



== CHICAGO AMERICAN GIANTS ==  
*April 1, 1915 - Portland, Ore.*



PORTLAND HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

# STATE OF THE CITY PRESERVATION REPORT 2021

MAY 2022

*Cover photo title and credits: National Register of Historic Places Landmark Nomination, 2021. The Chicago American Giants, including future Baseball Hall of Fame inductees Rube Foster and John Henry Lloyd, whilst on a 23-game tour in the Pacific Northwest, stayed at the Golden West Hotel which was the first hotel in Portland to serve back patrons.*

# Portland Historic Landmarks Commission

The Portland Historic Landmarks Commission **provides leadership and expertise on maintaining and enhancing Portland’s architectural and cultural heritage.** The Commission reviews development proposals for alterations to historic buildings and new construction in historic districts. The Commission also provides advice on historic preservation matters and coordinates historic preservation programs in the City.

## 2021 Commission Members



**KRISTEN MINOR, CHAIR** – Commissioner Minor has spent over 25 years studying and shaping the built environment. She practiced architecture for 10 years, then spent 10 as an urban planner, and now works exclusively with historic and older buildings.



**MAYA FOTY, VICE CHAIR** – Commissioner Foty’s experience includes numerous preservation projects on both the east and west coasts. With over 18 years’ experience as a preservation architect working exclusively on National Register listed properties, she specializes in projects with complex seismic and material conservation issues.



**MATTHEW ROMAN** – Commissioner Roman has 25 years of experience preserving Portland’s architectural heritage both as a designer and through involvement in nonprofit organizations like Restore Oregon, the Architectural Heritage Center, the Pittock Mansion, and the Preservation Artisans Guild.



**ERNESTINA FUENMAYOR (UNTIL APRIL 2022)**– Commissioner Fuenmayor has a Master’s Degree in Historic Preservation and spent the last 10 years working in historic preservation in the Pacific Northwest. She has written several National Register Nominations and local landmark designations, as well as historic building surveys. She has been practicing architecture for the last 16 years focusing in multifamily, government projects and historic resources.



**ANDREW SMITH** – Commissioner Smith is an historical architect with more than 20 years of experience working on preservation and rehabilitation projects, including many utilizing historic tax credits. He holds a Master of Architecture from Tulane University, and practiced in St. Louis, Chicago and New Orleans prior to living in Portland.



**KIMBERLY STOWERS MORELAND** – Commissioner Moreland, MBA, MURP, is the owner of Moreland Resource Consulting and has over 25+ years of public sector urban, historic preservation, community development, and urban planning experience. She worked as an Urban Planner for Portland, Tacoma, and Salem. She is actively involved with several cultural, historic preservation, and heritage boards, including: Oregon Black Pioneers, President, and Board Development Chair; Bosco-Milligan Foundation: Architectural Heritage Center, Board-Development Co-Chair; Oregon Heritage Commission.



**RON BRONSON (UNTIL FEBRUARY 2022)**— Commissioner Bronson has spent nearly two decades an interaction designer and director on large-scale technology projects. Outside of work, he started a chronicle of old Portland neon signs on Instagram (@portlandneon), which led to further interest in historic landmarks and architecture heritage in the city. Ron also coaches high school tennis in his spare time.

The Historic Landmarks Commission (PHLC) is supported by **HILLARY ADAM**, primary staff to the PHLC, an expert team from the Bureau of Development Services (BDS), and **KARA FIORAVANTI**, supervising manager of the Design and Historic Review team at BDS, as well as **BRANDON SPENCER-HARTLE**, our liaison from the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS).

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2021 STATS	<u>Commission Reviews</u>	1	Retreats with Staff and Commission	
	6	Type III Historic Resource Reviews	1	Trainings
	0	Type III Appeals to City Council	5	Work Sessions
	0	Type III for Landmark Designation	<u>Staff Reviews</u>	
	2	Type II Appeals	64	Type II Staff Level Reviews
	3	Design Advice Requests	20	Type IX Staff Level Reviews
	6	National Register Nominations	32	Type I Staff Level Reviews
	10	Briefings		

# 1.0 Message From the Chair

Dear Mayor Wheeler and City Council Members,

Portland is hurting and problems seem more entrenched than ever. All of us are sick and tired of divisiveness, of the corrosive effects of inequity and racism, and of the pandemic. On the Landmarks Commission, we are aware that for many, historic preservation seems like a side topic; something that is an “extra”, not a need. Yet preservation directly strengthens community bonds and generational stability, which help people heal and rebound from stress. Historic preservation and adaptive reuse are far better for the planet than the typical redevelopment model, moving us from a “throw-away” society to one that repairs and adds to what we already have. Finally, if used intentionally to honor communities who have experienced loss, displacement, and erasure, historic preservation can begin to work towards justice.

We have heard many voices saying that developers will benefit Portland simply by adding more housing. Is Williams Avenue a success? How you answer that question probably depends on who you are. Yes, there are new housing units on Williams. But many of the historic buildings, families, and businesses in the heart of Albina are gone. The Black families who have moved to less expensive areas such as East Portland are far from historic communities of people of color, and far from each other. Unlike white people who are reasonably confident they can find neighbors like them anywhere, the Black community has been - and continues to be - pulled apart. Portland’s Conservation Districts in N and NE Portland, locally-designated as opposed to listed on the National Register, have been damaged. We need policies to help people keep their homes, add ADUs, and to do building upgrades including weatherization, solar, and new systems. The Portland Housing Bureau has a “Right to return” program which places value on keeping or bringing back long-term neighborhood residents. This is exactly the kind of policy that directly addresses the red-lining and injustices of the past. Many more units of housing can be added to Conservation or Historic districts without allowing opportunistic developers to continue to pick off the most vulnerable people and properties.

