

The BAYSIDER

WINTER Edition

January 2026

Published by the Bayside Neighborhood Association



NO ICE FOR BAYSIDE

During a recent meeting of the Safe Streets Team of the Bayside Neighborhood Association, neighbors were brainstorming about the many different safety issues facing Baysiders. One neighbor spoke up with the simple word "ice" and quickly added "both kinds." Slippery sidewalks are no doubt a problem which the BNA is taking action to help solve, but the slippery slope of federal agents targeting "illegal aliens" in our community is a problem that is growing exponentially before our eyes and causing untold strife for some of the hardest-working and peace-loving of Bayside families.



A member of BNA's Citizens' Trash Brigade makes safe passage along Portland Street

Sarah Lewis, director of the Bayside headquartered Maine Access Immigrant Network (MAIN) notes that while many people are asking themselves how to prepare for the coming surge in activity from Immigrant and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Maine, the fact is that ICE has been active in Portland for years, detaining residents, disrupting families and creating an atmosphere of fear and distrust throughout our community. City Councilor and Bayside resident Pious Ali pointed out that ICE has run a facility in Scarborough since 2020, and has greatly increased activity in southern Maine since the federal government sharply increased funding for ICE last year.

On January 20th the board of the Bayside Neighborhood Association released the following statement: "The Bayside Neighborhood Association stands, as always, with our immigrant neighbors and friends. New Mainers from other countries, whose hard work and commitment to building a better life makes Bayside a better place, are among the best of us. The multicultural fabric of Bayside is and has always been an integral part of our neighborhood's identity as a welcoming

community. Our mission continues to focus on promoting diversity and meaningful partnerships. The BNA opposes any plan to bring militarized federal agents to our city to target and detain our fellow residents."

It's a sentiment shared by Portland Mayor Mark Dion, who recently released a statement saying, "Our community is anxious and fearful regarding the understanding that ICE is planning to send agents to Portland and Lewiston next week. We are a welcoming city. There is no evidence of unchecked criminal activity in our community requiring a disproportionate presence of federal agents. In that view, Portland rejects the need for the deployment of ICE agents into our neighborhoods. While we respect the law, we challenge the need for a paramilitary approach to the enforcement of federal statutes. The consequence of law enforcement should not be chaos and violence, which only results in making Portland less safe."

Mayor Dion continues, "The City Council and I stand, not apart, but with our lawfully admitted immigrant and refugee communities. I urge our residents to look out for one another. Know your rights and have a plan of action if ICE stops you on the street, visits your home, or arrives at your business or place of employment. As a reminder, Portland Police does not cooperate with ICE and they do not participate in enforcing federal immigration law. If you decide to protest or demonstrate, keep your efforts peaceful and consistent with the expectations for lawful behavior that we all share."

BNA vice-president Robert Sylvain adds, "The BNA was born out of a desire to build connection and cooperation across Bayside's diverse cultural landscape. We work together, learn together, play, sing, dance, laugh and cry together. Most importantly, we stand together against oppression and injustice."

Sylvain and other members of the BNA have been working with leaders in the immigrant community and non-profits in Bayside that serve new arrivals to ensure our neighbors stay safe and get the support they need during this uncertain time. Neighbors are bagging and delivering groceries to families who are afraid to leave the sanctuary of their homes. For more information on how to help email welcometeam@baysideportland.org — — —



Equality Community Center's affordable housing development on Casco St. Hundreds of units are now under construction in Bayside, with over a thousand more in development.

Homes are on the Way

by Amelia LaBreck

When it comes to Portland, Bayside is the Playside, East End is the Beast End (lovable dogs, mostly) and West End is the Best End (according to the nice, quiet folks living there.) Well, the Playside is about to get even more vivacious and hopefully all of our new residents will be just as enamored with it.

Walk down Lancaster Street lately? Look up at the cranes on Elm? Our neighborhood is in the midst of a housing transformation unlike anything we've seen in this lifetime—and the numbers tell the story: 1,519+ new units are in the development pipeline right now, with 255 already under construction.

But before we dive into the big numbers, let's start with something special happening right here on Casco Street.

Equality Commons Leads the Way

The 54-unit senior housing project at 25 Casco Street, currently under construction by the Equality Community Center, represents more than just housing—it's a statement about who gets to age with dignity in our city. This isn't your typical senior development. It's purpose-built affordable housing for LGBTQ+ seniors and allies, addressing the real and specific needs of older adults who have too often been marginalized in traditional housing options.

The Casco Street project reminds us that housing isn't just about units—it's about community, belonging, and making sure everyone has a place to call home as they age. It's the kind of thoughtful, values-driven development that sets the tone for what Bayside can become.

The Big Picture: What's Being Built

The 255 units under construction include not just the Casco Street project, but

also the massive 201-unit Avesta building at 89 Elm Street—the first phase of what will eventually be the affordable housing part of an 800-unit Reveler development spanning multiple properties along Lancaster and Elm streets.

The Reveler Master Development Plan is the elephant in the room—or rather, the neighborhood. Eight hundred units across multiple phases, including the Phase 1a at 89 Elm that's rising now, plus Phase 1b at 61 Preble Street (you might know it as 60 Elm). Reveler's partnership with Avesta Housing is also building 96 units across three sites: 197 Oxford Street, 50 Cedar Street, and 158 Lancaster Street.

Other projects in motion include a mixed-use hotel and condo building at 385 Congress Street (9 units in design development), the Youth & Family Outreach childcare and housing project at 22 Preble Street (60 units, awaiting demolition), Maine Public's redevelopment of their 320 Cumberland Avenue property, and the Franklin Street redesign, about which residents and abutters have many valid

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The Baysider

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Special thanks to Jay York for his generous sponsorship of this issue of *The Baysider* and his continued support of the BNA

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President's Remarks

At the time of this writing, we're waiting for the upcoming announcement of the winning applications for the project at 72 Parris Street, which Justin Alfond has entrusted to a committee of community stakeholders, which included the late Deborah Van Hoewyk. I was asked to speak about Deb at the announcement dinner. The following is my address:

"My name is Tom Blackburn, President of the Bayside Neighborhood Association, one of the oldest neighborhood associations in Portland, formed over 27 years ago. I am also the Executive Director of the Bayside Opportunity Center

First I want to thank Justin and Rachel Alfond for their generosity in offering 72 Parris Street as a community asset for our neighborhood, as well as hosting these meetings of interested parties to solicit their input and focus attention on Bayside's needs.

