

The Culinary Corridor

A concept to save downtown's food carts . . .

. . . and part of Portland's soul . . .

Brett Burmeister

Daniel Huerta

Randy Gragg



EVERY CRAVING
IS A MOVING TARGET

Brett Burmeister
FoodCartsPortland.com

Tight Tacos

August 23, 2017 By [dieselboi](#) 3 Comments



Tight Tacos

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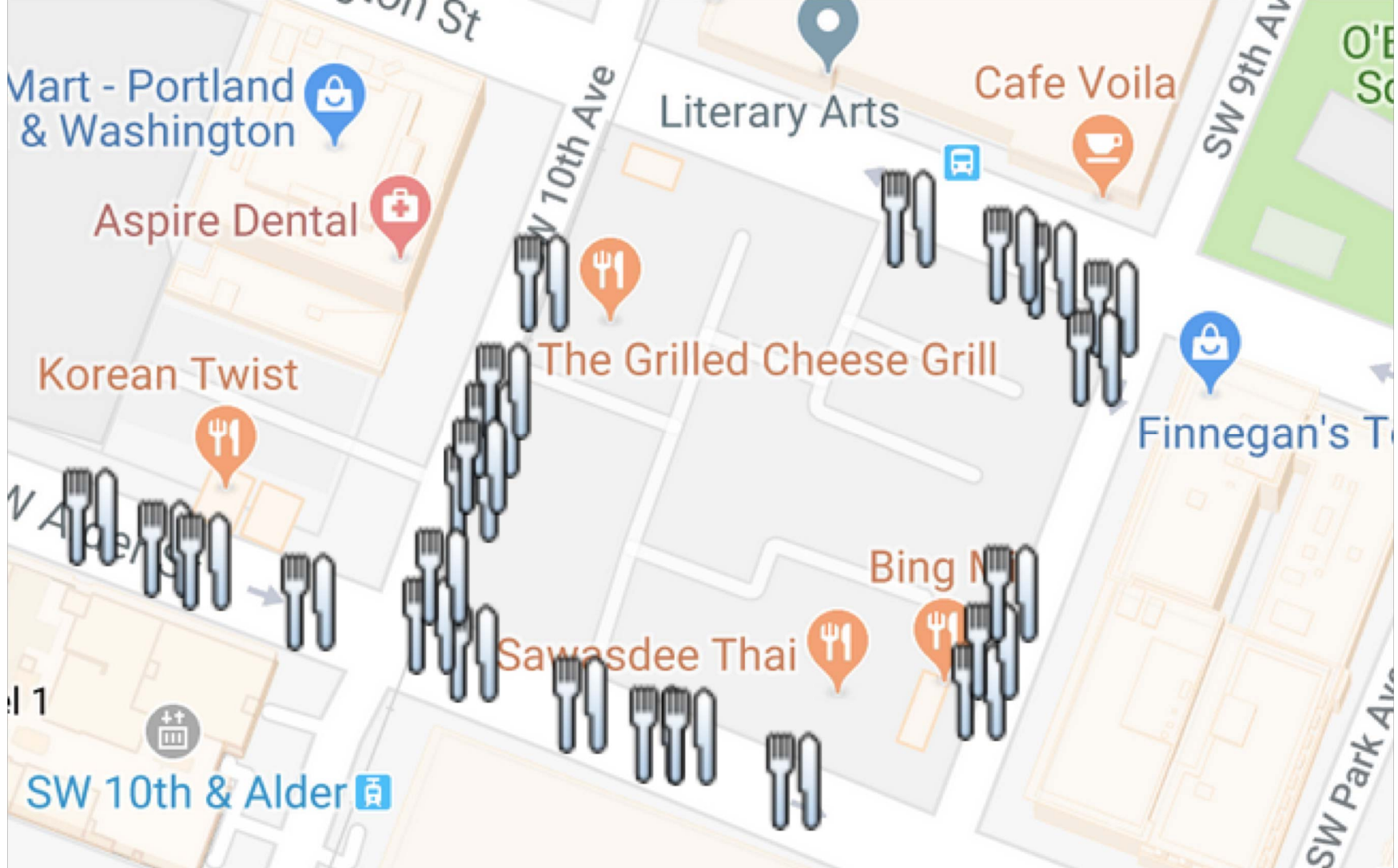




There are about 130 food carts in downtown Portland



There is not one McDonalds or Burger King.



**There are 55 food carts at SW 10 and Alder.
That's 55 small businesses.**

The possibilities of Portland

Sugar, spice and the people are nice in the Rose City

Monika Vitek says she likes that she can chat with the customers at her Tibor Authentic Czech Eatery food cart. Valerie Reed, Philadelphia Inquirer

Below, the flavorful pho at Mai Pho. Kyle Wagner, The Denver Post



“Pods” put the cart before the hordes

By Kyle Wagner Denver Post Travel Editor

PORTLAND, ORE.» It can be agony to walk these streets hungry.

Around 9 a.m., the aromas of grilling beef, baking bread, simmering broth, sautéing onions, sizzling bacon and just-ground coffee thread through the usual city scents of car exhaust and scorching pavement.

By 10 a.m., residents and tourists alike start to make their way toward favorite food carts — mobile units of every size, shape and color, from converted Airstream trailers to banquet tables topped with tarps. They're clustered in “pods,” some with formal names like

Good Food Here or Cartopia, in the corners of parking lots along the edges of entire city blocks.

By 11 a.m., you'd better be in position at the more popular carts, or you could be in line for a while. Or worse — be forced to go somewhere else.

“By 1 o'clock, she'll sell out,” says David Siegel, who along with his wife, Linda, has scored one of the coveted sidewalk tables at Nong's Khao Man Gai, one of Portland's most famous



Above left, the famous YouCanHasCheeseburger, which features grilled Angus beef between two grilled-cheese sandwiches made with butter-splattered Texas toast. Above, the pod at SW Fifth Avenue and Stark. Photos by Kyle Wagner, The Denver Post

Quirks in the works

Flip a coin: Lots to do, see, enjoy

By Bill Reed The Philadelphia Inquirer

PORTLAND, ORE.» Bike lanes and streetcars, craft-beer breweries and coffee roasters, green spaces and green buildings — this trendsetting city enjoys its clean, healthy and easygoing lifestyle.

And then there's its quirky side — with a capital Q.

This is a city that was named by a coin toss, whose sea captains beefed up their crews by shanghaiing sailors, and that attracted tourists with a “monstrosity of art.” Today, it boasts the world's smallest park — about the size of a manhole cover. And a Chinatown with no — zero — Chinese residents.

It all starts with Voodoo Doughnut.

“When you're talking quirky, you're talking Voodoo,” says Herb Spice, the quirky guide of a Quirky Portland tour.

The cash-only, takeout-only doughnut shop opened seven years ago, “mostly for people with hangovers after the bars closed,” Spice says.

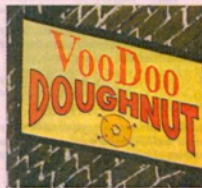
“They'd get Pepto-Bismol doughnuts, Robinussin doughnuts, Nyquil doughnuts,” till the FDA said medicine couldn't be used as an ingredient. The legacy lives, though, with the shop's Pepto-Bismol-pink boxes.

