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431-2022

Proclamation

Proclaim May 30, 2022 to be Vanport Day of Remembrance

Placed on File

Whereas, our understanding of history shapes our view of the present, and to understand where we are going, we must understand where we are from; and

Whereas, 2022 is the 80th anniversary of the construction of Vanport, built in 1942; and

Whereas, Vanport was once the country's largest public housing project and Oregon's second largest city, with a peak population of 42,500; and

Whereas, Vanport was intended as temporary housing for the war workers pouring into Portland from all over the country, supplying labor to three major shipbuilding yards; and

Whereas, Vanport was demographically diverse, with African American, Hispanic, Native American, Asian and white populations who all came from elsewhere to work in the shipyards; and

Whereas, a postwar housing shortage affected all incoming laborers, but due to Portland's discriminatory housing policies of the time such as redlining, many of the African American workers could find no place to live because they were restricted to a small area of Portland that was already at capacity; and

Whereas, after the war, the city was also home to many Japanese Americans who returned from prison camps to find Vanport the only place they could procure housing in the Portland area; and

Whereas, these groups of people found themselves all strangers together and forged new connections that endured even after Vanport was gone; and

Whereas, Vanport was constructed in the Columbia River flood plain and was protected from the river by a series of levees; and

Introduced by

[Mayor Ted Wheeler](#)

Contact

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Requested Agenda Type

Time Certain

Date and Time Information

Requested Council Date

May 25, 2022

Requested Start Time

9:45 am

Time Requested

15 minutes

Whereas, the Columbia River flooded on May 30, 1948, displacing 18,700 residents , about 6,300 of them African American, leaving them homeless and without most of their belongings;

Whereas, at least 15 people died in the Vanport flood. Two were Japanese American who were among many who had few living options when released from concentration camps during WWII; and

Whereas, Vanport Mosaic will hold the 7th Vanport Mosaic Festival from May 20 to June 7 to honor and celebrate Vanport as an essential and often forgotten chapter in Portland's history - A story that provides a template for how we all can live together and create a society that honors history, cultural contributions and paves a way for our humanity and our city to thrive.

Now, therefore, I, Ted Wheeler, Mayor of the City of Portland, Oregon, the "City of Roses," do hereby proclaim May 30, 2022 to be

Vanport Day of Remembrance

in Portland and encourage all residents to observe this day.

Documents and Exhibits

 [Proclamation](#) (128.96 Kb)

Agenda Items

431 Time Certain in May 25-26, 2022 Council Agenda

Placed on File

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