I am honored to have been invited to address this group about Deb Van Hoewyk, a guiding force in the Bayside Neighborhood and the 72 Parris Street Steering Committee, who unfortunately passed away last summer.

She was my good friend.

I first met Deb through the Bayside Neighborhood Association. I have lived in Bayside for over 25 years on Hanover Street, purchasing my home when several other buildings on my street were vacant—often occupied by squatters. My own house had been vacant for 5 years. I bear witness to Bayside's many challenges, from red-lining and being the location for many social service agencies and a large number of people living unsheltered. My own work on the BNA board included spearheading projects such as moving an historic house from Mechanic Street to Myrtle Street, and helping to start the Bayside World Market and Fair, where incidentally, our then community organizer Dory Waxman first met young Justin Alfond. I also started the Bayside Community Development Corporation with past BNA presidents Ron Spinella and Steve Hirshon, in hopes of finding a space for a community center in Bayside. Our attempts were rebuffed on no less than four separate occasions...

Then came Deb.

Deb was born in 1943 in Barrington, Rhode Island, moved to Cumberland, Maine as a child, and graduated from Columbia University with a degree in English. She later earned a master's degree in English from Queens College of City University of NY, where she met John, her future husband of 39 years.

Deb lived in fascinating places: a barge on the Hudson River, a houseboat in the Bronx, a Michigan farm where she and John raised sheep, goats, pigs, chickens, and dogs, a winter home in Santa Cruz, Mexico, a condo at Chestnut Street Lofts in Bayside, and finally a cottage in West Bath, Maine.

Her employment history was equally interesting. As a demolition worker, she once arrived at a date with John straight from



Thomas Blackburn, BNA President

work in overalls with hard hat in hand. Their first date involved liberating a refrigerator from a fire-damaged building in the middle of the night just before demolition. Two kindred spirits met that night.

In New York, Deb wrote LSAT guides for the Stanley Kaplan Institute and edited newsletters for the union representing staff physicians in the city's public hospitals. In Detroit, she wrote technical manuals for LUTZ Associates and began writing grants for national foundations. At the University of Michigan, she studied Urban Planning, then taught engineering students how to write technical reports.

When Deb and her husband John retired from academic life and settled on Chestnut Street in 2010, their love of gardening led them to the Bayside Community Garden where Deb met Rob Sylvain and eventually joined the BNA board. Before long Deb and I were working closely together on many projects for the BNA including the Black Frame Art Sale. Deb and I reconnected when I joined the Maine Charitable Mechanics Association as a board member and later as Hall Superintendent. Together, we raised many thousands of dollars in grants for the restoration of Mechanics Hall. Today, the hall reflects the work Deb and I accomplished.

As a longtime resident and member of the Bayside Neighborhood Association, Deb was asked to join the 72 Parris Street steering committee to determine how the community could best utilize this extraordinary gift. Deb served on the 72 Parris Street steering committee with fellow Baysiders Jim Hall, Stacy Begin & Lydia Mangan. Knowing that Bayside has long needed a community center, and that the BNA had been seeking a home since its inception in 1998, Deb and other members of the BNA, including myself—along with a diverse team of community leaders—formed the idea for a Bayside Opportunity Center.

By the summer of 2025 the BOC was ready to make a proposal to the 72 Parris Street Steering Committee to administer the community center we had envisioned. Deb decided to resign from the committee when they did make a call for proposals in order to avoid any perceived conflict of interest. It was around then that we found out that the Immigrant Welcome Center in

—continued on page 8

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—Councilor's Corner—

by Pious Ali

Welcoming and Nurturing Our Neighborhood

As your neighbor, I see every day what makes Bayside special. It is the people. Our neighborhood is home to families, elders, newcomers, and long-time residents, all contributing in their own ways to the life of this community.

Welcoming one another is more than a kind gesture. It is a commitment to make sure everyone feels safe, respected, and included. It means listening with care, looking out for one another, and creating spaces where every voice matters.

Nurturing Bayside also means investing in its future. That includes

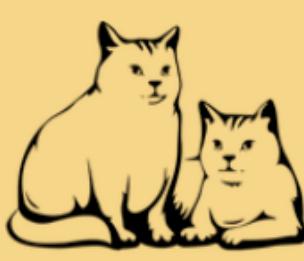
supporting housing stability, strengthening local businesses, protecting shared spaces, and ensuring our neighbors of all ages have access to opportunity. When people feel supported, they are more likely to stay, grow, and give back.

As your neighbor and your city councilor, I am committed to working alongside you, not above you. By staying connected and engaged, we can continue building a Bayside that is welcoming today and nurturing for generations to come.

—Councilor Ali is serving his fourth term on the Portland City Council in an at-large seat. He lives in the Bayside Neighborhood where he raised his two children.



(right to left) Councilor Pious Ali with District One Councilor Sarah Michniewicz, Bayside Neighborhood Association board member Jim Hall, and Bayside resident Scott Morrison at a recent BNA sponsored Citizens' Trash Brigade event. Photo by Robert Sylvain.



Wednesdays - Saturdays, 7:30am-4pm

Sundays 9am-3pm

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PROPRIETARY BLENDS

by Peter Markoe

It's not often that it nears 45 degrees in January, so I called up Peter Leavitt of Leavitt & Sons and took a downright balmy jaunt over to Maine Oyster Company. I'm a little bit closer to our venue than Peter, so I chatted with MOC owner John Herrigel and oyster bar manager Kelly. They were stoked to hear about all the activity going on with the BNA in Bayside and informed me of their Winter Wednesday speaker series that was kicking off later that evening (see below). Winter can be slow for restaurants across Portland, but it's widely recognized as the best season for seafood, especially oysters. Peter rolled in, and we sat at the bar for what was to be a classic Happy Hour at MOC.

MOC is a quaint hole-in-the-wall on Portland Street that has been decked out to look and feel like you're in the belly of a ship. The staff I've gotten to know over the past several years are always friendly and

continuing his passion for food and beverage as he started brewing craft beer in Berkeley in 1988. Now I knew that Peter had been in the sandwich game for years—I'd been to his location up in Falmouth long before I had been to the Bayside one—but I didn't know that his experience included diving headfirst into craft beer, becoming a consultant in Oregon and Telluride and finally landing back in New England to set up Stone Coast and Sunday River Breweries.

