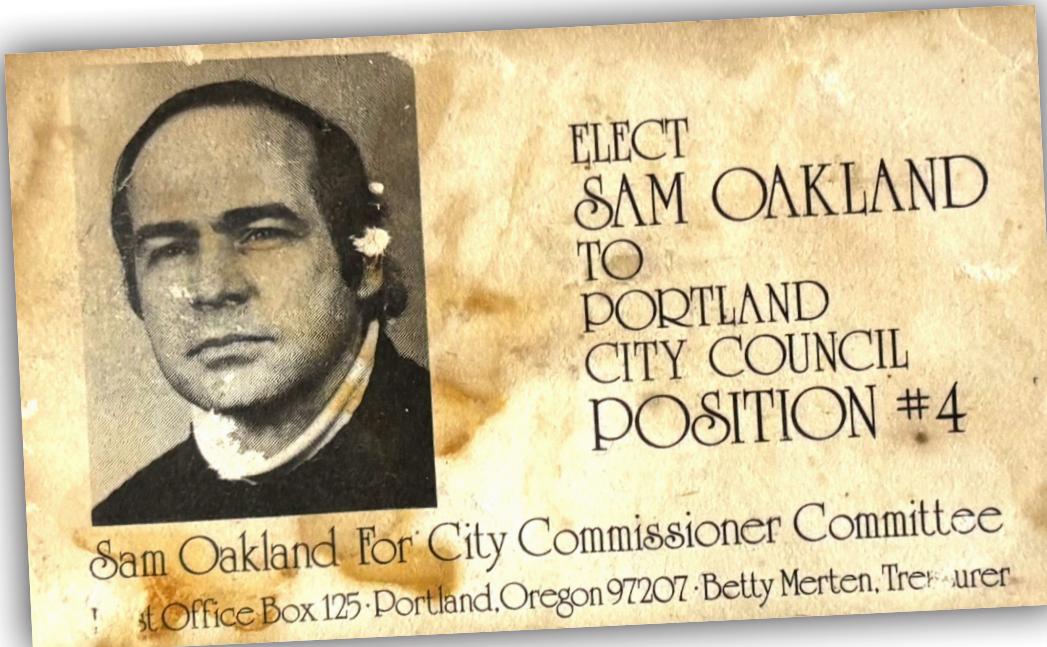
The Downtown Neighborhood Association challenged a consultant's report advising the City Council against remodeling the Keller Auditorium. "We were gobsmacked," said DNA President LaJune Thorson, who said Chicago-based Hunden Partners was not asked to decide between remodeling Keller versus a new Portland State University facility.



Proposed Under Review In Construction Other

For an interactive and continually updated version of this map, visit: NextPortland.com
Also see the development map maintained by the Goose Hollow Foothills League:

'Time capsule' has clues for our time



As a young crusader (left) or elder park ranger, Sam Oakland did it his way.

What did Sam Oakland know in 1974 that we are just discovering?

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

Martha Connell recently found a 50-year-old business card while tending the apartment building she and her husband own.

The humble card had served as a campaign flyer for Sam Oakland, a City Council candidate in 1974. She had met Oakland somewhat later when he was working in a lawnmower shop, and they discovered some common connections, including her fascination with his "crazy, overgrown garage" on Northwest

Thurman Street that was akin to a local landmark.

Oakland would become known for many things, though few may recall that he once worked at a lawnmower shop. When he died at age 80 in 2014, obituaries struggled to encapsulate a man whose life knew no boundaries.

He was called a poet, professor, reformer, environmentalist and gadfly, and—other than living in an 1888 house for most of his life—he never stayed in one place too long.

At age 16, Oakland quit high school to join the Navy during the Korean War. He later served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Albania on his way to becoming a world citizen, receiving four Fulbright grants to teach in Finland, Italy, Belarus and Moldova. He also taught and studied in Norway, England, Spain, Macedonia, China, Australia and Siberia.

International flags adorned the world traveler's porch.

"By the end of his life, he was ordering custom-made flags of obscure and

historical designs from a seamstress in Dublin," said Ted Kaye, a Willamette Heights neighbor and fellow flag lover who produced the Portland Flag Association newsletter. Only Oakland would brandish a replica banner of Richard III of England.

Oakland may have lived in the past and fallen behind on yard maintenance, but in a larger sense, he was always ahead of his time.