Spice opens a box of assorted “classic” doughnuts, including the “blood-filled voodoo doughnut” — a rectangular, chocolate-iced doughnut with arms, red-iced eyes and mouth, and a pretzel stick in its belly.

“Think of someone you don't like or who's done you wrong,” Spice says, chuckling. “Then push down the pretzel, and if the voodoo doughnut bleeds (raspberry jelly), see how that person's doing in a few days.”

The other signature doughnut is the bacon-maple bar, known as “Breakfast in Vermont.” Since TV chef Anthony Bourdain gobbled one on his show “No Reservations” in 2007, the shop has stayed open 24/7, often with a line

QUIRKY » 5T



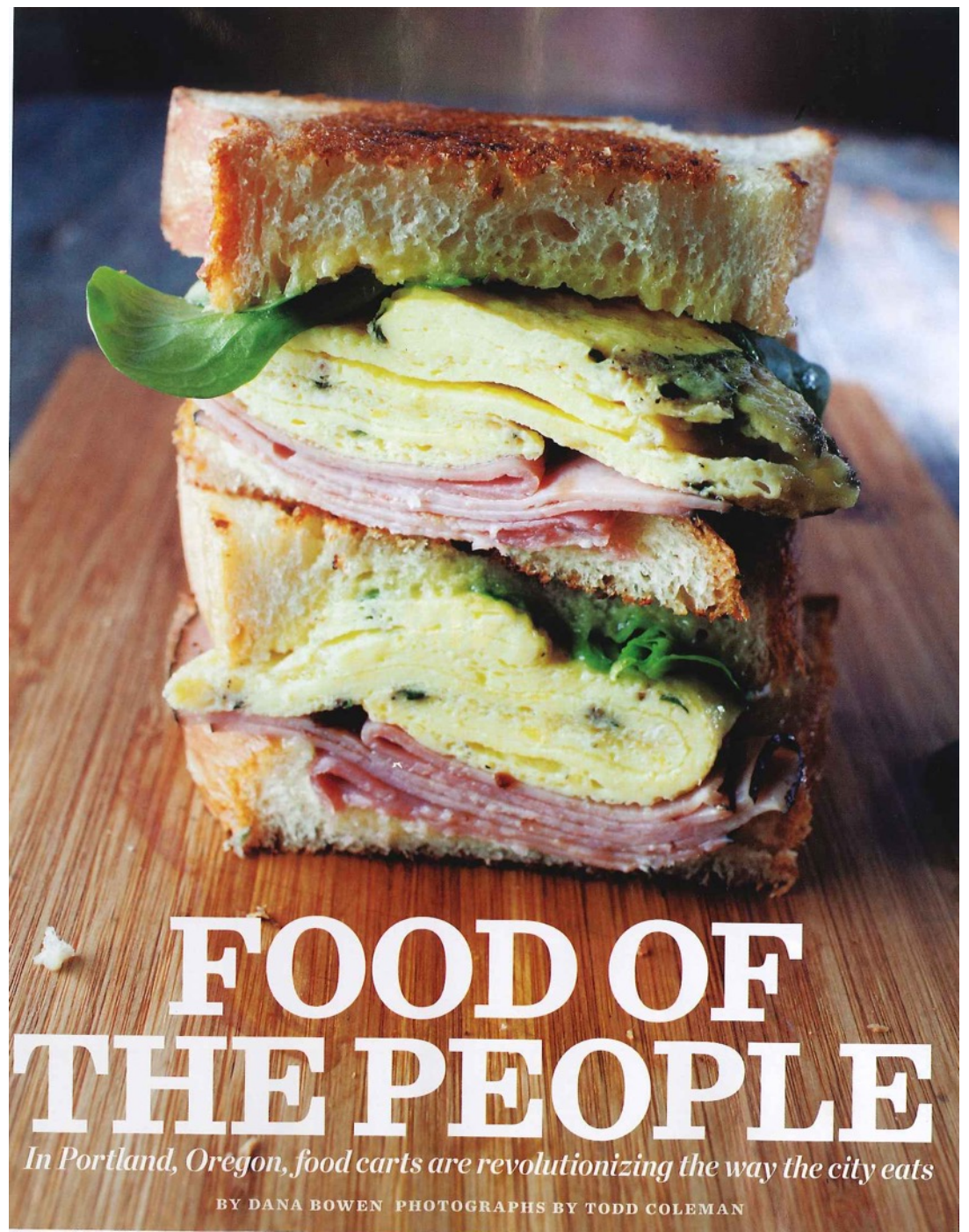
Voodoo Doughnut in Portland, Ore., features a hole lot of approaches to the classic treat. Portland Oregon Visitors Association

The diverse culinary offerings and grassroots authenticity have made food the number 1 reason tourists come here, according to Travel Portland

Denver Post



Foodies flock here.





... from across the globe



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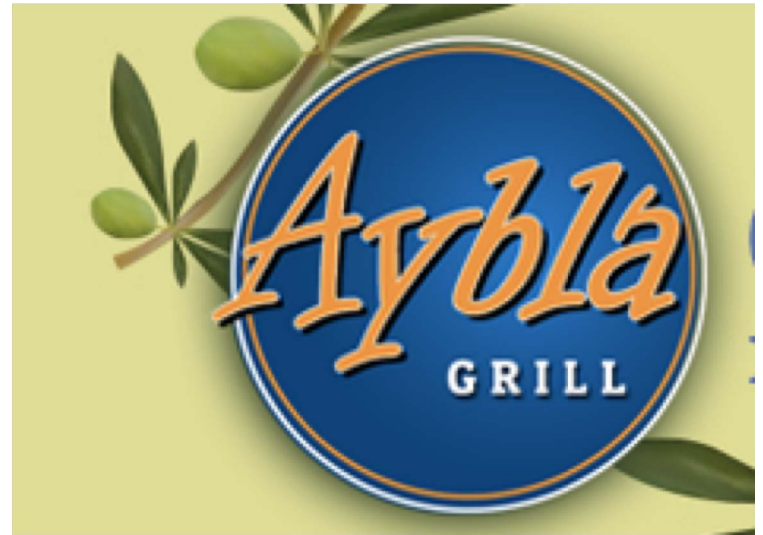
OREGON
BRIDE

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POST



Daniel Huerta, proprietor, Churros Locos



Saied Samaiel, a Syrian immigrant, started with one food cart.

He and his family now have a restaurant and 6 carts around the city.



Saied and his family now have a restaurant and 6 carts around the city.



**Jaime Soltera, Jr. started selling tamales
out of the trunk of his car, started a food cart . . .**



... and now has 2 mobile carts, 2 restaurants, and locations at PDX airport and the Moda Center.





Nong Poonsukwattana began with one chicken-and-rice dish served in folded butcher paper sold from a food cart.