Kelly served our delicious dozen, along with a spread of cocktail, mignonette, and tabasco sauces. There was no better way to kick off the best Farm-to-Slurp experience in Portland than being served a Bombazine oyster from one of the farm's proprietors! Kelly told us about her experience with the MOC family up at Basecamp in the Phippsburg area; aside from the shucking classes they run nearly daily at the Portland



photo courtesy of Leavitt & Sons Deli

started middle school, LSD had blown up and needed a larger location to accommodate its growing customer base and catering business. As Peter told me about his move to my favorite neighborhood (Bayside), I gulped down probably my favorite oyster from Johns River. In 2017, Leavitt & Sons moved into 200 Kennebec Street (Bayside's sneaky little side entrance). At this time, Bayside was poised to begin what will most likely be a 25-year journey to becoming the most densely developed neighborhood in Portland. Leavitt & Sons arrived just in time to serve the growing population with a delectably curated menu of sandwiches. As Peter told me about this move to my favorite neighborhood, I gulped down my favorite oyster from Johns River.

We were finishing up at MOC. It had been a dynamic interview that foreshadowed the experience I would have getting a couple of sandwiches for lunch the next day down at 200 Kennebec St. "I want it to feel like you're eating in a friend's kitchen" was the ethos that drove Peter to start his business, and what keeps him going. We chatted like old friends as I waited for my Big Reuben and

The Franklin (a superb concoction of Boar's Head chicken, muenster, BLT, and chipotle mayo), even though we had really only met the night before. I also had to grab a quart of LSD's signature soup, the Flu Chaser. "Like getting a hug from the inside," it's rich with anti-inflammatory, anti-viral ingredients and spices, and sits in the take-home case alongside pot and shepherd's pies, craft beer, fine wine, and of course, deviled eggs.

Kelly told us about the MOC Mug Club that earns patrons \$5 pints, which I will most certainly be joining, and how they ship live oysters across the country. Peter added that, similarly, a large part of his business is preparing sandwiches for catering events, having streamlined the process to accommodate large orders for functions of 15 to 150 people. My favorite part of this feature was observing that while neighborhoods like the Old Port or Munjoy Hill are defined by their pasts, Bayside is defined by its future. The area is home to a groundswell of diverse, driven residents and business owners dedicated to their crafts, each helping to shape a new Bayside culture—one rooted in cooperation and built on a foundation of shared opportunity.

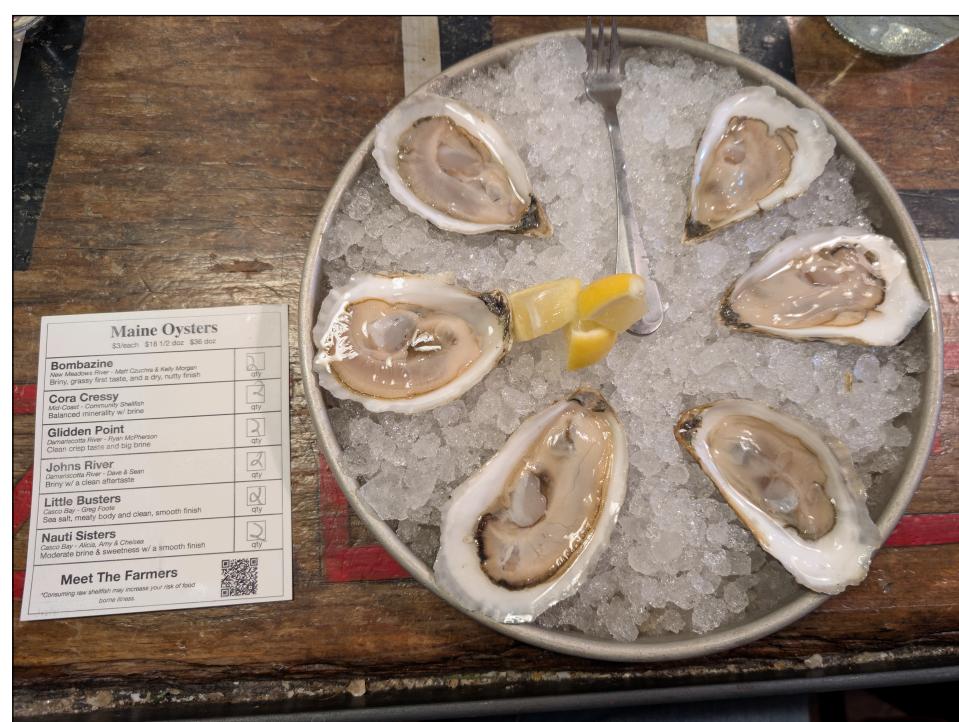


photo courtesy of the author

clearly possess the expertise to provide a seriously top-shelf half-shell experience. As is the custom, we ordered a beer and a dozen oysters (one from each oyster farm) to try as we got to know each other better. The first similarity was striking; both of our first jobs were in sandwich shops—Peter's in Mass. and mine up in Waterville at Jorgensen's, a Main Street staple that has since closed.

Peter had moved out to California as he came of age (another similarity we shared),

location, you can take farm tours, oyster retreats, and meet with oyster sommeliers at the mid-coast location that is, in my opinion, the oyster farming capital of the world.

In 1999, Peter had gone back to school and worked for a time with Fairfield Semiconductor. Unsatisfied working with "chips" and missing the food biz, he took his talents to Barber Foods. But he soon realized that the corporate world wasn't filling his cup. He soon realized that his passion for artisan and high-quality foodstuffs might be his true calling, and Leavitt & Sons Deli was born as a purveyor of "cured, aged, and selected" products for folks to savor and enjoy.

As I learned the definition of a cheese iron—a tool used to test the ripeness of a cheese—it became even clearer that Peter knew his stuff. We'd slurped our way (clockwise) from the Cora Cressey to the Glidden Point, and I learned yet another new term, now in the realm of shellfish. Singing the shucker's praises, Peter noted, "These are great; fully separated, no grit, full liquor..." I hesitated. Had I missed a secret ingredient in the champagne mignonette? Did he get an added dash of something in his oyster that I had not? Flummoxed, I nodded in agreement; these oysters were amazing. I resolved to add the term "Oyster liquor" to my search history, learning later that this is the natural brine from within the oyster that, if expertly preserved, adds to the flavor and experience of eating a raw oyster.

In 2007, when Leavitt & Sons Deli opened its Falmouth site, Peter's two boys were kindergarten-aged. By the time they

UPCOMING EVENTS

EVENTS 2026

JAN 14 WINTER SPEAKER SERIES KICK-OFF! WEDNESDAY NIGHTS, 5:30PM \$5 DRINKS ALL NIGHT!