He pioneered Oregon's bike movement, founding the Bike Lobby in 1967 and

Continued on page 14

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Welcome by appointment

Cultural Center Annual Membership Meeting Slated for April 21, 2026

The Northwest Neighborhood Cultural Center (NNCC) will hold its annual membership meeting at 6:00 PM on Tuesday, April 21, 2026. As has been our practice in recent years, the meeting will take place as a Zoom hosted teleconference. Members of record as of March 16, 2026 who wish to attend the meeting will need to register in advance. Please watch our web site www.nnccpdx.com for more information about this meeting and the advance registration process.

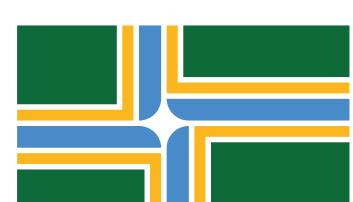
Director nominees for the terms beginning in 2026 will be elected. The new Board will elect officers for 2026 immediately following the annual meeting. An update on the pending sale of the building, Board nominations, the Northwest Neighborhoods Fund and related matters will be presented.

If any member of the corporation wishes to nominate persons for Directors other than those proposed by the Nominating Committee, said member shall do so by delivering to the Secretary not less than ten (10) days prior to the Annual Meeting a petition signed by at least ten (10) members naming the nominee or nominees and stating that each nominee has agreed to serve if elected. The Secretary shall state at the Annual Meeting, prior to the election of directors, the names and qualifications of those nominated by petition. Nominating petitions may be delivered to the NNCC Secretary by US Mail at Northwest Neighborhood Cultural Center, P.O. Box 96116, Portland, Oregon 97296-6116.

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Sam Oakland's bike seat was used by Gov. Tom McCall to sign the Oregon Bike Bill in 1971.



Sam Oakland collected rare flags, and if he couldn't find one, he had it custom made.



Oakland's old garage is a Willamette Heights landmark.

"Time capsule" cont'd from page 13

leading a campaign for passage of the 1971 Bike Bill that was commemorated by a photo of him with Gov. Tom McCall at the state capitol.

Local historian Steven Johnson wrote about a rally Oakland organized in 1970:

"400 bicycle enthusiasts gathered on Swan Island in North Portland to draw attention to a four-point petition that Oakland had written. The petition called upon the city to create bike lanes on major thoroughfares and bridges; bike parking facilities near schools, department stores, supermarkets, restaurants and in city garages; bike racks on city buses; and the consideration of bike lanes and parking facilities in plans for future developments within the city."

Some of his campaigns were not as successful. He took only 4% of the vote in the 1974 city primary, and later runs for the U.S. Congress, Multnomah County commissioner, Oregon superintendent

of public instruction and Multnomah County sheriff also fell short.

He did not give up easily. He tried to prevent the closure of Portland's oldest post office when the Pioneer Courthouse was remodeled in 2004. He also sought to stop construction of a garage for five judges in the building. The project, however, went ahead.

But Oakland's 1974 platform is a testament to political insights that would later prove prescient.

Number 1 on his list?

"Support for city/county consolidation."

His rationale for merging the jurisdictions may have been lost, but perhaps his thinking is reflected in the current fledgling campaign to accomplish a goal that was so clear to him 50 years ago. ■

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Cyclist upended by right hook sees bigger picture



Tim Slevin-Vegdahl was crossing West Burnside from Southwest 18th last summer when a car in the position of the one behind him in the photo turned into his path. Photo by Walden Kirsch



Arrow shows the route Tim Slevin-Vegdahl was taking when a car on his left cut in front of him in the middle of West Burnside Street.

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

Bicyclist Tim Slevin-Vegdahl was the victim of a "right hook" collision on West Burnside Street, but he didn't get mad. Instead, he imagined what the driver might have been thinking.

"I speculated about the point of view of the car driver," said Slevin-Vegdahl, who then tracked down that driver and learned that his assumptions were correct.

The disjointed intersection forces northbound cyclists to turn right from Southwest 18th before picking up the bike lane crossing Burnside. The motorist thought Slevin-Vegdahl had turned right onto Burnside (which technically he was forced to do to reach the Burnside crossing) and therefore felt it was safe to also turn right onto Burnside.

Slevin-Vegdahl went back to photograph the confusing bike lane markings. He produced a video to further explain the situation and sketched out a simple remedy and asked the Portland Bureau

of Transportation to consider it.