We ask for funds from City Council to commit to a program of ongoing, yearly work in Preservation justice. This work would include surveys; designation of places important to communities historically subject to disinvestment within Portland; and other responsibilities (see the section in this report, “Cultural Resources Plan.”) It is not enough to focus on survey and designation; though. We are listening and learning about what holds a community together, especially the critical anchors of a neighborhood. Established and culturally-appropriate places and businesses need support in highly gentrified and gentrifying areas, and bringing successful designation and support programs such as the Legacy Business model to Portland can focus on places that anchor a thriving community. Increased home and business ownership by the historic residents of these neighborhoods can strengthen community ties and move the needle on inequality. The Black community has not benefitted from opportunities and incentives offered by traditional Preservation programs, because Black, Indigenous and people of color own a fraction of the real estate that white people do. The primary source of wealth for most Americans with assets is the inter-generational transfer of those assets, especially through inheritance. As outlined by Albina Vision Trust, ownership and investment is critical to wealth building and community cohesion. Historic preservation can and will benefit Black, Indigenous, and people of color if we can put in place a better system than business-as-usual.

Thank you,



Kristen Minor

Chair of the Portland Historic Landmarks Commission

## 2.0 What We Do



The Portland Historic Landmarks Commission has a wide variety of tasks, goals, and collaborative partners. We are here as a resource for city officials and neighborhoods as well as applicants. We are professionals who believe in finding nuanced solutions that benefit all Portlanders, including future generations. Below is a list of some of the powers and duties afforded to the Commission by the Portland Zoning Code:

### Make Recommendations to City Council

- Establishment, Amendment, or Removal of Historic Districts
- Adoption of New Design Guidelines for Historic Districts
- Type IV Demolition Reviews



### Decide Land Use Applications

- Type III Reviews of New Construction in Historic Districts
- Type III Reviews to Establish or Remove Landmark Designations
- Type III Reviews of Alterations To Historic Resources
- Type II Appeals



### Provide Advice

- Design Advice to Applicants for future Land Use Reviews
- Legislative Advice on Code Projects to Other Commissions (Design, PSC, PDC), City Council, City Bureaus, Other Public Agencies
- Collaborate with Portland Design Commission



### Advocate

- Initiate and Coordinate Preservation and Outreach Programs within and outside of the City



### Commission Highlights

- The Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) and the Design Commission (DC) held a joint Design Advice Request (DAR) for the Bridge Type Selection of the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge. This DAR marked a turning point in the future bridge's design following consensus among the two commissions. See page 12 for more info.
- This Historic Landmarks Commission participated in the creation of the Historic Resources Code Project, adopted in early 2022 by City Council. This included forming a subcommittee to work with a subcommittee of the Planning and Sustainability Commission (PSC) to form a 3x3 working group to refine Code concepts and provide testimony to the larger PSC in 2020 and steady leadership by Chair Minor who participated in PSC hearings and work sessions on the project which was forward to City Council in 2021.
- Reviewed and recommended approval of several National Register nominations including the South Park Blocks as well as the Golden West Hotel, Dean's Beauty Salon and Barbershop, and Mt. Olivet Baptist Church - three irreplaceable resources related to African-American history in Portland that now have demolition protections, ensuring these resources will remain as physical reminders of our past and present.

## 3.0 Why Preservation Matters

*Here, root yourselves beside me.  
I am that Tree planted by the River.  
Which will not be moved.  
I, the Rock, I, the River, I, the Tree  
I am yours—your passages have been paid.*

*Lift up your faces, you have a piercing need  
For this bright morning dawning for you  
History, despite its wrenching pain,  
Cannot be unlived, but if faced  
With courage, it need not be lived again.  
Lift up your eyes*

*Upon this day breaking for you.  
Give birth again  
To the dream.*

This excerpt of an inaugural poem entitled “On the Pulse of Morning” was written by Maya Angelou when Bill Clinton became the President of the United States, reiterating the original intention of historic preservation. Monuments, historic buildings, historical markers, and historic spaces such as parks, memorials, etc., remind us of dream makers who paved the path for our families and dreams.

For many, history was not so kind and cannot be unlived. But if we acknowledge the history, we can help honor the people by preserving spaces and places that gave birth to our dreams and accomplishments. Preserving the old Mount Olivet Baptist Church not only saves a historic building, but it honors those early church founders. Like Rueben Crawford, a well-respected ship caulker, who bought his freedom in 1862, moved his family to Oregon in 1870; and in the early 1900s, his daughter, Hattie Crawford Redmond, became a Black woman suffrage leader. Or Benjamin and Mary Rose Dean, who came to Oregon during WWII in hopes of establishing a family business, Dean’s Beauty Salon and Barber Shop, that has now operated for three generations. Civil Rights Activists Otto and Verdell Burdine Rutherford, whose home was the center of early Portland Branch of NAACP activities, and led the NAACP when the public accommodation law was finally passed in 1953.

Historic preservation is expanding beyond recognizing architectural masterpieces or history of the elite, but it embraces the culture within the walls of historic buildings. Many of which are not adorned with architectural details or designed by well-renowned architects. However, their stories are profoundly interwoven in the history of Oregon and the nation. Telling these stories through preservation of the spaces in which these people lived and these events took place, as well as through other means, is key to understanding the full complex story of Portland and allowing all Portlanders to see themselves as part of this continuum.