JAN 21 ISLAND INSTITUTE AN ASK ALL: ELECTRIC BOAT EDITION PHOEBE WALSH/WHEELER

JAN 28 ME AQUA ASSOC. SO YOU WANT TO START AN OYSTER FARM? CHIRSTAIN BRAYDEN

FEB 4 MAINE SEAGRANT COLD COMMODITIES IN AQUACULTURE R+D DANA MORSE

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Bayside Business Spotlight

Portland Custom Tailor



Portland Custom Tailor is a family-owned business with roots that trace back to 1995, when founders Simao Andre and Wuta Mansango first began their tailoring journey. After relocating to the United States in 2019, the couple brought their decades of expertise with them and reopened their tailor shop in March 2022 in the heart of downtown Portland.

Located at 17 Portland Street, Portland, ME 04101, Portland Custom Tailor honors the timeless art of tailoring while embracing modern design. The shop offers a full range of services—custom suit design from scratch, alterations, garment

construction, and specialty clothing work. Whether it's a bespoke suit, a reimagined garment, or precise adjustments, Simao and Wuta handle every project with unmatched skill and attention to detail.

Their shop has quickly become a trusted destination for those seeking quality craftsmanship, personalized service, and clothing that truly fits both the body and the individual style of each client. With nearly three decades of experience, Portland Custom Tailor continues to bring artistry, passion, and dedication to every stitch

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Homes —from page 1

questions that warrant answering, and concerns to address.

Looking Ahead: Proposed Projects

Here's where the numbers get really big. Redfern Properties has proposed a 500-unit development at 115 Lancaster Street—a project that would nearly double our current development total if it moves forward.

And then there's Midtown. Remember Federated Companies' plans? That site is back in city hands now, its future uncertain but its potential undeniable. What happens there will shape Bayside for decades. Many residents are hoping for a park for all residents to relax in and to provide the cooling effect and carbon neutralizing and the parking we will no doubt need. The deficit of both green space and parking in Bayside already exists and neither is required according to the city's development code. While the city's agenda may be to force citizens to abandon vehicle ownership, until public transit gets a major reboot, or unless we designate another needed lot or garage, a lot of senseless struggle is inevitable in a place that

otherwise has the potential to be a truly wondrous place.

What This Means for Us

Let's be honest: this is a lot of change, fast. These projects will bring thousands of new neighbors, new businesses, new life to streets that were parking lots and industrial sites not so long ago. They'll also bring challenges—construction noise, traffic questions, the ongoing need to ensure that affordable housing actually stays affordable and that workforce units don't become a form of segregation by another name.

The transformation of Bayside from industrial area to mixed-use neighborhood is already well underway. As these projects come online over the next several years, we have both an opportunity and a responsibility to shape what that transformation looks like. Will it serve all of us? Will it honor what makes this neighborhood special while building something new?

The cranes are already here. The question is: are you ready?

The BNA Relevant Developments Team wants to know what you think. Reach us at development@baysideportland.org

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Animals

By Walt Whitman

I think I could turn and live with animals, they are so placid and self-contained;
I stand and look at them long and long.
They do not sweat and whine about their condition;
They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins;
They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God;
Not one is dissatisfied—not one is demented with the mania of owning things;
Not one kneels to another, nor to his kind that lived thousands of years ago;
Not one is respectable or industrious over the whole earth.

—From Song of Myself

Wrapped in a Quilt

BNA Public Art Team chooses warm and welcoming design for Portland Downtown's Paint Outside the Box

Thanks to Betsy Boyd of Portland Downtown, Lily Phillips Carter of Ladybird Glassery, and Kincaid Pearson of 82Parris Gallery, Bayside in Portland is a little more colorful now that the BNA Public Art Team was able to bring a utility box painting program, funded by the Portland Downtown District, to our neighborhood. Check it out on the corner of Cumberland Ave and Preble Street.

The "Painting Outside the Box" Project is a public art initiative by Portland Downtown that enlists local artists to paint utility boxes to beautify the city. The project transforms ordinary utility boxes into colorful, original works of art. Selected artists receive a stipend for their work.

The contract for the utility box on Cumberland Ave in Bayside was awarded to Lily Carter, whose design was chosen by BNA Public Art Team Lead Kincaid Pearson over more than a dozen applicants, noting "I thought it was a fitting one because it's based on a quilt and the Bayside neighborhood feels like the most diverse and similar to a quilted network of residents."

Carter is a local stained glass artist, puppet maker, and graphic designer. She's deeply invested in bringing more art to Portland as she's worked there for over 10 years.

The photos to the right show the transformation from a drab gray box littered with tags and nonsensical graffiti to a hand-crafted, one-of-a-kind beautiful piece of art that sends a direct statement to all passers-by.

Top to bottom:

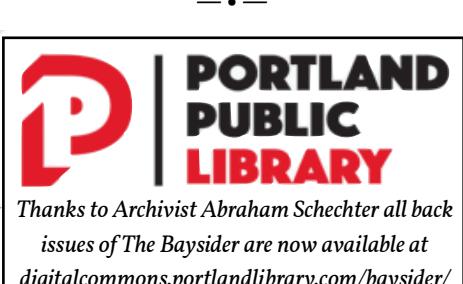
- The artist, Lily Carter (left) with BNA board member Betsy Boyd representing Portland Downtown.

- BNA Public Art Team Lead and co-director of 82Parris Gallery Kincaid Pearson (right) looks on as the primer coat is applied.

- Mid-project, the "quilted squares" are deftly arranged.

- The finished product for all to enjoy.

Contact the BNA Public Art Team by email: arts@baysideportland.org



Dyer's Variety

-Est. 1971-



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Pizza
Calzones
Hot sandwiches
Cold sandwiches
Fried food
Snacks
Drinks

THE APOHADION THEATER

Underground Jewel of Bayside
by Deirdre Paul



Pat Corrigan

January in Portland: cold and dark, trailing in the aftermath of the comet of the holidays, trying to stay grounded without losing yourself to the quiet stillness of the nights that can easily become too much. On just such a night myself and two other intrepid souls braved the temps and the icy streets and set out for the Apohadion (say it like a local: Ah-FOH-dee-un) located on Hanover Street in Bayside.

