



HOMELESS HISTORY #1

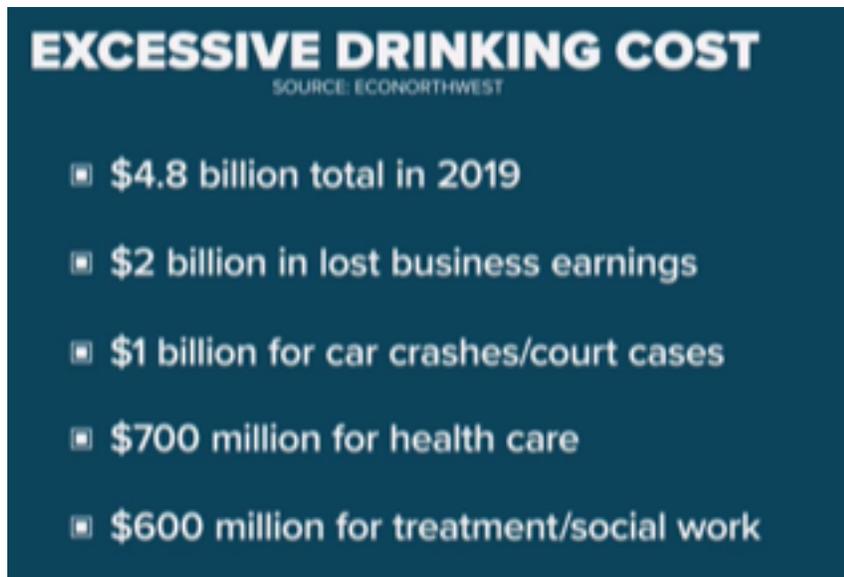
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Update, Homelessness, #1 : History

On Sept. 23, 2015, then-Mayor Charlie Hales told Portlanders, "We have a crisis. We have a crisis both in continued unsheltered homelessness and in rapidly eroding housing affordability. ... I don't think we can solve all of Portland's homelessness or housing problems overnight, but if we're going to make real progress, we've got to recognize this is a true emergency and that it affects tens of thousands of lives of people in our community." A 2018 proclamation by Mayor Wheeler declared drugs as a "public health crisis." In March 2018 Oregon Gov. Kate Brown signed an executive order declaring addiction and substance abuse a public health crisis statewide. It was also referred to as a national epidemic of drug use and overdose.

At that time, Oregon Recovers reported that Oregon ranked last in the country in access to addiction treatment. In a 2020 National Survey Oregon ranked No. 1 for meth use, No. 1 for prescription drug misuse, No. 2 for marijuana use, No. 7 for cocaine use, and No. 11 for heroin use. It didn't mention the consequences of excessive drinking so I am attaching a chart on the estimated costs of booze to our communities.



Recently, candidate for City Commissioner, Dale Hart, and a host of other Portlanders, many business leaders of neighborhood associations and more than a couple in the entertainment, accommodation /food industries, finally discovered the Mayor Hale pronouncement in their

inboxes, but still have not seen the Wheeler one nor Governor Brown's executive order. They probably went into spam folders.

Those living in Old Town, both housed and unhoused, past and present, welcome their interest, of course, but not so much the "solutions" being offered by folks with little knowledge or experience with housing or how to care for those who are suffering from major health issues of addiction and/or mental illness.

In the process of trying to help it has become the thing to frame the thousands of healthcare professionals working for, with, and among the homeless as incompetent. And did I mention the dissing of those who developed and staff drug recovery programs (paired with housing) that is the history of Central City Concern (CCC)?

The story that is being sold to citizens sounds to me as "move aside for here come supermen to fix things and to do it quickly, fast, and now" because that's what supermen do, right?

Commissioner Ryan discovered the folly of this approach. He was well-intentioned as many supermen are but has been ineffectual so far.

It's time to start quantifying and collaborating with folks with muddy boots over big heads. I'm hoping the folks from [Community Solutions](#) are asked in to help us out with the measuring and objective setting. I think we have learned from COVID that in a crisis Dr. Science is our friend and the behaviors of our citizens heavily influence outcomes.

Thank you for taking the time to hear me out on this. I'm on social media as pxdowntowner and post my writings and videos at [pdxdowntowner.com](#). I am fiercely independent and a publisher/writer who has lived in Downtown for four years, Old Town for six, and since COVID in the Pearl across the street from the Post Office project in affordable housing

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