PBOT engineer Alex Garate was impressed with his assessment.

"I am going to recommend widening the existing [crossing] to better accommodate bicycle movement through the intersection," Garate told Slevin-Vegdahl.

PBOT spokesperson Dylan Rivera said the suggested widening, along with concrete traffic separators, is approved and "expected to be installed when funding becomes available."

Not bad for an amateur transportation adviser.

Slevin-Vegdahl, who is a member of the Goose Hollow Foothills League board, said his first encounter with the driver could have been worse.

"I was knocked to the ground from my bike and scraped up my hands pretty good, but nothing required major medical care," he said. "I got pretty lucky, as I was actually moving pretty fast when the car turned in front of me." ■



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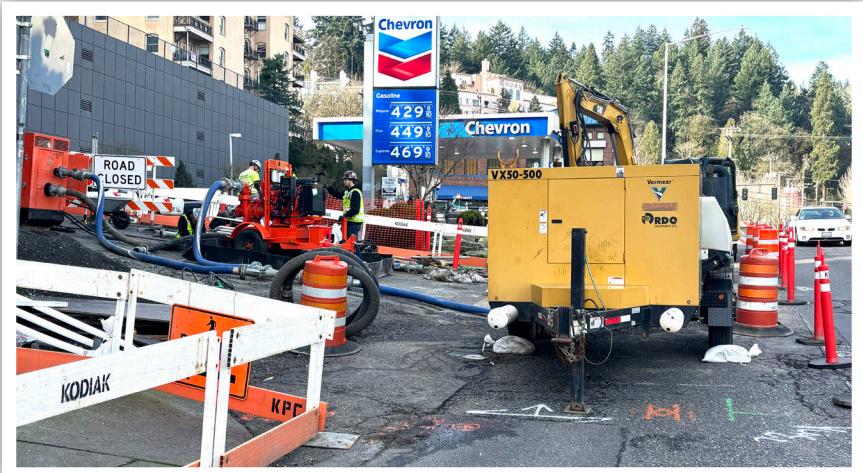
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Snapshots



Dignitaries including U.S. Reps. Suzanne Bonamici and Maxine Dexter participated in a ribbon cutting for Bethanie's Room, an overnight shelter for women opening at Northwest 17th and Lovejoy streets Feb. 9. Photo by Erin Hoover Barnett.

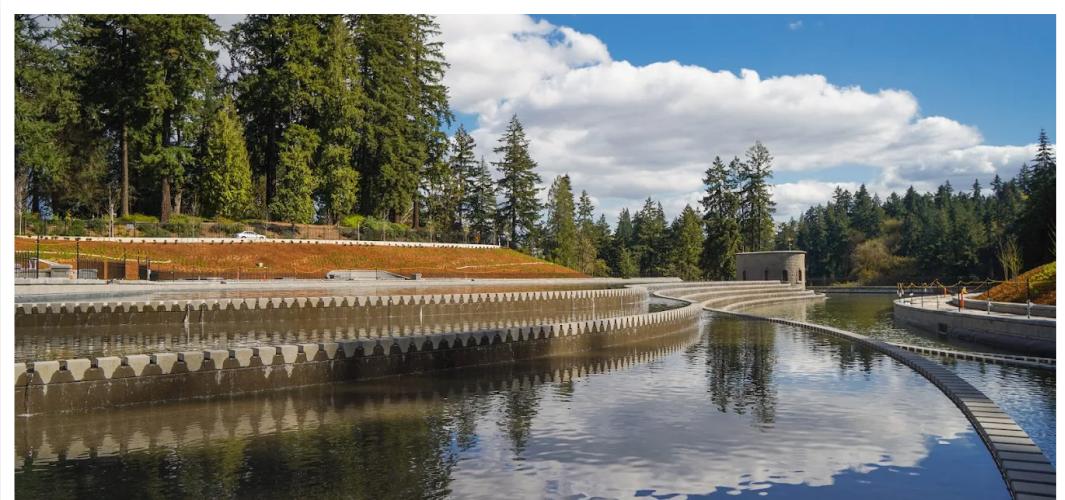


A signalized crosswalk is being installed at West Burnside Street and St. Clair streets, where a pedestrian was struck and killed by a vehicle in 2022. The Portland Bureau of Transportation projects completion "by the end of the year."