Anyone who thinks that Portland has lost its authentic gritty side should set foot inside this place and find themselves greeted with tons of evidence to the contrary. We got there just in time to see the headlining act, a local Portland group called

Rhys, a stoner psych quartet who gave a raucous, energetic performance that was just what the room wanted.

The Apohadion is the brainchild of best friends and partners in crime Pat Corrigan and the late great Dave Noyes, and has been in its present incarnation since 2016, although it existed before that in a more underground way. Home to baby bands of all genres, lots of punk and noise, but also reggae and other stuff too, it is



the green room



Rhys onstage at the Apohadion Theater

fiercely loved by the musicians who have a place to play thanks to the haven that is this space.

The room sounds great, with a sound system that provides plenty of low end. You can get beer and wine at the bar, post up on a couch, and check out the scene. Be sure to throw an extra ten bucks in the tip jar because this place is a labor of love for sure.

The decor is pure magic, with art of all manner wherever you look. Pat's signature painting style is represented from the refrigerator to the bulletin board to the walls, giving the place a whimsical feeling, constantly unfolding but never finished.

The green room is the best in town, like where you want to hang out all the time. If

you want to experience this amazing venue for yourself, don't sleep on it! It feels like it is held together by a magical combination of live performances, teenage dreams, and Pat's undying devotion to the local music and art scene.

The future as we know it is uncertain, and the Apohadion calls like a beacon to anyone who wanders but is not lost. As Rhys lead singer Chris Morabito put it, addressing the crowd at the end of the night: "Thank you to the Apohadion... I said it once and I'll say it again — we would all be f***d without this place." — • —

— Deirdre Paul lives in Bayside
for more info see www.apohadiontheater.org



Not All That Glitters Be Gold

(SOME BE PLATINUM, AS WELL!)



Bayside insiders revel in the holiday spirit at Ayan Mastering's new facility on Casco Street

The Bayside Neighborhood Association is thrilled to welcome Ayan Mastering, a world-class audio mastering studio now calling Bayside home. Founded by Grammy Award and seven-time Latin Grammy Award-winning mastering engineer Adam Ayan, the studio represents the next chapter after his remarkable twenty-five year tenure at the legendary Gateway Mastering Studios.

Adam has mastered recordings for music icons including Paul McCartney, Taylor Swift, Bruce Springsteen, and

countless others, with his work accumulating over 181 billion streams worldwide. In 2025, Adam built the mastering studio of his dreams on Casco Street, bringing cutting-edge audio excellence to our community.

This addition strengthens Bayside's growing reputation as a hub for creative professionals and adds to the vibrant Arts District ecosystem. We're proud to have such an accomplished studio and talented engineer as part of our neighborhood!

MPBN Films Music Series at The Studio Portland



Carolyn Currie with Noel Paul Stookey at The Studio Portland in Bayside

This past summer, Maine Public Television brought the production crew for their local music show, Sound Waves, to one of Maine's premier recording studios, The Studio Portland, located in Bayside. Carolyn Currie who hosts the series provides up-close and personal interviews with Denny Breau, The Erica Brown Band, The Joan Kennedy Band, Don and Cindy Roy, Paul Sullivan, Brad Terry and Peter Herman, Jason Brown, The Mallett Brothers

Band, Noel Paul Stookey, and The Oshima Brothers. The series airs from January 8th through February 26th and is available for streaming at www.mainepublic.org/sound-waves

Con Fullam, founder of the Pihcintu Multinational Girls Choir, teamed up with Maine Public Television to produce the series. Steve Drown and Sam McArthur were the audio engineers.

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THE STUDIO

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VIDEO PRODUCTION

BNA Teams Do the Work, BNA Teams Have the Fun!

BNA Teams focus on specific areas of interest to our neighbors and friends. Contact a Team Lead to ask a question, learn more, and join us. BNA Teams meet at various times. You don't have to be on the BNA board to be on, or even lead a team!

Business Breakfast Club

The Business Breakfast Club brings together Bayside business owners monthly to foster collaboration, strengthen connections, and build a more vibrant commercial community in Bayside. Since launching in early 2025, the group has met at rotating local businesses to discuss neighborhood branding, wayfinding signage, pedestrian safety, and opportunities to work with organizations like Buy Local, Creative Portland, and Portland Downtown. The team is working on exciting initiatives including a visitors' guide for the neighborhood and coordinating business support for community events like the fall cleanup. This team proves that nothing beats making personal connections in real life to make Bayside a welcoming and thriving place for local commerce.

Citizens' Trash Brigade

The Citizens' Trash Brigade is an idea that literally came to team lead Megan Holt in a dream — complete with the snazzy moniker. The CTB keeps Bayside clean and beautiful through regular community cleanups and volunteer action. Beyond the longstanding tradition of annual spring and fall neighborhood cleanups that bring neighbors together to prepare for changing seasons, the CTB has expanded to include monthly targeted "walk the block" cleanups that focus on one street at a time. Armed with gloves, bags, pickers, and community spirit, volunteers meet at designated locations to tackle litter while strengthening neighborhood bonds. Recent cleanups have been enhanced by partnerships with local businesses who offer discount coupons to volunteers, turning civic duty into an opportunity to support Bayside shops and services while making a visible difference in the neighborhood's appearance.

Community Garden Team

The Garden Team has been growing community connections since 2001 at the Bayside Community Garden located at 78 Chestnut Street. Unique as Portland's only community garden run by a neighborhood association without city funding or support, the garden is a testament to over two decades of dedication from residents who have poured their hearts into maintaining this rare green space in one of Portland's most challenged urban neighborhoods. The garden provides affordable plots for just \$30 per season and serves as a peaceful gathering place where neighbors can garden, grow fresh food, and cultivate strong relationships. All plot holders contribute to maintenance and operations, making it a true community effort that enhances the livability and equality of the Bayside neighborhood amid mounting development pressures.