## Chapter Highlight

### Golden West Hotel Listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

The Golden West Hotel was recently listed on the National Register of Historic Places under African American Resources in Portland, Oregon, with the Period of Significance from 1851-1973. The building meets all of the general and property-specific registration requirements established by the Multiple Property Documentation (MPD) Form, and it is locally significant under Criterion A in the areas of Ethnic Heritage/Black, Commerce, and Entertainment/Recreation for its prominence within Portland's African American community between 1906 and 1930. Throughout its entire twenty-four-year period of significance, the Golden West Hotel was the only major hotel in Portland with an African American proprietor (W.D. Allen), and it was also the only major hotel in the city to welcome African American guests. It provided a necessary service for African American travelers, particularly railway porters, waiters, cooks, and other Black men employed in the railroad industry, but also for visiting Black entertainers, athletes, politicians, and activists, all of whom were denied lodging at white-owned establishments because of their race. The hotel and the smaller commercial spaces in its basement and ground floor also provided recreational opportunities and social gathering spaces for the local African American community. Overall, the Golden West Hotel was one of the most prominent Black-owned businesses in early twentieth century Portland and one of the most important community spaces available to African American Portlanders at this time. "Preservation of this resource ensures that this important aspect of our collective history will not be forgotten.





## 4.0 Recommended Council Action Items

### 4.1 Support the Creation of a Cultural Resources Plan

It's time to create a Cultural Resources Plan for Portland. The work of updating Title 33's Historic Code chapters has been done, thanks to the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, the Planning Commission, City Council, and hundreds of community members who shared their thoughts and ideas. We now have a process to update our City Historic Resources Inventory, ossified in time since 1984. We have a process to collect and save newer survey data. We have articulated what types of historic resources we most want to identify and protect, namely those that have been overlooked in the past and that represent groups with less power and prestige. Yet all of these processes and values are purely theoretical unless someone is tasked with doing this work, and given funding to do it. The City currently spends close to zero on outreach, preservation work, survey, or any other aspect of preservation, whether actively focused on underrepresented groups or not. The annual expenditure boils down to a single person's salary in the Bureau of Planning & Sustainability.

The last time the City was serious about addressing or repairing some of the damage caused by our own past planning policies, the Bureau of (then) Planning surveyed and created the Conservation Districts, in the early to mid-1990s. Since then we have apparently lost political will to fund community survey and designation work and, inevitably, the people with money enough to designate properties at the National Register level have dominated the process, favoring representation of wealthier and predominantly white histories. Please consider that the City's surveyed areas and our designated historic resources, at the local level or at the National Register level, might actually be more diverse at this point had the City committed to helping communities with less resources. The work to acknowledge or protect a diversity of resources has not happened since the 1990s, and today none will happen without funding and without specific agreements for City staff to allocate time and resources. This is why we need a Cultural Resources Plan.

A Cultural Resources Plan would put in place responsibility for doing some annual survey work, hopefully with partners in local higher education programs. Survey areas could include neighborhoods east of 82nd Avenue which were never surveyed in the past, as well as focus on areas of the City and any known places associated with Black, Latinx, LGBTQ, Women, Native American, Southeast Asian, African, and many other groups that were or became part of the population of Portland. Focused annual survey efforts could identify potentially eligible resources for designation and could allocate funding for an annual designation as well. It is important to recognize that these types of modest resources might be missed in typical professionally-led "windshield" survey work which focuses on architectural integrity in the built environment. To combat that, the Plan should identify how, when, and where the work of City-supported outreach, survey, and designation would take place. The Plan should identify how to find specific concentrations of historic resources related to these diverse groups and actively put into place strategies to pursue the support, input, and knowledge of the local communities in the essential research needed for such a survey.

#### 4.0 Recommended Council Action Items

But a Cultural Resources Plan could go further to pursue or support policies that would help prevent displacement and the ongoing loss of community cohesion in many areas of North and NE Portland. The Plan could identify Bureaus or stakeholders that might host various other culturally-supportive programs and create a forum for cross-pollination of programs across Bureau lines.

Portland has a lot of work to do. The Landmarks Commission asks for support from City Council and from preservation advocacy groups for a Cultural Resources Plan for the City.



Photo from 1950: N Broadway, Wheeler Ave and Flint Ave looking northeast



Photo from 2022: Same area, showing significant loss of neighborhood fabric.

## 4.0 Recommended Council Action Items

### 4.2 HRI Funding and Updates

We understand historic preservation has not served all Portland communities equally. Collectively we have not done a good job protecting the cultural resources of minority populations. The list of these historic places is long and unfortunately many are lost to previous indifference without even proper documentation. Those community stories become harder to tell without the touchstone of any physical cultural landscape left behind.

Beginning in 1966 with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act, and Portland's first historic preservation ordinance in 1968 we have regulated the level of protection historic properties and historic districts receive. We have relied primarily on the National Register of Historic Places to determine what is historic. More than 700 individual landmarks and 25 districts across Portland have been designated and protected for their architectural, cultural, and historic significance. For almost four decades the majority of this work has been funded by private individuals. In many cases the listings made access to state and federal preservation programs possible. This mechanism for listing properties has predictable results. Yes, many important properties have been saved, but we must recognize how inadequate this system has been protecting vulnerable and scarce resources of underrepresented communities.

Portland's new Historic Resource Code represents our community values related to preservation. Stated values acknowledge:

1. Meaningful and tangible connections to the past enhance the lived experiences of current and future community members.
2. Extending the useful life of existing buildings retains embodied carbon and reduces landfill waste.
3. Historic resources provide opportunities to acknowledge, address and reverse past harms.
4. The broad community should be engaged in the identification and designation of historic resources, with underrepresented histories prioritized for protection.
5. Historic places must continually evolve to meet the changing needs of Portlanders. Value statements like this need to be advanced through action which as we all know means money!