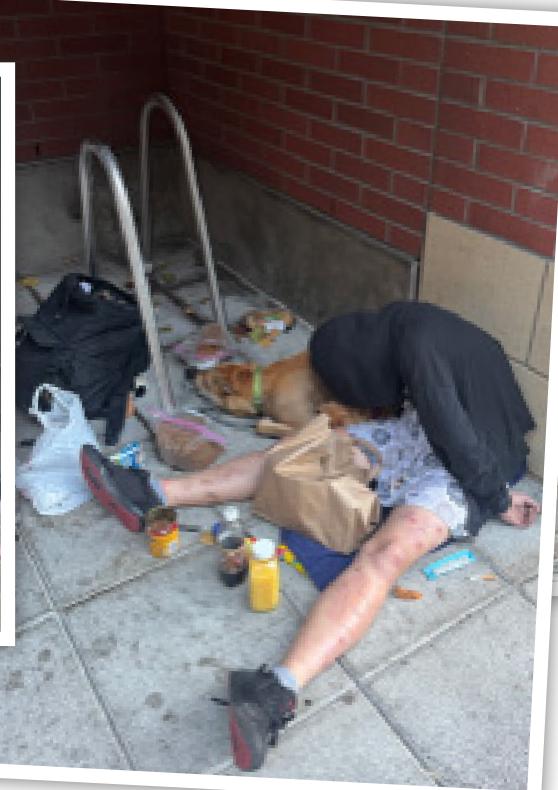
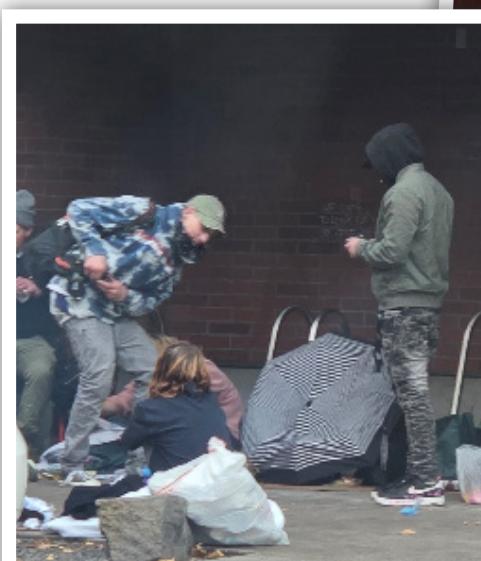
Ryan Tong, a former trainer at Orangetheory Fitness in Slabtown, pleaded guilty to stealing at least \$24,000 from members by supposedly collecting donations for local charities, then keeping the money. Members complained to Orangetheory, leading to his dismissal in 2024.



Longtime Northwest District Association representative Jeanne Harrison received a plaque honoring her years of service from NWDA President Todd Zarnitz last month. Greg Theisen, who served on the association's Planning Committee, was also honored.



The Washington Park Reservoir pavilion remains closed to the public, eight months after a "soft opening" event last June. "Because the site is an active construction area still, it is not yet ready for public access," wrote Grace Wilson, a public involvement coordinator for the Water Bureau. "The final to-do list includes eliminating pedestrian hazards, installing safety signage, and continuing work on the hypochlorite system and reflecting pool."



Work is finally underway to enclose the bike rack alcoves at Asa Flats + Lofts, 1200 NW Marshall St., where camping and drug activity have predominated for years.

Thanks to you, the Examiner is growing



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For 40 years, the NW Examiner has covered greater Northwest Portland the way it always has: by showing up, asking questions and paying close attention to what happens here at home.

We report on the issues that demand vigilance — City Hall, homelessness, development — and the stories that give a neighborhood its texture: restaurant news, obituaries, opinions and the offbeat moments that make this place feel like itself. The essential and the simply interesting.

Because of reader generosity, the past year has been transformative. The Examiner has expanded from a monthly print paper into a daily online presence at nwexaminer.com, while still reaching 19,000 households in print each month. Today, nearly 2,500 readers subscribe online, and more than 650 support the paper with contributions to the Northwest Local Journalism Foundation.

At a time when public debate is louder and more polarized, trust matters. Readers rely on the Examiner to report carefully, independently and to use that trust responsibly.

As the next step in that commitment, we're introducing three tiers of annual sustaining community support for new subscribers:

- Good Neighbor — \$75
- Fact Finder — \$350
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