Events Team

The Events Team brings fun and connection to Bayside through creative community gatherings and celebrations. Led by longtime Bayside artist-in-residence Deirdre Paul, the team's mission is to add "more fun" to everything the neighborhood does, from block parties and community meals to candidate forums and seasonal festivals. Recent successes include the

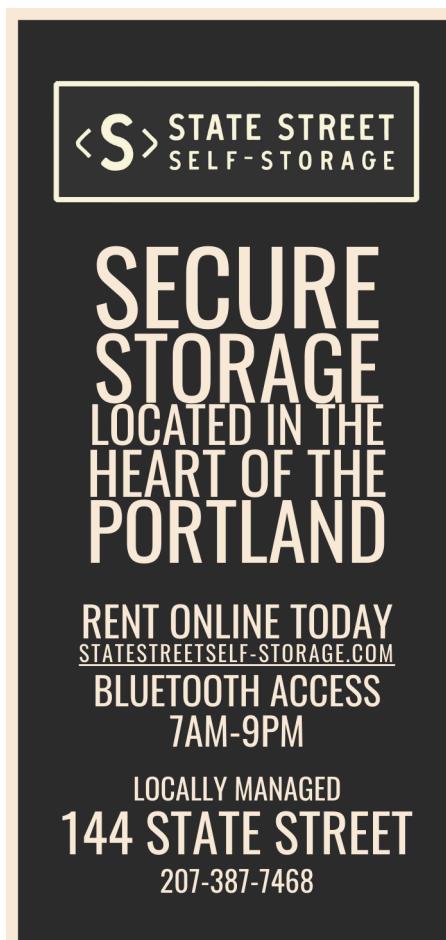
inaugural Bayside Trail Howl-oween Pet Costume Parade and Neighborhood Harvest Festival, featuring live music, food trucks, prizes, and activities for both humans and their four-legged friends. We are always looking for volunteers to help plan and execute events that bring neighbors together, strengthen community bonds, and showcase Bayside's unique character and creative spirit.

Relevant Developments Team

The Relevant Developments Team monitors and engages with proposed construction projects and planning initiatives that will shape Bayside's future. The team closely follows major developments including Port Property's 804-unit Bayside Master Development Plan, the proposed 3,300-seat music venue at Myrtle Street and Cumberland Avenue, Avesta's 48-unit project at the former Oxford Street shelter site, and childcare and housing projects throughout the neighborhood. By attending planning board meetings, organizing neighborhood meetings, and encouraging community members to submit public comments, the team ensures that Bayside voices are heard in decisions affecting housing, affordability, infrastructure, and the neighborhood's evolving character. The team keeps residents informed about timelines, design details, and opportunities to participate in the planning process.

Public Art Team

The Public Art Team creates and promotes visual arts throughout Bayside to enhance the neighborhood's cultural identity and sense of place. The team is actively seeking funding for public art projects, including an innovative initiative to transform material from an historic oak tree that was removed from Oxford Street



into community artwork. The team has supported Portland Downtown's utility box painting program and is working to revive the BNA Black Frame Art Sale fundraiser, a beloved event that previously showcased local artists while raising funds for neighborhood initiatives. Through these efforts, the team aims to make art accessible to all residents while celebrating Bayside's creative spirit and adding beauty to streets and public spaces throughout the neighborhood.

Safe Streets Team

The Safe Streets Team focuses on public safety, walkability, infrastructure improvements, and crime prevention to make Bayside safer and more livable for all residents. The team works to address the reality that Bayside accounts for a disproportionate percentage of Portland police calls for service, while also advocating for improvements to infrastructure, lighting, crosswalks, and pedestrian-friendly street design. By monitoring crime statistics, engaging with Portland Police's Midtown Community Policing team, and bringing community concerns to city officials, the team seeks to create streets where children can walk to school safely, neighbors feel comfortable greeting each other, and all residents can move through the neighborhood confidently. The team is now under the new leadership of longtime Bayside resident John Van Hoewyk.

Student Group

The Student Group serves as the liaison between the Bayside Neighborhood Association and local schools including Baxter Academy and Portland High School. This team provides an important bridge for student voices and perspectives to be included in neighborhood planning and activities, while also creating opportunities for young people to get involved in community service and civic engagement. By connecting students with BNA initiatives like cleanups, events, and community projects, the group helps foster the next generation of community leaders and ensures that young residents have a say in shaping their neighborhood's future. The team welcomes students who want to make a difference, learn about local government, and contribute their fresh ideas and energy to Bayside.

Comms Team

The Comms Team manages technical aspects of the BNA's communications and digital presence, including the website, workspace coordination, social media channels, community calendar, newsletter, and outreach materials. The team ensures that neighborhood news, events, and opportunities for engagement reach residents through multiple platforms including Facebook, Instagram, and Nextdoor. The team also helps support The Baysider newspaper. By maintaining clear, accessible communication channels, the Comms Team helps keep the community informed, connected, and empowered to participate in shaping Bayside's future.

Green Team

The Green Team advocates for and engages in the planting, maintenance, and stewardship of trails, playgrounds, and green spaces throughout Bayside, working to bring more trees and greenery to a neighborhood that has historically been underserved in this area. The team works closely with Portland's Parks Department and City Arborist on tree planting initiatives, coordinates care for the Bayside Trail's sapling forest, and advocates for development projects to allocate tree-planting fees specifically for use within the neighborhood boundaries. Recent accomplishments include organizing meaningful ceremonies like the blessing of the Bayside Trail sapling forest by the Penobscot Nation's Burnurwubskek Singers, and conducting forest bathing experiences to help residents connect with nature. The team recognizes that green

spaces and tree canopy are vital to creating a healthy, livable, and sustainable urban neighborhood.

The Baysider Team

Since 1999, *The Baysider* has been the voice of Bayside—starting as The Bayside Newsletter, evolving into Inside Bayside, and becoming the community newspaper you know today. For over two decades, neighbors, writers, and volunteers have used these pages to share the stories that



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matter most: new businesses, local events, neighborhood history, and the voices of the people who make Bayside unique. From updates about neighborhood development to profiles of local businesses, from event calendars to the issues shaping our neighborhood's future—*The Baysider* is here to inform, engage, and celebrate what makes this corner of Portland special. Whether you're a longtime resident, a new neighbor, a business owner, or simply curious about this evolving neighborhood, *The Baysider* is your guide to where Portland's past meets its future.

Welcome Team

The Welcome Team is where community connection begins in Bayside. In our diverse and dynamic neighborhood, we organize volunteer opportunities that bring people together—from community meals and seasonal celebrations to emergency response coordination. Whether it's mobilizing volunteers for a Thanksgiving dinner at Food for All Services, supporting new immigrants navigating life in Portland, or simply ensuring every neighbor feels they belong, we work to make Bayside a place where everyone is truly welcome. Following the closure of the Greater Portland Immigrant Welcome Center, our commitment to supporting New Mainers has only grown stronger as we actively work with community partners to find new ways to serve and connect. Bayside has always been a neighborhood built by people who show up for each other, and if you believe in the power of neighborly kindness and want to help foster connections across our diverse community, we'd love to have you join us.