**Nong now owns
two restaurants
and is world
renowned**

Stall 10

USA

Churros Locos

10



FALL ARTS PREVIEW:
SHOWS TO KNOW

THE TOP JOBS OF
PORTLAND'S FUTURE

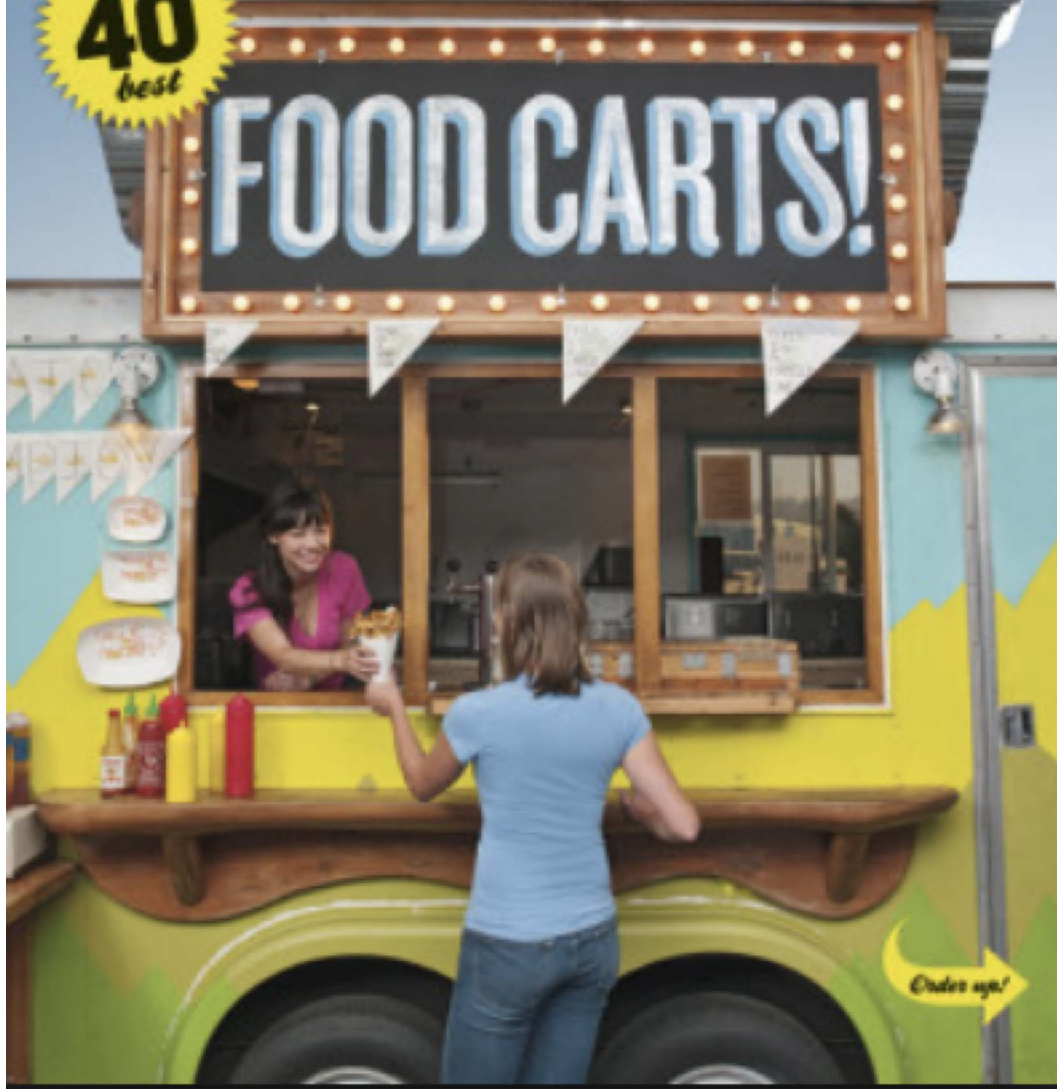
NEW WAVE
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Portland

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40
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FOOD CARTS!



Randy Gragg
urban advocate



In the Great Recession, food carts were the only downtown retail sector that *grew*.



In fact, they grew dramatically by bringing Portland's burgeoning food scene to the street in the form of new businesses, affordable and creative cuisine, and *jobs*.

Food carts also became an important urban regenerator, giving asphalt parking lots a lively, urban face.

And O’Bryant Square, aka “Paranoid Park” / “Needle Park” . . .





... became a nice place to eat lunch.



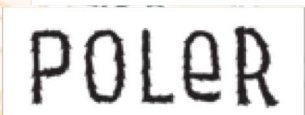
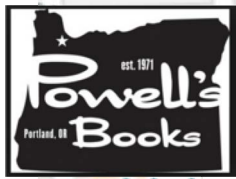
But the parking lots where food carts thrived are now poised for new development.

A hotel/condo tower proposed for Block 216 will displace more than a third of downtown's food carts as soon as September. Some are already closing due to the uncertainty.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES



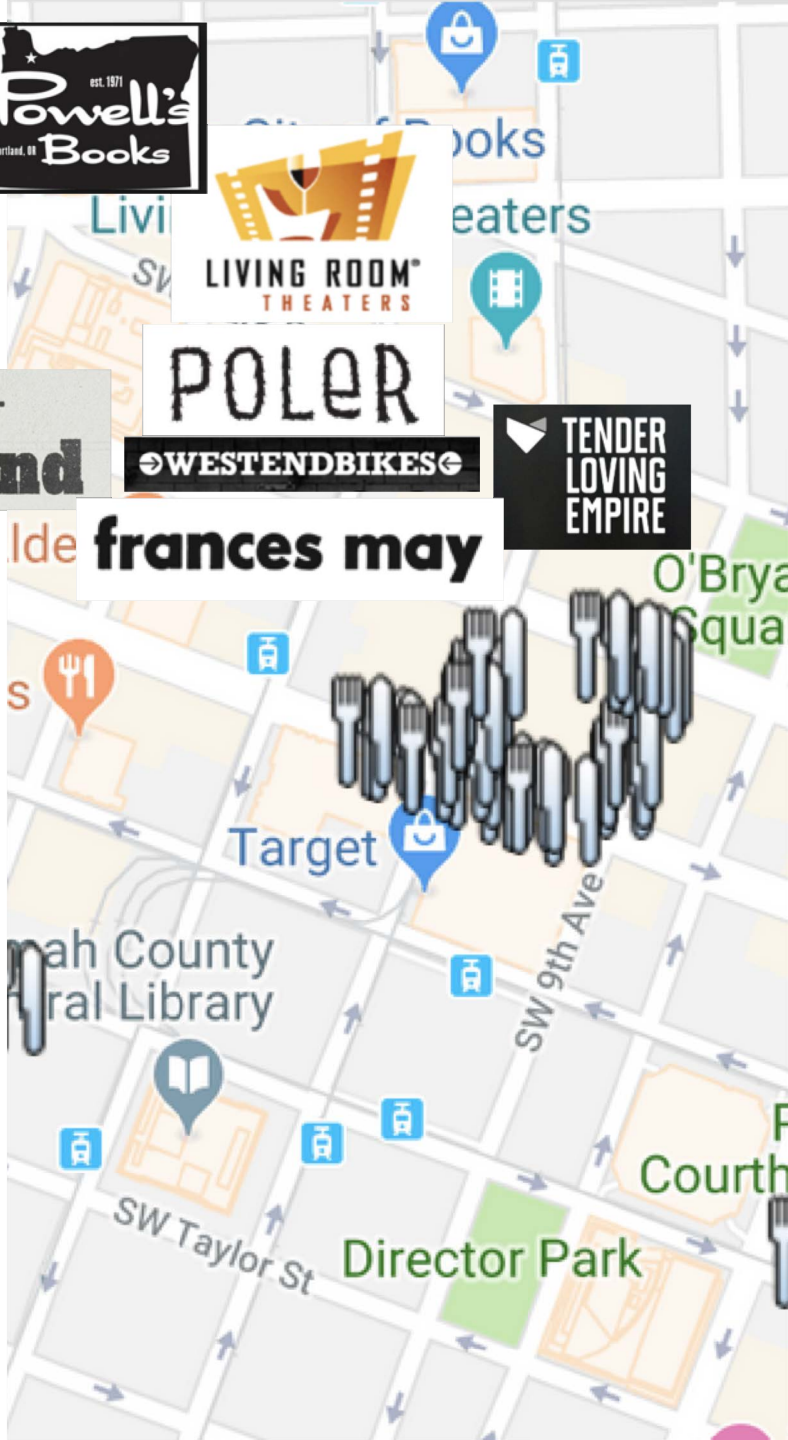
Inevitably, downtown food carts will become an endangered species.