Work to identify, designate and protect historic resources will continue to be funded by the private sector. Changes to the Historic Resource Code will make it easier to designate a property without going through the National Register process. Code changes alone however, will not correct the past inequities around what has been designated. In order to tell a more inclusive story we (the City) need to fund the research that has not been done until now. How can we prioritize underrepresented histories without funding the research into what they are? The City of Portland's funding of The National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation (MPD) Form for African American Resources in Portland is a great example of how we can make good on our promise to correct the injustice built in to our system.

Only funding from Portland City Council can ultimately correct the inequity. Making Portland's historic resource regulations more equitable, effective, and responsive to the current and future needs of Portlanders requires we update the Historic Resource Inventory to reflect stories and places of the entire population. Anything short leaves the current inequity in place and time is ticking as those unrecognized places disappear. How can we plan for a future city without a thorough survey of the existing cultural landscape? Be bold and take action now to save what is disappearing fast. Fund the work that will otherwise not be done.



*Blackstone Hotel aka Fairfield Apartments, a Significant Resource associated with A.D. Griffin, editor of The New Age, the first African-American newspaper published in the U.S.*

## Chapter Highlight

### Benefits of Historic Designation: Billy Webb Elks Lodge

In 2020, The Billy Webb Elks Lodge on North Williams Avenue in Portland was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in recognition of its historical significance for the city's Black community. It first served as the African American branch of the Portland YWCA and was part of a larger historical context of "Colored Women's Clubs" in early 20th-century Oregon. For a four-year period during WWII, the lodge was loaned to the United Service Organization (USO) for use as a recreation center for African American servicemen. In 1948, the building was used as an emergency shelter during the Vanport Flood disaster providing shelter to the African American community, which was disproportionately impacted. In 1956, the Portland Branch of the NAACP established its first official headquarters in the basement of the lodge, focusing on African American community issues like the value of organized opposition, state support for education, housing accessibility, discrimination in labor unions, and displacement by urban renewal programs in inner northeast Portland

In the early morning of September 11th, 2021, the Billy Webb Elks Lodge in North Portland's Albina neighborhood suffered a devastating fire as a result of trespassers. The decking attached to the rear of the building caught fire, which in turn ignited two adjacent walls and the roof above the lodge's ballroom. Thankfully, the fire was reported quickly enough that it was contained in time to save much of the building. Unfortunately, the blaze left gaping holes in the building's roof, and burnt rafters throughout. Water has destroyed the walls and floor of the ballroom, as well as the basement below, and the entire interior has been damaged by smoke. Recent listing in the National Register of Historic Places opened doors for grant funding that can offset the costs of preservation and business planning, as well as staffing. The lodge was awarded a small grant by the National Trust for Historic Preservation to fund a feasibility study exploring self-sustaining uses for the property that will outline steps to optimize the building and its operations for new income-producing uses.



*Billy Webb Elks Lodge*

## *4.0 Recommended Council Action Items*

### **4.3 URM Policies and Funding Updates**

Portland has approximately 1,650 unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings, which use stone or brick masonry for structural walls. These buildings range from small one-story residences to large 10- or 12-story buildings, and many have civic or educational uses. While some of these buildings are designated as historic landmarks and represent a valuable part of the City's cultural heritage, many are not designated. They are churches, schools, apartment buildings, storefront buildings and located in some of our most densely populated urban cores.

Because URM buildings are very fragile in a seismic event, the City has been exploring ways to ensure upgrades for URMs. In 2019, the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management formed a URM work group comprised of representatives of URM building owners, URM building tenants, and other subject matter experts charged with further evaluating reasonable seismic retrofit requirements, and developing recommendations for standards, financing options, incentives, tax strategies, and timelines for a seismic retrofit program for Class 3 and Class 4 URM buildings. Two HLC Commissioners sat on this work group. The work group was dissolved in the wake of the COVID-19 crisis and the subsequent civil rights protests and has not been reconvened.

It is of paramount importance that the City continues its efforts to find ways to incentivize building owners to upgrade their URM Building and to help identify funding sources to help defray the costs. The City of Seattle signed a resolution in December, 2021 declaring City Council's and the Mayor's intent to consider strategies to ensure that all URM buildings in Seattle are seismically retrofitted. This resolution identifies that both City resources and external funding sources will be necessary to successfully implement a mandatory URM retrofit program. Given that costs associated with seismic upgrades for privately owned URMs are estimated to total around \$1.3 billion in Seattle, the City alone will not be able to offer the financial resources required, and will instead need to assist building owners with accessing affordable funding options and creating other strategies to incentivize retrofits. Portland needs to follow suit.

The recent Covid-19 pandemic and wildfires should underscore the fact that natural disasters are real and can happen any time, and we must be ready for them. While we understand that ongoing natural disasters take precedent over future ones, we must keep taking steps to prepare ourselves. One easy task would be to update the City of Portland URM Inventory to clarify definitions of what a URM building is and make sure the list of buildings on it is accurate and up to date. The Landmarks Commission has demonstrated its interest in aiding in this process and we again offer our services toward this effort.