For more about BNA teams visit our website: www.baysideportland.org/teams

Pedestrian Safety Takes Front Seat

Bayside has its say

The Bayside Neighborhood Association convened two sessions of the Community Voices for Road Safety Pedestrian Safety Campaign, with 10 participants attending each session. This initiative, part of the Maine Bureau of Highway Safety's new pedestrian-focused safety effort in Portland, Lewiston, and Auburn, brought Portland residents directly into the creative process of shaping public safety messaging.



Rather than using a traditional top-down approach, the campaign asked community members—many of whom walk daily as their primary mode of transportation—to help guide the message drivers and walkers need to hear, determine the creative look of the campaign, and identify where these messages would be most effective.

The sessions, each lasting 90 minutes, were designed to address the rising pedestrian injuries and fatalities in Portland by centering the voices of those most affected. Participants received \$50



compensation for their time, and snacks and beverages were provided. Jeff Larason, Highway Safety Communications Program Director for Community Voices campaign, moderated the program. The neighborhood-authored campaign that

emerges from these focus groups is set to roll out in Spring 2026.

WENA hosts workshop

Gregory Farino of the The West End Neighborhood Association is calling a meeting of all the Portland neighborhood associations and other stakeholders together this winter for a mini-summit to exchange ideas, strategies, and resources related to temporary traffic calming efforts in Portland.

The effort comes in the wake of an unusually high number of pedestrian fatalities in 2025, including the death of a 75-year old woman killed by a driver at the corner of Marginal Way and Franklin Street in Bayside last November. The BNA co-signed a group letter penned by the Portland Bike Ped Advisory Committee calling for action by the city to address the problem.

JWH takes the Lead

Thanks to John Van Hoewyk for stepping up to the lead role in the BNA's Safe Streets Team. John is a longtime



Bayside resident and supporter of the Bayside Neighborhood Association.

An exploratory meeting was held in January along with Midtown Community Policing Coordinator Jennifer Rogers, Officer Jesse Dana, Officer Dan Knight and other neighborhood leaders to reconvene the team and set priorities for the coming year. The group decided to meet monthly on the second Wednesday of the month at 1pm starting on March 11, 2026. Contact safestreets@baysideportland.org for more info.

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Teams Ready Greens for Winter

Bayside Trail Trees Get Mulch

Portland's tree steward Cameron Scharff was surprised by the number of volunteers who showed up on Saturday, Nov. 9 to help tuck trees on the Bayside Trail in for the winter.



photo by Avery Yale Kamilla

"I am incredibly pleased with what was accomplished," Scharff said. "In less than two hours, we mulched and composted nearly 50 younger trees on the Bayside Trail, with volunteers from Bayside, the West End, the East End, and Libbytown. The addition of this organic material will support tree growth, increase water retention, suppress weeds and improve aesthetics along the trail. This collaborative effort is precisely the kind of community-driven forestry initiative that can make a large difference in the lives of trees, the health of parks and the enjoyment of the community that uses them."

The 15 volunteers were more than had RSVP'd, and people continued to trickle in as the event was in progress. With a fleet of wheelbarrows, shovels and rakes, and piles of loam and woodchips, the volunteers gathered behind Dunkin' and started with the recently planted trees and expanded from there. The trees in the section of the trail behind Trader Joe's had been topdressed and mulched in the spring.

Scharff's last day on the job was November 21. He served with the Portland

Parks Conservancy and Portland's Parks and Recreation Department in 2025 as a tree steward courtesy of the Maine Conservation Corps, which is funded through the national AmeriCorps program. One project Scharff worked on this season was cataloguing all of Portland's street trees. Portland hopes to host another Maine Conservation Corps tree steward next season.

Bayside Garden Gets New Beds

This fall, the Bayside Community Garden welcomed a group of Baxter Academy students for a hands-on volunteer workday focused on replacing aging garden bed sideboards. Working alongside garden volunteers and members of the Bayside Neighborhood Association, the students helped improve the garden's infrastructure while learning about community care, collaboration, and stewardship of shared green spaces.



This project was made possible by a micro-grant from the City of Portland's Office of Sustainability through its Sustainable Neighborhoods Mini-Grant program, with support from Sustainability Associate Karly Meyer. Funding from this program helped cover materials for the garden bed repairs, demonstrating how small, targeted investments can create lasting benefits for neighborhoods and the people who care for them. —•—

Save the Dates!

BAYSIDE WEEK

April 25 - May 2, 2026

Spring Cleanup

— Saturday April 25th, 10am-noon

Bayside Treasure Hunt

— Sunday, April 26th, through the week

Community Meal and Ice Cream Social

— Monday, April 27th, noon-2pm

Bayside Visitors' Guide Rollout

— Wednesday, April 28th, 8:30am

First Friday Art Walk

— Friday May 1st, 5pm-8pm

Jane's Walk Bayside

— Saturday May 2nd, various times

BNA Annual Meeting

— Saturday May 2nd, 5:30pm

more to come!

www.baysideportland.org

President

—from page 2

Bayside would close, leaving a tremendous hole in services for new Mainers in Greater Portland. Shortly thereafter it became clear that the needs of the BOC and the trajectory of the 72 Parris Street process was beginning to diverge. Firstly, we had become quite fond of Khadija and the team at Food for All Services, recognizing the important work being done there could not be impinged. Assuming they stayed, as we would hope, that left very little room for programming, and certainly not enough to bridge the gap left by the IWC. Meanwhile 72 Parris seemed headed for new construction, and the BOC needed a space now!

That's when the BOC started to explore other options. Living on Hanover Street, I pass 28 Portland Street daily—the large blue building formerly housing the Goodwill Neurological Center, now home to Portland School Department offices. On the first floor, 17,000 square feet sat vacant, used only for storage—what Mayor Dion called the school department's junk drawer. The problem? Mold. As a former contractor, I knew this could be remediated.

The BOC team began to envision how we could activate Portland Street—one of the most dangerous streets in Portland—with a Community Multicultural Center. Increased foot traffic from programming,—educational classes, job training, event space, and nonprofit office space would shine a light onto a street that has been dark for far too long.

With the current federal administration shifting funding priorities, many organizations serving New Mainers and the low-income ALICE population face significant funding challenges. We realized we had an ideal place for these groups to share office space in a coworking environment, combined with the existing community policing station already in the building.