ACE HOTEL

Portland

frances may



The Alder Street Food Cart Pod is particularly important due to its proximity to the West End—downtown's most important cluster of local retailing.

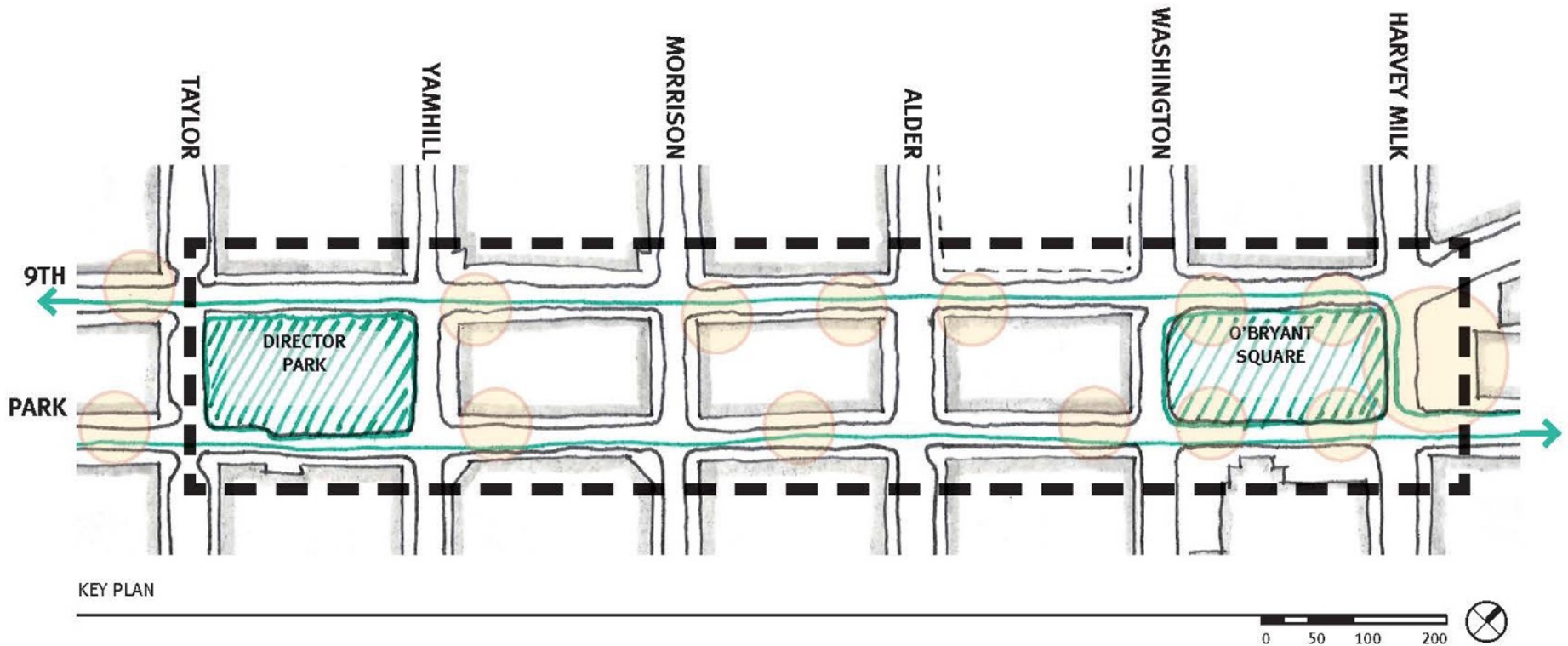
We can change this story.

**With the kind of bold, simple, thrifty move
Portland is renowned for, we can not only
save Portland's downtown food carts, but
grow them.**

Introducing: The Culinary Corridor



CULINARY CORRIDOR
VISUALIZATION

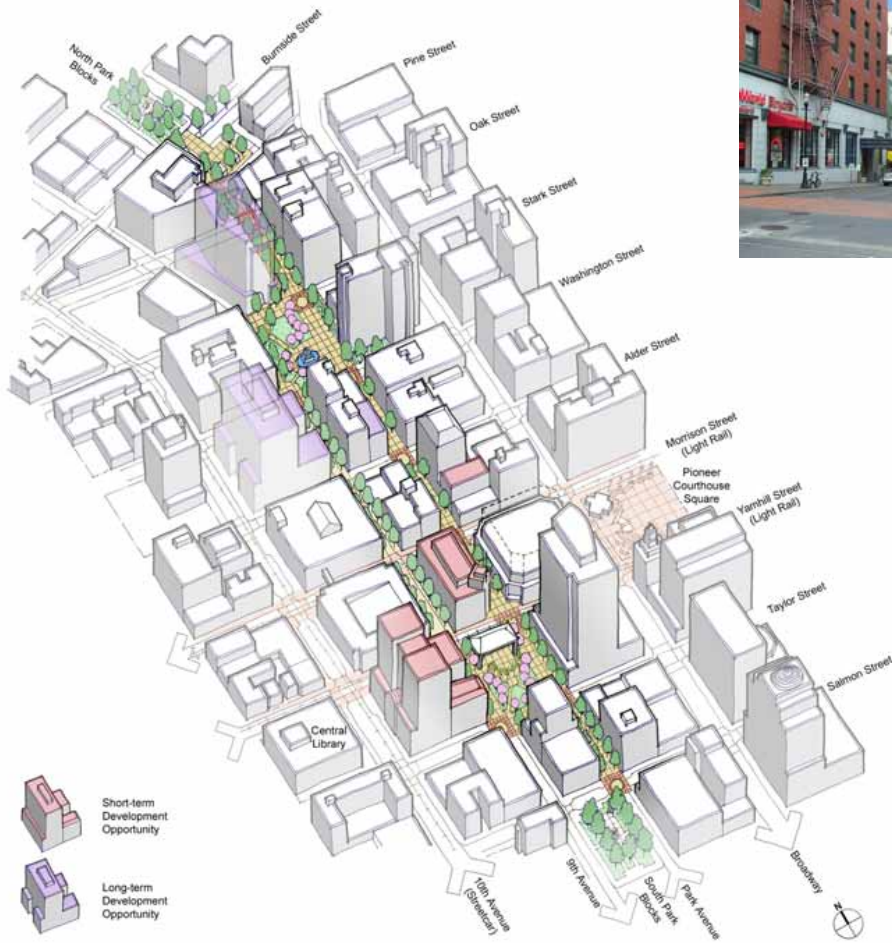


We propose creating a corridor of food carts along the Midtown Park Blocks between Director Park and O’Bryant Square by simply repurposing a few parking spots.