### **Accurate Data is the First Step to Implementing a URM Policy: The Washington State Unreinforced Masonry Inventory**

At the close of the 2017-2018 legislative session, the Washington State Legislature directed the Department of Commerce, in collaboration with the Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), to initiate an inventory of unreinforced masonry (URM) buildings in Washington State, excluding single-family housing. This undertaking included the following tasks:

- Inventorying and categorizing, to the greatest extent possible, information such as the locations, building attributes (e.g., building use, historic character), and vacancy or underutilization of Washington’s URM buildings.
- The Legislature’s directive stipulated that the URM Inventory be produced using existing survey and data sources to the greatest extent possible. Development of both the structure and content of the URM Inventory consequently drew on a variety of data sources.
- The development of a URM Dashboard, an online mapping interface that enables users to view – at varying levels of detail – the geographic distribution of suspected URM buildings that meet a wide variety of criteria, as well as a detailed development of that criteria.
- Finally, a focused pilot survey in order to demonstrate the type of building-specific field survey and permit research that is necessary to transform a given list of “Suspected URM” buildings to one consisting of “Identified URM” buildings. Downtown Port Townsend was selected as the location for the pilot survey due to its preponderance of URM buildings, several of which have undergone structural upgrades.



*Troy Laundry Building, URM, currently under renovation including seismic retrofit*

## 4.0 Recommended Council Action Items

### 4.4 Establish a Legacy Business Program

Two years into the pandemic and we, as a community, cannot foresee what the economy, and world will be. We thought 2020 was hard for small businesses, however 2021 turned out to be even worse to many. The shortage of materials, labor, transportation, and now a war with global impacts has made the survival of many restaurants, stores, and local small businesses challenging. Last year, the Commission presented the idea to the City of Portland the importance to financially support Legacy Business, a term that has been used in cities around the country to identify historic small businesses that based on their “enduring presence in their neighborhoods, are community gathering places that have played an integral role in making a city what it is today.”<sup>1</sup> These cities have seen the importance these business have to a community, and even organizations like the National Trust for Historic Preservation launched the Backing Historic Small Restaurants Grant Program, in the same spirit of supporting legacy businesses.

1 Erin Swicegood, “Celebrating Mom and Pop Shops: The Importance of Legacy Business Programs for Conserving Living Heritage” (Master Degree Terminal Project, Portland, Oregon, University of Oregon, 2020), 3.

Since Summer of 2020, the Commission initiated conversations with City Council to study the implementation of a similar program in the City of Portland, here is a proposal of how the city can achieve the goal to create and implement this program:

- First phase would be to understand what is existing, with an inventory that can be done by the communities by self-registering their businesses that would comply with the criteria established.
- Second phase would identify funding sources: bond measure, city budget, grants, etc.
- Third Phase would be implementing a Pilot program with 5 businesses.

Actions to save small businesses from closing is desperately needed in Portland, where displacement, gentrification, and the pandemic have affected the communities around the city and beyond. The PHLC is in support of a program that can help preserve our uniqueness, character and culture, and strongly encourage our government to take action with a Legacy Business Program.



Paul Knauls (left) and Paul Knauls Jr., owners of Geneva's Shear Perfection, a legacy barbershop and salon located in the heart of Portland's African American community, announce the closing of their landmark business due to economic losses caused by the coronavirus public health crisis. Photo by Shawntell Washington/The Portland Observer.



The Roxy, a Portland staple for 27 years that served as a safe space for many, particularly those in the LGBTQ community, is the latest downtown business to close its doors for good.

## Chapter Highlight

### Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge Project DAR

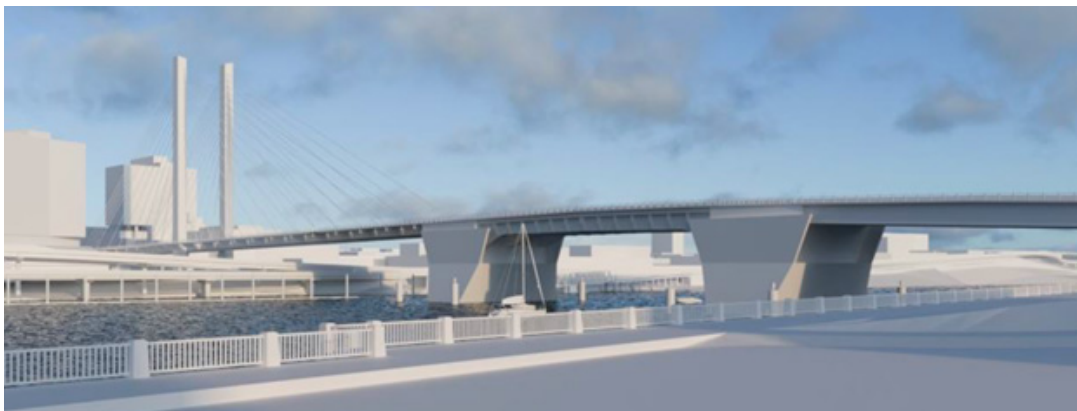
As part of Multnomah County’s public outreach on the Earthquake Ready Burnside Bridge project, the project team held a joint Design Advice Request (DAR) with the Historic Landmarks Commission and the Design Commission in March 2021. The project team had briefed both Commissions several times, sometimes jointly, but this was the first time the Commissions were able to offer advice on the physical form of the future bridge.

Because the existing Burnside Bridge is a Historic Landmark, the Landmarks Commission has recommending authority to City Council on any proposed demolition of the bridge. At the time of the DAR, the Design Commission still had approval authority over the majority of the bridge while the Landmarks Commission had (and still has) approval authority over the portion of the future bridge west of the seawall at Tom McCall Waterfront Park, as this is the eastern edge of the Skidmore/Old Town Historic District. Because these two Commissions would both have design purview over a future bridge, it was important to achieve some level of consensus between the two Commissions.

The Commissioners recognized the Burnside Bridge as the cardinal center of the city, Burnside dividing north and south, east and west by the Willamette River. The existing historic bridge provides 360° of nearly uninterrupted views of the City skyline and surrounding landscape as well as clear views up and down the river as the bridge is located at the river bend. The Commissioners believed that any new bridge built to take the place of this landmarked bridge with these iconic characteristics should be just as iconic.

