



Paris Achen/Capital Bureau  
Gov. Kate Brown signed legislation and an executive order Tuesday to combat drug abuse.

## Brown declares drugs a public health crisis

Governor signs addiction bills, executive order

By PARIS ACHEN  
Capital Bureau

PORTLAND — Gov. Kate Brown on Tuesday declared drug addiction a public health crisis and signed two pieces of addiction-related legislation into law.

“Unfortunately, right now, our federal government is recognizing the problem, but it is certainly focused on punishment,” Brown said. “That leaves us, the states, to right the wrongs of a war on drugs that has done absolutely nothing to address the issues that drive this public health crisis while our prisons and our

foster care systems are filled to capacity with its victims.”

The declaration is part of an executive order Brown issued Tuesday that charges the state Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission and certain state agencies with developing a statewide strategic plan for addiction prevention, treatment and recovery.

Addition is the main driver of foster care placements in Oregon, the governor said.

Nearly 60 percent of children in foster care have at least one parent with a substance abuse disorder. Addiction also heavily contributes to the nation’s high rate of incarceration.

“The criminal justice system should not be Oregon’s safety net for persons

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## Planners reject zone change at former RV park

Questions about land near Hampton Inn

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Daily Astorian

A former RV park next to the Hampton Inn on the east side of Astoria will remain industrial for now.

The owners, who also own the hotel, had hoped the Astoria Planning Commission would pass a recommendation to rezone the property, a move they believed could make it more marketable by opening up other development options.

But all seven commissioners agreed that, as Com-

missioner Sean Fitzpatrick said, there are “too many questions and concerns about the unknown, about what might happen and the future use of the property.”

The commission unanimously denied the request.

Kevin Cronin, a former Astoria community development director, represented property owner Sameer Sharma and argued the zoning — marine industrial shorelines — is too restrictive and applies to uses that are not in demand. In his application, he wrote that “marine lands are dormant or have been converted to serve other, more viable uses,” pointing to places like Mo’s Restaurant in a former

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# A LEGACY OF TRANSIT



Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

A Sunset Empire bus sits waiting for passengers at the transit center in Astoria.

## Sunset Empire bus system evolved from trains, streetcars and horses

By EDWARD STRATTON  
The Daily Astorian

The Sunset Empire Transportation District, the first countywide bus system, turns 25 this year.

Jeff Hazen, the executive director since 2014, said the transit district will celebrate the anniversary throughout the year, starting with a ribbon cutting April 26 at the Astoria Transit Center.

The impetus for Sunset Empire was couched in what locals remember as a fledgling public transportation system by the early 1990s.

Knappa mink farmer Jack Davies was running his own bus system in Astoria by the 1980s, said former Astoria City Councilor Russ Warr. Donald Morden, former owner of Columbia Chocolates and an original board member of Sunset Empire, recalled Robert Brown running his own small, dilapidated bus between Astoria and Seaside.

“There was no public subsidy,” Warr said of the two operations. “They were doing it on their own dime. It became obvious to them at about the same time that they just couldn’t make it, and they didn’t want to give it up.”

Davies approached Astoria, which eventually took over and contracted out bus services, Warr said.

In 1991, the county commission convened a special task force to explore creating a new countywide transportation district. On March 24, 1993, the county board voted to create the district with the help

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Clatsop County Historical Society  
Astoria Transit Co. brought in six 25-passenger Mack buses in 1924 to replace the city’s streetcar system.



Clatsop County Historical Society  
Astoria’s streetcar system was pulled by horses before going electric in 1889.



Clatsop County Historical Society  
A fire in 1922 decimated downtown Astoria and destroyed many of the streetcar tracks, leading to an end of municipal train service and the beginning of buses.

# Food carts head to the waterfront

New options planned for 11th Street pier

By KATIE FRANKOWICZ  
The Daily Astorian

Food carts are moving to the waterfront.

The Astoria Planning Commission approved conditional use permits Tuesday night that will allow Steve and Karen Allen, who own buildings at the end of the 11th Street pier, to include food carts on portions of their property. The food carts Good



Edward Stratton/The Daily Astorian  
Food carts are planned for the 11th Street pier.

Bowl and Snack Box hope to set up shop.

There were few questions around a possible food

cart location at the front of a smaller building on the east side of the pier, a former seafood market now home to a

skate shop, where Good Bowl hopes to locate. But commissioners had more questions about opening up spots around the Pier 11 building to the west. Commissioner Joan Herman worried about allowing a food cart on the 10th Street side of the building where it might alter views of the river.

The other commissioners were not concerned, however, and approved the Allens’ request. Commissioner Jennifer Cameron-Lattek, co-owner of Street 14 Cafe several blocks away, cited a conflict of interest and recused herself.

The conditional use per-

mits allow the Allens, who also own Astoria Brewing Co., to provide space for the current carts and any future carts that might replace them. The city will still require other permits before the start of any construction or operation. Each cart, for example, must have a business license.

Interim City Planner Mike Morgan pointed out that the city’s waterfront bridge end replacement project, which involves major construction at the end of 11th Street, might delay the opening of the food carts.

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