**The area is currently
a retail dead zone.**





Adaptive reuse of ground-floor streetscape (Park/Morrison looking north)

Park Avenue Streetscape

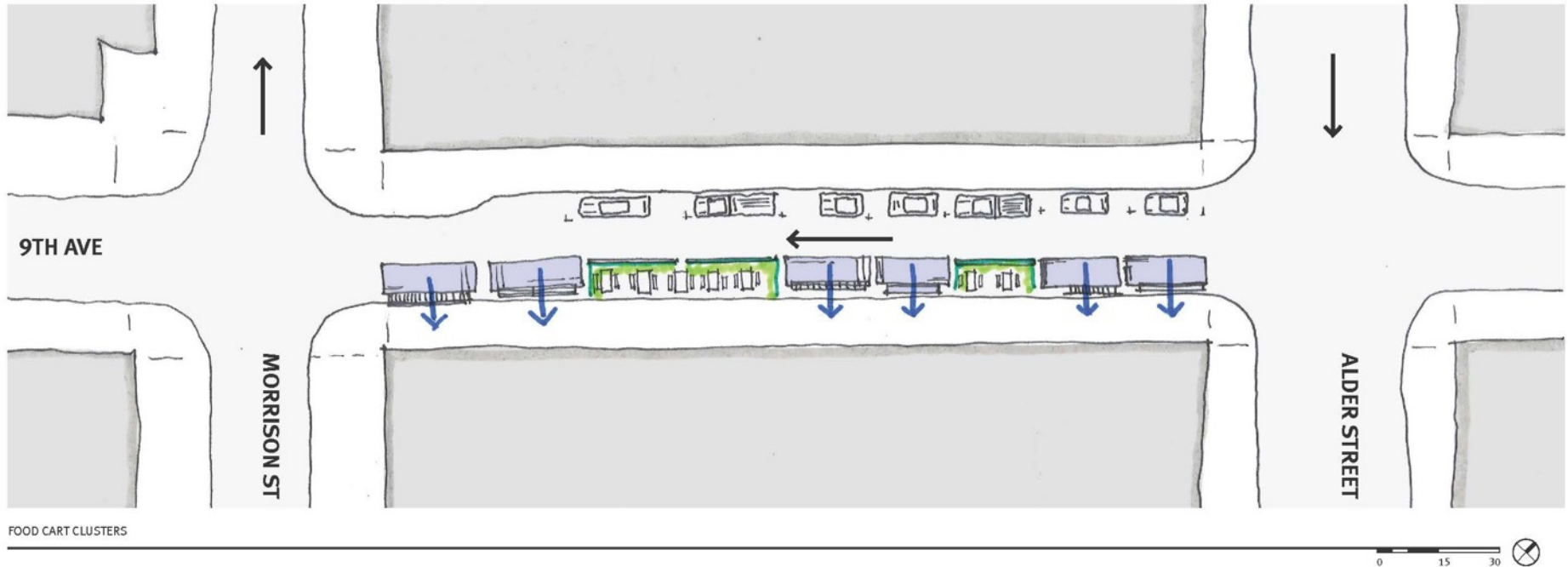
The Street Character Study presents ideas for streetscape enhancements to SW Park Avenue - the street that literally connects the North and South Park Blocks - that create a unique urban environment downtown. The goal is to establish a café-and-retail-lined street that becomes a haven for pedestrians without necessarily compromising vehicle access, parking and loading opportunities.

The hope is for the design of SW Park Avenue to be such that for special events, it can be closed to vehicle traffic to allow restaurants, cafes and other retail businesses to spill out into the street beyond the sidewalk. (See real world examples on the following page.)

In the last 20 years, the city has done at least four studies of the Midtown Blocks—none resulting in the kind of place-making imagined.

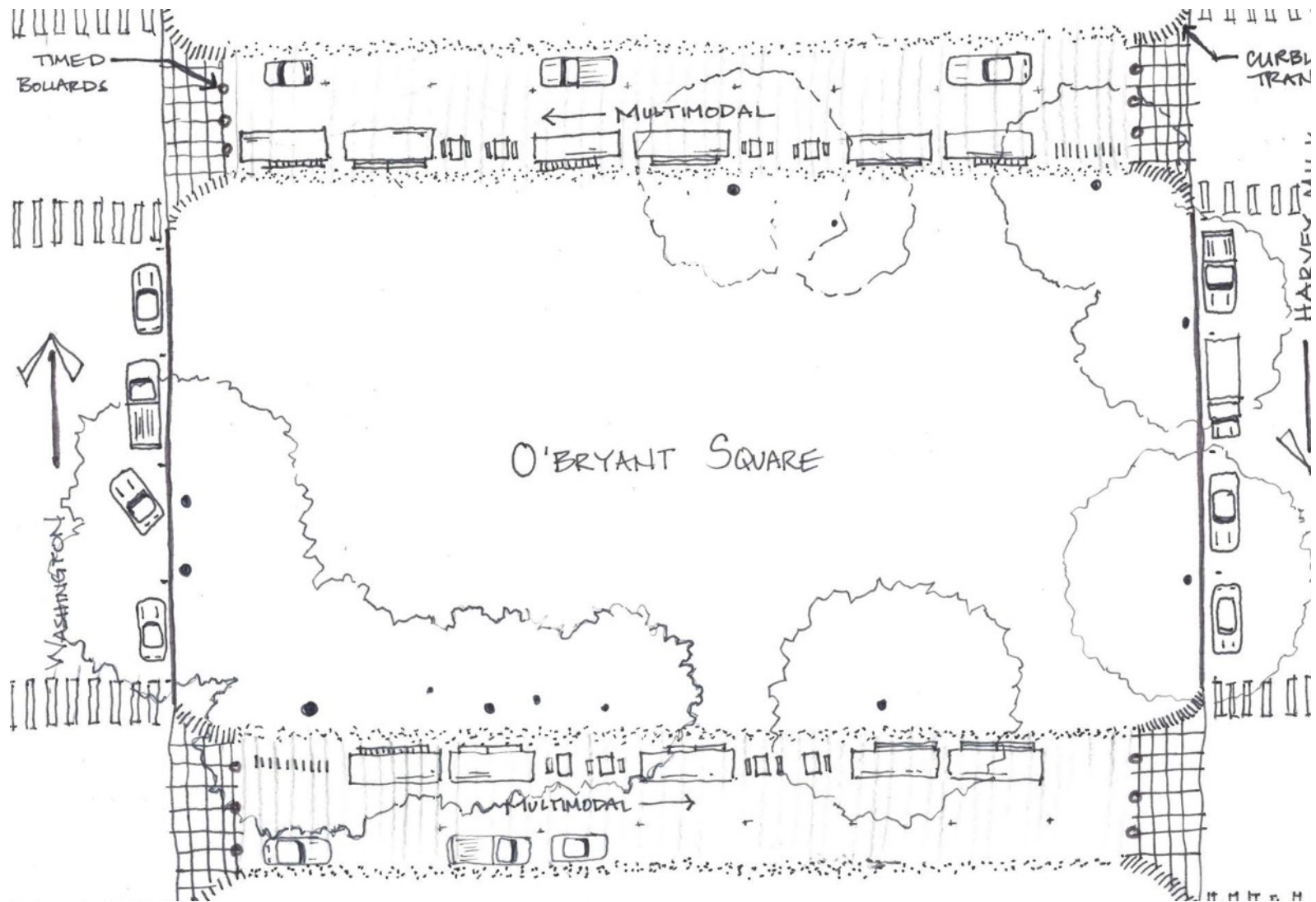


The Culinary Corridor will spark a change toward the kind of festival street those studies imagined.