Prior to this DAR, there was much discussion among stakeholders over whether or not the bridge should be symmetrical about the center span. Through discussion at the DAR, Commissioners recognized that the context on the west was markedly different than the context on the east. The west is characterized by low scale historic buildings that date from the City’s founding, an iconic historic neon sign, a linear public open space, and a blunt seawall. The east is characterized by a more gently sloped landscape, a freeway and railroad, and tall, modern, and dynamic buildings. The east side also demands a longer span than the west due to unstable soils beneath the bridge. The Commissioners acknowledged that the asymmetrical context requires an asymmetrical response and that should be celebrated.

Both Commissions agreed that the ideal bridge form for this diverse context should be a girder with no above-deck structure on the west (to ensure unobstructed views of the “Portland, Oregon” sign and the downtown skyline and to respect the scale of the historic district), a bascule at the center span (also to ensure unobstructed views of the skyline and surrounding landscape), and a cable-stayed bridge at the east (to match the exuberance and drama of the east bridgehead and draw attention away from the freeway and railroad below). Finding consensus among the dozen or so Commissioners present, all of whom have various backgrounds, was remarkable, and a fascinating discussion overall. We have heard that this DAR helped Multnomah County narrow their focus on the proposed bridge type to an asymmetrical solution as recommended by the Commissions. We look forward to future collaboration with the project team.



*Burnside Bridge, Cable Stay option*



#### *4.0 Recommended Council Action Items*

### **4.5 Preservation of Public Art - Statues, Graffiti, Cultural Legacies**

In 2020, a number of monuments and memorials associated with racial injustice were vandalized, destroyed or removed in Portland as well as the rest of the country. These included monuments to George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Harvey Scott, and others. In some cases, public monuments were vandalized because of their prominent public location, like the Thomson Elk Fountain in downtown.

The toppling of the Stalin statue in Budapest, Hungary, on October 23, 1956, heralded the Hungarian revolution against Soviet occupation. What we display as art and how the public interacts with the art is part of a larger cultural conversation that the City of Portland has to be part of. As we enter into a national dialogue and reckon with historical narratives, we ask City Council to recognize

that public art can play an integral role in our society, activating and reflecting who we are and what we value. This means advocating and helping to fund new public art and artists, but also protecting and maintaining monuments that represent positive aspects of Portland's past. The Landmarks Commission is always ready to advise on new monuments in historic settings, or the appropriate protection of existing monuments.



*Thomson Elk Fountain*



*Temporary York Statue that replaced the Harve Scott Statue*

## *Chapter Highlight*

### **Sustainability and Climate Resilience**

The issue of climate resilience continues to be a central theme in the design and construction industry. Much in the same way as society continues to make the transition away from fossil fuels and increase investment in renewable energy sources, the building industry is increasingly embracing the climate-friendly approach of reuse and retrofit of existing buildings over demolition and replacement.

Over the past 25 years, much has been documented regarding the embodied energy in our existing built environment. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, building construction and operations account for nearly 40% of annual carbon emissions worldwide – higher than both transportation and industrial activity. And, an energy efficient new building can typically take 30 years, and in some cases up to 80 years, to offset the carbon impact of its initial construction alone.

As we continue toward achieving the goals laid out in the City’s Climate Action Plan, the Landmarks Commission urges City Council to remain mindful of the tremendous impact the built environment has on our carbon footprint, and to enact further measures to encourage and incentivize reuse, rather than demolition, of our building stock.



*Portland Waterfront, image of White Stag building*

## 5.0 Projects of the Year: 2021

5.1 Anna Lewis Mann, Old People's Home: New Build Project of the Year

5.2 Montgomery Park Alterations: Rehabilitation Project of the Year



## 5.0 Projects Approved by Commission

### ANNA LEWIS MANN HOUSE

Architect: Emerick Architects

Developer: Home Forward



### 5.1 Anna Mann House: New Build Project of the Year

The Portland Historic Landmarks Commission recognizes projects that go beyond simply preserving or restoring historic buildings. Projects we spotlight also highlight community values historic preservation helps articulate. Preserving the past to house the future, Anna Mann House represents a nexus of sustainability, affordable housing and preservation planning. When complete this Landmark property in the Kerns neighborhood will provide 128 affordable units serving low income households, immigrants and refugees and other communities of color in an area well supported by neighborhood services and transportation. The Kerns Laurelhurst area gets increased density but not at the expense of more gentrification. Repurposing historic buildings has a long tradition accommodating changes to uses and users. We highlight this project as an example of how useful old buildings can be in addressing some of the challenges ahead of us, specifically housing. Adaptive reuse of historic buildings can bring meaningful change to neighborhoods and communities without destroying them. Materials are saved from landfills. We preserve the architecture that belongs to the neighborhood and the visual continuity and unique sense of place in each of Portland's neighborhoods. We commend the owner's vision of transforming this property for housing while maintaining the integrity of this 110-year-old building and for their respectful approach to the site and neighborhood. We encourage the City of Portland to invest in and support projects like this whenever possible.