During my 10 years at Mechanics' Hall, I was involved in over 250 events, many for New Mainers. At 28 Portland, we envision an event venue, gathering spaces, a café serving ethnic foods, and programs that educate, train, and empower New Mainers to successfully navigate American society.

The Bayside Neighborhood is home to a diverse population with many opportunities and challenges. It's also home to a diversity of non-profit organizations committed to addressing those challenges and opportunities. Our goal is to continue to support our residents and complement each other—the BOC, the BNA, our partners and friends at Maine Access Immigrant Network, Hope Acts, Prosperity Maine, Food for All Services, Presente! Equality Maine, Youth and Family Outreach, and so many more, to include the successful 72 Parris Street applicants, who will be revealed tonight. The BOC pledges to help the new 72 Parris entity in any way possible.

Deborah was an exceptional, gifted woman who was my good friend. She stood out as one of the smartest people I have ever known, and she possessed a kind heart—especially for immigrants, refugees, and those less fortunate—but she would not suffer fools. Hers was a singular vision of justice, equity, and the true spirit of community. May the light of her vision and good works continue to shine from Bayside to all corners of the globe.

Thanks again to Justin Alfond for his generosity and support for the Bayside neighborhood.

—Tom Blackburn lives in Bayside.
contact president@baysideportland.org



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Residents, Schools Call for Park in Bayside

By Avery Yale Kamila

Few trees, not enough parkland and a lack of public recreation facilities in conjunction with the neighborhood's growing population prompted the Bayside Neighborhood Association to ask the City Council that part of the 3.25 acre Midtown parcel be set aside for a community park. This followed the city's \$15-million re-acquisition this summer of the failed Midtown development sandwiched between the Bayside Trail and Somerset Street.

"Dense urban areas function best when filled with trees, parks and places to gather," said Thomas Blackburn, president of the Bayside Neighborhood Association. "Bayside children and adults are underserved when it comes to parks and recreation space. Bayside lacks basketball courts, picnic tables, grassy areas, and shade trees. We need more community garden plots and more splash pad space. Bayside is home to many private gyms but lacks adult exercise equipment for public use. The City Council has a rare opportunity to bring all of these amenities and more downtown."

The City Council advertised for a real estate broker to represent the land, but has otherwise yet to take any actions regarding the use of the 3.25 acres.

In October, Portland Press Herald reporter Grace Benninghoff spoke with Councilors Ben Grant, Sarah Michniewicz, Regina Phillips, Kate Sykes and Wes Pelletier, and all said they wanted to see housing built on the land. In addition, both Grant and Michniewicz spoke of the need for more park space.

The Bayside neighborhood includes two high schools, a large daycare and the Boys & Girls Club. Together the institutions serve more than 1,700 children each day. However, the neighborhood's only public parks are the Stone Street Playground, which is overcrowded on hot summer days, and the Bayside Trail, which serves primarily as a transit route through the neighborhood.

The Bayside Community Garden on Chestnut Street sits on private land whose future is uncertain, and it is not part of the city's community garden program. Instead



Map of Midtown Property in Bayside showing possible location for a park, leaving 2/3 of the property for other types of development

the garden is managed by the neighborhood association.

In November, the Portland Press Herald published an op-ed calling for a new park in Bayside written by Blackburn and Camelia Babson-Haley, executive director of Youth & Family Outreach. Youth & Family Outreach is a daycare center located at the intersection of Preble Street and Cumberland Avenue that will grow to serve 110 children—ranging from infants to preschool students and Portland Public Schools pre-K students—when its new building is constructed on site. During construction, the center is temporarily located in South Portland.

Neither Portland High School nor Baxter Academy have outdoor recreation facilities on-site. In addition, Bayside lacks any athletic fields or courts. The Portland Parks & Recreation Department is aware of the acute need for basketball courts in Bayside and has been seeking suitable land for years. The lack of athletic facilities forces children into the streets to dribble basketballs and kick soccer balls.

Portland's 2026 capital improvement plan budget allocates \$150,000 to create basketball courts in the Bayside neighborhood. Bayside children who walk to the basketball courts in Kennedy Park or Deering Oaks must cross dangerous, multi-lane intersections where cars have hit pedestrians.

It remains unclear when the City Council will hire a broker or if any councilors will put forth a proposal to designate part of the land a park before it is marketed for sale.

— • —

Avery Yale Kamilla lives in Bayside
contact greenteam@baysideportland.org

Portland Downtown is a 501c4 nonprofit Downtown Improvement District (DID). Our mission is to stimulate a vibrant, thriving, and sustainable downtown community.

Stay in touch & get involved!

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About the Bayside Neighborhood Association (BNA)

Bounded by Forest Avenue, Franklin Street, Interstate 295, and Congress Street, Bayside is situated in the heart of the peninsula as Portland's gateway to downtown. Today, it is a vibrant mix of families and singles, young and old, New Mainers and old-timers, historic architecture and new development, social services, shops, restaurants, and small businesses.

The BNA was founded in 1998 and seeks to represent all those with a vested interest in the Bayside neighborhood. The Bayside Neighborhood Association empowers the Bayside community by building meaningful partnerships that promote health, safety, green spaces, diversity, housing, and sustainable development for all who live, work, and play in this unique urban neighborhood.

The BNA board has monthly meetings the first Tuesday of the month at 6pm, which are always open to the public. It's a great way to hear about what is happening in the neighborhood. They alternate between virtual (Zoom) and in-person at the Steve Hirshon Community Room at Unity Village at 24 Stone Street.

BNA Teams meet at various times. You don't have to be on the BNA board to be on, or even lead a team! Check the website for more info— www.baysideportland.org



JOIN IN!

Shared experiences build the relationships, friendships, and trust that are the bonds of a strong community. Join one of the BNA's teams today to meet your neighbors and help your neighborhood.

The Baysider Team

baysider@baysideportland.org

Development Team (Planning board watch)
development@baysideportland.org

Safe Streets Team

safestreets@baysideportland.org

Welcome Team (Helping recent arrivals)

welcome@baysideportland.org

Citizens' Trash Brigade

ctb@baysideportland.org

Trees & Greens Team

greenteam@baysideportland.org

Community Garden

garden@baysideportland.org

Public Art Team

arts@baysideportland.org

Business Breakfast Club

breakfastclub@baysideportland.org

DONATE TO THE BNA

The Bayside Neighborhood Association needs your help, and now is a great time to give.

An anonymous benefactor has offered to match every contribution up to \$2,500 until the end of the year.

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