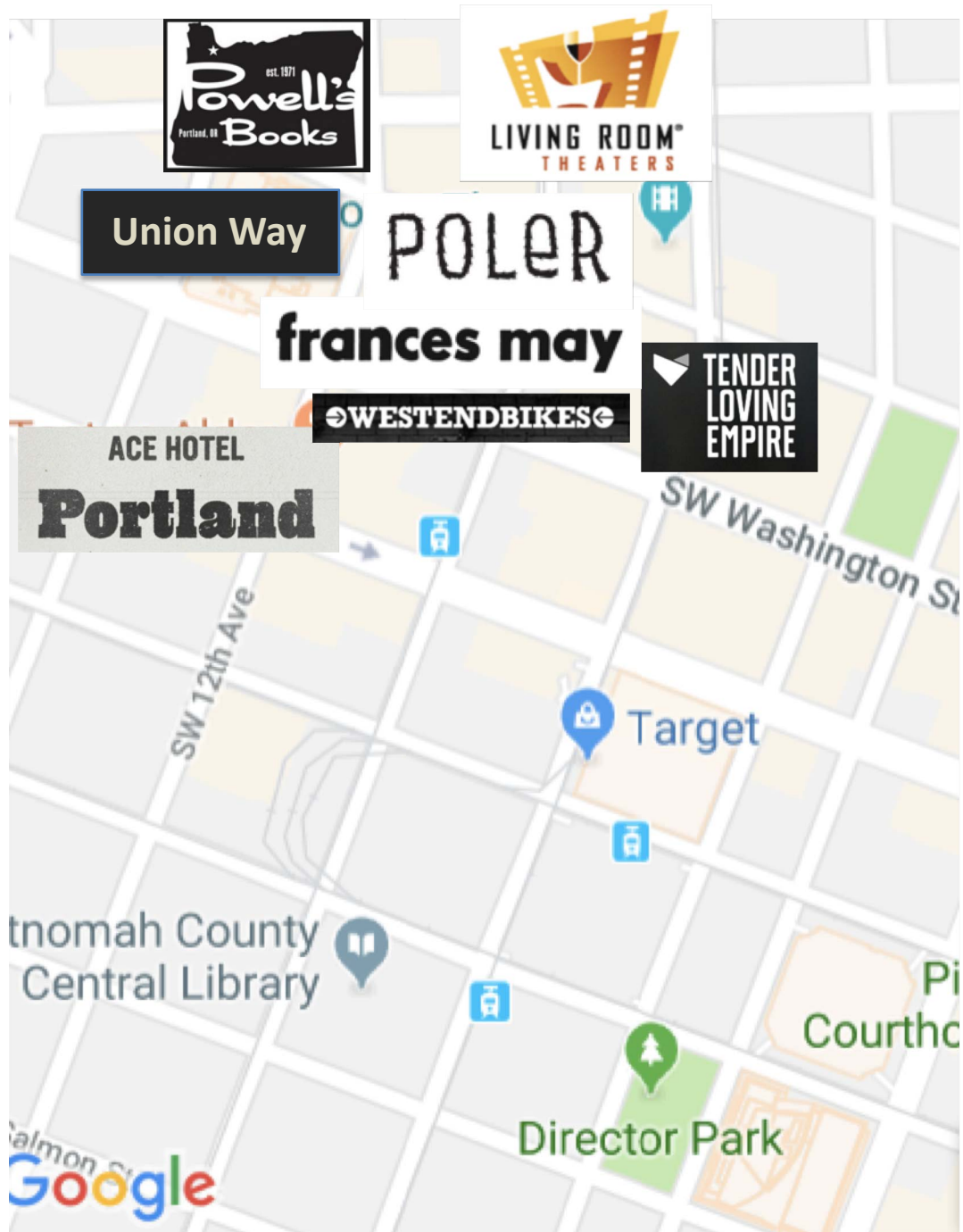
This doesn't need to be made difficult.

We propose a fast-track task force and a feasibility study of Ninth from O'Bryant Square to the South Park Blocks with pilot program for a single block . . .



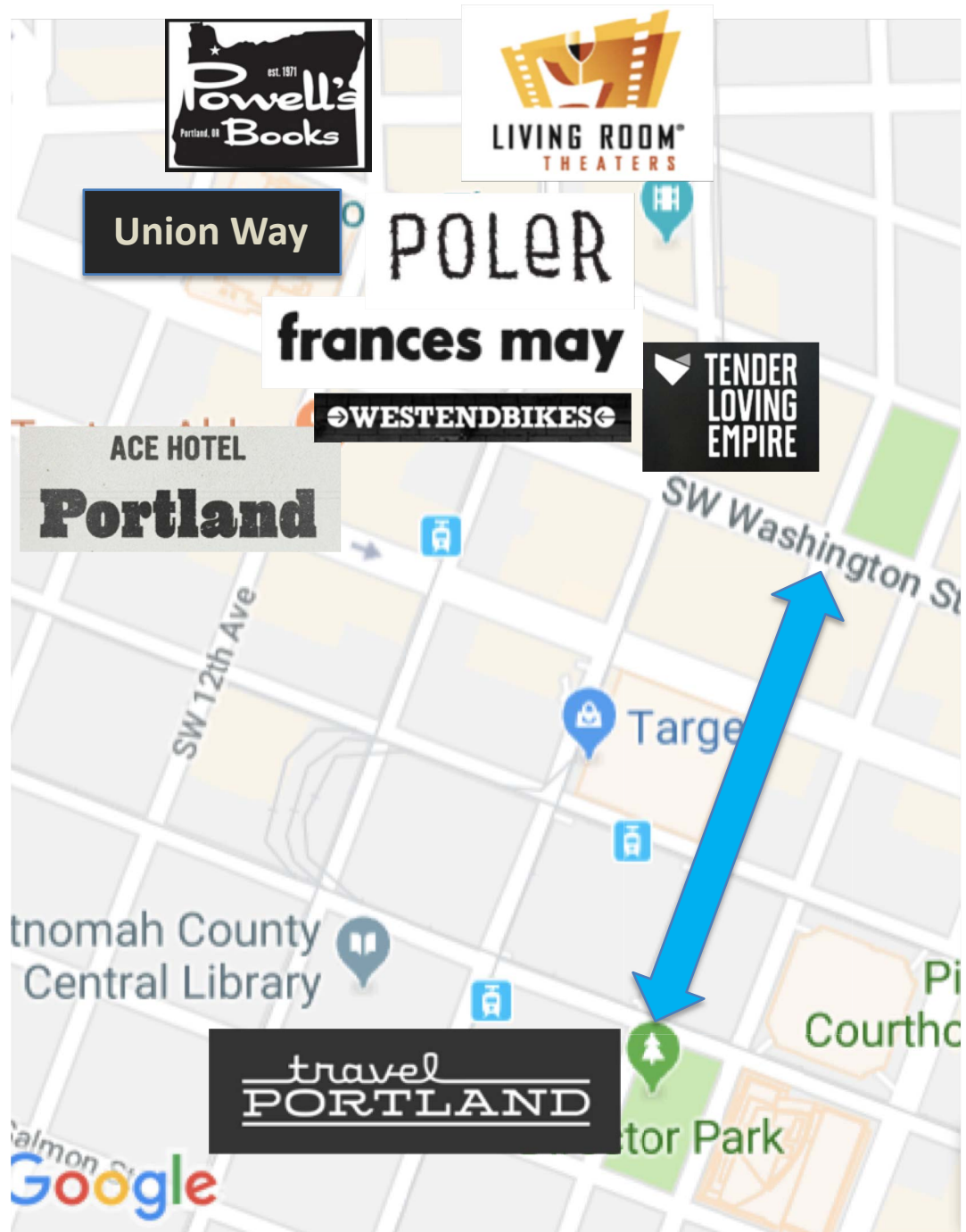
... and at O'Bryant Square, if some part of the plaza can be reopened on an interim basis