## 5.0 Projects Approved by Commission

### MONTGOMERY PARK

Architect: GBD Architects

Developer: Unico Properties



### 5.2 Montgomery Park, 2701 NW Vaughn Street: Rehabilitation Project of the Year

Constructed in 1920 and enlarged in 1936, the Montgomery Ward & Company Building was one of six similar catalog distribution centers developed by the company between 1920-1929. The building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985 for its association with the evolution of mail-order retailing as well as its architectural expression as a massive warehousing facility. The building was vacated by the company in 1984. In 1989, the Naito Corporation rehabilitated the building, converting it into office space. At that time, the main entrance was shifted to a glass-enclosed light-well on the west. Prior to that, the west façade had been the back of the building with the main entry at the east, above the railroad terminals. In 2021, GBD Architects proposed alterations to the building including: removal of the west addition entrance to be replaced by a multi-story curtain wall in plane with the “rear” façade, revamping the east entrance and conversion of the vehicle ramp for pedestrian use, introduction of operable storefronts and conversion of loading docks at the north and east to activated sidewalk areas with adjacent retail, office, and dining, and conversion of the penthouse to a restaurant with access to the rooftop which will provide incredible views of the City and the building’s iconic rooftop sign. This remodel is respectful to the historic landmark, as the changes remove incompatible additions, retain character-defining elements and will allow greater enjoyment of the building through minor alterations at the ground level to accommodate contemporary needs and desires. The rehabilitation, along with other nearby development, will help Montgomery Park further establish itself as an anchor in this changing neighborhood.

# 6.0 HLC 2021 Watch List

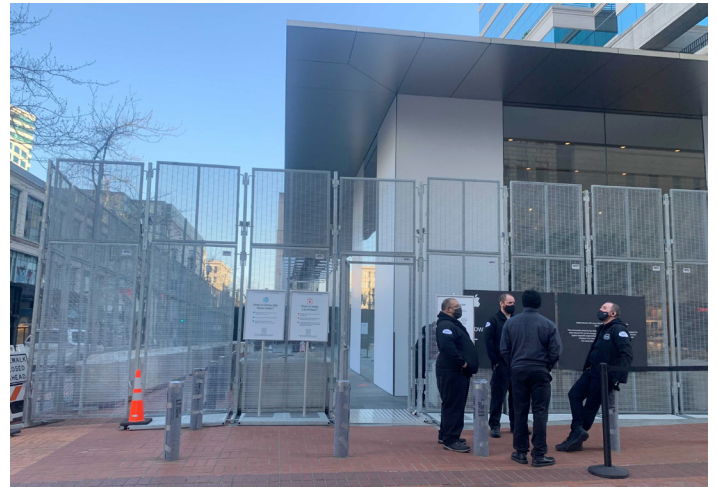
## 2035 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

### POLICY 4.51 - CITY-OWNED HISTORIC RESOURCES:

“Maintain City-owned historic resources with necessary upkeep and repair.”

#### 6.1 Downtown (Pandemic/Vandalism, etc)

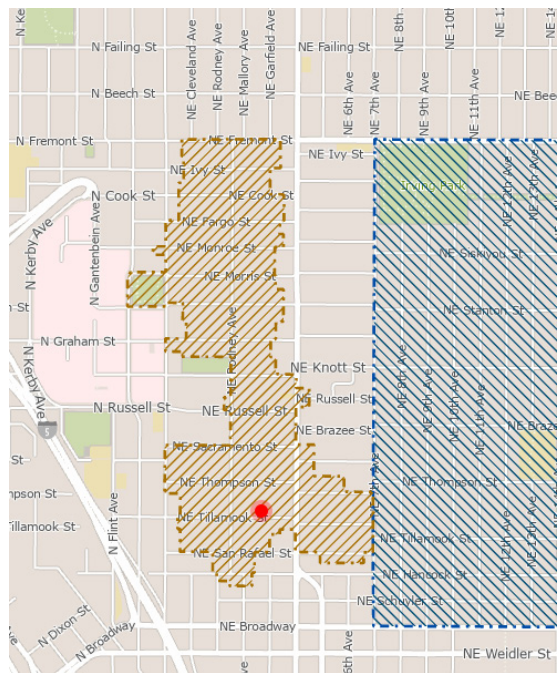
With the end of the pandemic in sight, every effort should be made to make downtown welcoming both to the people that work there and to out of town visitors. This includes making the sidewalks safe for pedestrians, making sure trash is cleaned up and trash cans are available at all blocks. Consider grants for business to help clean off graffiti and keeping their sidewalks near their businesses clean from trash. Ensure that public spaces such as parks are safe and clean. The vitality of our city is critical for the long-term preservation of our buildings and encouraging continued investment.



Apple Store, Portland OR

#### 6.2 Eliot Conservation District

Decimated by Portland planning decisions long before Eliot was designated a Conservation District (local historic district) in the early 1990s, the neighborhood has also been altered more than any other Conservation District since this time. Bland condos and apartment buildings have replaced original buildings, especially along Commercial streets, and businesses are generally by and for white people. Though Contributing properties in all Conservation Districts are now required to at least get a land use approval before demolition, Eliot’s Black history is still arguably lost. There is no plan to support Black ownership or history, reckon with the losses to the Conservation District, or re-survey the District to recognize remaining buildings for their ties to the pre-1960s vibrant Black culture and history.



Eliot Conservation District

## 6.0 2021 Watch List

### 6.3 Montgomery Park to Hollywood Transit (MPH2)

The Montgomery Park to Hollywood Transit and Land Use Development Strategy (MP2H) will study opportunities to create an equitable development plan for potential transit-oriented districts in NW Portland (extending from the Central City to Montgomery Park) and NE Portland (extending from the Central City to the Hollywood District). The MP2H study identifies land use and urban design options, economic development opportunities, and community benefits possible with a transit-oriented development scenario. The project will also consider how such opportunities could support the City's racial equity, climate justice, employment, and housing goals. The work is funded by a Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant.