The Culinary Corridor
could connect West
End shopping district
via the Midtown Park
Blocks to . . .



... Travel Portland, soon to open its meet-and-greet center in Director Park.

Retail works best when destinations become connected through lively urban trails: the Pearl and Powell's to Travel Portland to the Cultural District.





Pioneer Courthouse Square recently added a carefully curated group of food carts, enlivening the Square and providing a new profit line to the Square's operations.

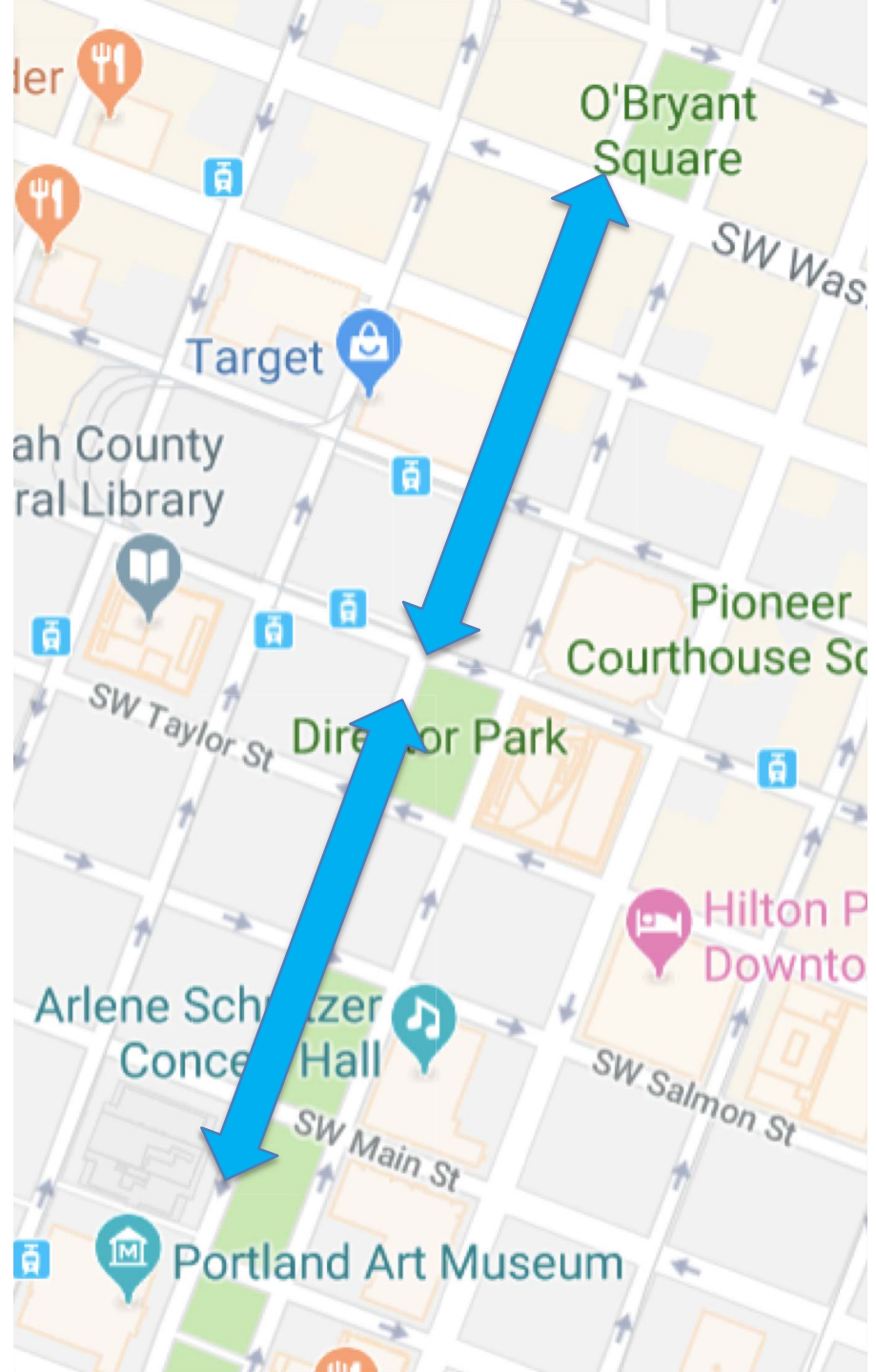
The Culinary Corridor would need a similarly careful approach:

- **Diversity of eating experience**
- **Lack of clutter**
- **Cleanliness**
- **Simple Design**