The project team, including staff from the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) and Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), will assess affordable housing, economic development, and business stabilization opportunities associated with potential transit investments. They will evaluate existing and future transit services along a potential 6.1-mile transit corridor in two areas:

- Northwest: Explore extending the streetcar or other high-quality transit service to Montgomery Park, linking the Lloyd District and the Central Eastside to an underserved area of Northwest Portland.
- Northeast: Explore preliminary alignment options and development potential for an extension of the streetcar to the Hollywood District.

Both of these areas potentially include unidentified historic resources that could be impacted by significant growth and development. For instance, the Northwest project area has a unique history as the general location of the 1905 Lewis & Clark Exposition while Sandy Boulevard has many vintage mixed-use buildings and long-standing businesses associated with people of color, many of which lack protection from gentrification.

### 6.4 OMSI District Master Plan

The Oregon Museum of Science and Industry seeks approval from the City of Portland for the OMSI District Master Plan, which covers ten city blocks and is expected to include up to three million square feet of new mixed-use buildings. There will be a hub for innovation, arts, culture, science learning, and climate action. The District will include increased retail, restaurants, public green space, waterfront access, and learning/technology installations. A waterfront education park will include public green space, plazas, restored riverfront habitat, hands-on outdoor science programming, and interpretation that affirms, sustains, and shares Indigenous ecological knowledge and cultural connection to the river. The District will include a restored riverfront habitat and 1,200 new housing units with a minimum of 20% units for low-income families. Finally, the District will showcase and advance climate solutions through transportation, next-generation urban systems and technology, and OMSI science learning experiences advocating informed climate action.

While the site no longer contains historic landmarks due to multiple demolitions that led to the site's delisting from the National Register, the Commission is supportive of concepts that increase cultural connections to the river and the region's past.



## 6.0 2021 Watch List

### 6.5 Firefighters Memorial

The David Campbell Memorial, located on a traffic island between SW 18th, SW 19th, and SW Alder, just below West Burnside and north of Providence Park, is a cenotaph built to honor the much beloved 18-year Chief Engineer of the City's Fire Department. David Campbell died in 1911 fighting a four-alarm fire when he entered a burning building to make sure all other firefighters had evacuated.

Originally the monument was surrounded by sidewalk on all three sides but in 1963 the east sidewalk was converted to a strip of open space which is now called Portland Firefighters Park. As the site exists within the right-of-way, the memorial and the unofficial park fall within the purview of the Bureau of Transportation. Despite no official responsibility, the Fire Department also dedicates a significant amount of time toward maintenance to mitigate damage and vandalism given that the monument and the park are dedicated to the memories of our City's firefighters.

The David Campbell Memorial Association (DCMA) has long played a caretaking role in maintenance of the memorial and hope to see a greater preservation effort supported by the City. This would include greater protections against vandalism, restoration of the water feature, and relighting the lanterns. Some of these treatments may require historic resource review, as would shifting the location of the memorial further south to enhance safety and enjoyment of the memorial and the park which is under consideration by the DCMA. The Historic Landmarks Commission is interested in participating and hosting these conversations as the site is a Portland Historic Landmark, listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2010. The Commission invites City bureaus to work together with the DCMA to find a safe and appropriate solution for better preservation of this important monument to those who have given their lives in service to the City. The DCMA has raised over \$200,000 toward restoration of the memorial and hopes for additional support from the City including planning, restoration, and continued maintenance.

Portland Fire & Rescue has protected the citizens of Portland for 169 years. 75 members have given their lives in service. They deserve to be recognized. And this memorial demands better stewardship from the City they served.



*Firefighters Memorial, Image from 1931*



## 6.0 2021 Watch List

### 6.6 Thompson Elk Fountain

The Thompson Elk Fountain – consisting of a bronze elk statue atop a rectangular granite podium, and an octagonal fountain basin with four animal watering troughs – has been a Portland landmark for 120 years, and a designated local Historic Landmark since 1974. Portions of the granite base were damaged during the Summer 2020 protests, and the City dismantled and stored the statue and fountain in July of that year to prevent further damage. Notably, additional damage seems to have occurred during the City's removal process.

In September 2021, the Landmarks Commission received a briefing from the City Arts Program Manager regarding current planning for redeployment of the Landmark. Potential options included 1) returning the sculpture and restored fountain to its historic site, 2) returning the statue to the historic site along with a new, narrower non-fountain base, or 3) placing the sculpture at a different site – perhaps an adjacent park. After some discussion, the Landmarks Commission stated a strong preference for the following:

1. The statue and fountain are a single historic resource and should be treated as such. Separation of the two components is tantamount to demolition.
2. Although damaged by fire, the fountain is able to be fully restored and should not be considered a loss.
3. The most appropriate plan for the Thompson Elk Fountain is returning it to its historic site.

Since the briefing – and particularly since the City filed a 120-day Delay for Demolition in February – there has been an outpouring of public support in alignment with the Landmarks Commission's above positions, including from several individual citizens as well as community organizations such as Restore Oregon, the Architectural Heritage Center, and Portland Coalition for Historic Resources. The response to recent media coverage of the City's planning process is strong evidence of how important the Thompson Elk Fountain is to the identity of Portland and its citizens.

We are encouraged by the City's recent partnership with the Portland Parks Foundation in commissioning a study of returning the restored Landmark to its original site. As the City's expert body on historic resources and architectural heritage, it is imperative that the Landmarks Commission be afforded the opportunity to provide meaningful input throughout the remainder of this process, including at any Design Advice Requests.

What our city and our country endured in 2020 which led to the damage and dismantling of the Thompson Elk Fountain was traumatic. It is very important to this Commission and to many in our city that the trauma is not compounded by the loss of a beloved landmark. Rather, restoration of the statue and fountain can contribute to the healing process that is underway.