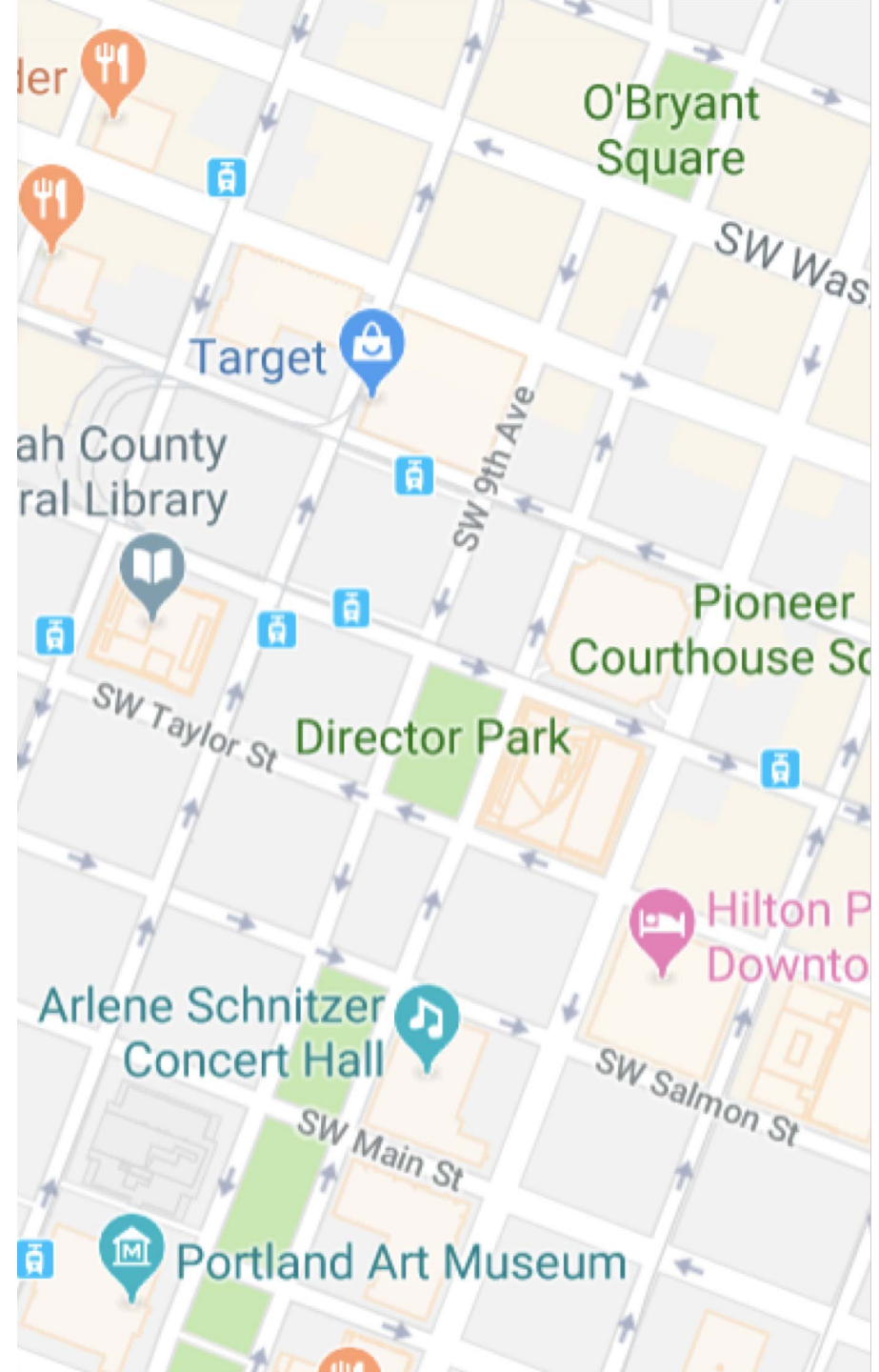
But it also needs to be real . . . authentic . . . grassroots . . .

- **Intermingle brand names with new start-ups focusing on ethnic and culinary diversity**
- **Work with Mercy Corps Northwest, Prosper Portland, MISO, APANO, Hacienda and others to create a micro-finance program to kickstart new entrepreneurs**

**If it works, the
Culinary Corridor
can expand.
If it doesn't . . .**



... it can go away.



Research is needed:

- **City and county codes**
- **Electricity**
- **Water and waste**
- **Seating**
- **Who is the curator/landlord?**

**The private sector will step up in partnership
with the city . . .**

**. . . particularly if a fast-track study for interim plan
for O'Bryant Square is included.**

Time is NOW to act.

**Otherwise, the national and international
headlines will be . . .**

**High-rising Downtown Portland
Loses Its Street Food Soul**

As a growing city with limited real estate options available for restaurateurs, the food cart pods provide another level of accessible incubation for aspiring owners and operators. The proposed feasibility study . . . will aid the city in its development goals, without compromising the food cart experience for locals or visitors.

This plan will strategically enhance the food cart experience as a complement to large-scale development projects.

—Jeff Miller, Travel Portland

The Culinary Corridor: Keeping Portland . . . Portland.

Concept planning moral supporters:

Travel Portland

Downtown Development Group

Melvin Mark

Portland Business Alliance

FoodCartsPortland.com

randygragg@gmail.com

Foodcartsportland@gmail.com

October 22, 2018

Dear City of Portland:

We are writing in support of the Culinary Corridor proposal to conduct a feasibility study to assess the future of food carts in downtown Portland.

Travel Portland takes great interest in projects that will enhance our desirability as a tourism destination, especially initiatives which create a competitive advantage for our region. Portland has a strong reputation of providing a best-in-class culinary scene from food carts to James Beard award-winning restaurants.

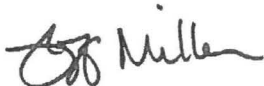
The food cart experience continues to be an important visitation demand driver for the central city, benefiting both residents and visitors alike, and to date has resulted in many domestic and international press accolades.

In addition to positive press, one of the many benefits of the tourism industry is its ability to bring in outside dollars to stimulate our local economy. In 2017, the tourism industry brought in \$5.2 billion dollars in direct spending equating to over \$250 million in state and local taxes.

As a growing city with limited real estate options available for restaurateurs, the food cart pods provide another level of accessible incubation for aspiring owners and operators. The proposed feasibility study for the Culinary Corridor on SW Ninth Avenue between Director Park and O'Bryant Square will aid the city in its development goals, without compromising the food cart experience for locals or visitors. This plan will strategically enhance the food cart experience as a complement to large-scale development projects.

Therefore, it is our pleasure to write in support of the proposed feasibility study along with other community stakeholders. We see our role as both a champion and supporter of this project. We encourage you to consider their proposal and invest in this concept.

Sincerely,



Jeff Miller
President & CEO Travel Portland

Parsons, Susan

From: Randy Gragg <randygragg@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, August 31, 2018 10:30 AM
To: Council Clerk – Testimony
Subject: Fwd: Communication

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Randy Gragg** <randygragg@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Aug 31, 2018 at 10:28 AM
Subject: Communication
To: Moore-Love, Karla <karla.moore-love@portlandoregon.gov>, FoodCarts Portland <foodcartsportland@gmail.com>

Hi Karla,

I spoke with you yesterday about a communication to City Council on Wednesday, Oct 31 regarding downtown foodcarts.

Brett Burmeister, cc'd here, and I would like to take back-to-back slots. We are working on adding a third person, but I want to nail down our time at least.

Here's a description:

Brett Burmeister, founder of Food Carts Portland blog, would like to address the commissioners on the threats to Portland's lively and internationally renowned food cart scene.

Randy Gragg, longtime Portland urban advocate, would like to address the commissioners on a potential solution to keeping these diverse, small business incubators downtown.

Let me know if you need anything else!

Randy Gragg
503-799-2655

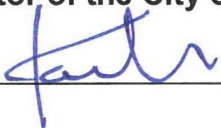
Request of Randy Gragg to address Council regarding
downtown food carts (Communication)

OCT 31 2018
PLACED ON FILE

OCT 23 2018

Filed _____

MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland

By  Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Eudaly		
Wheeler		