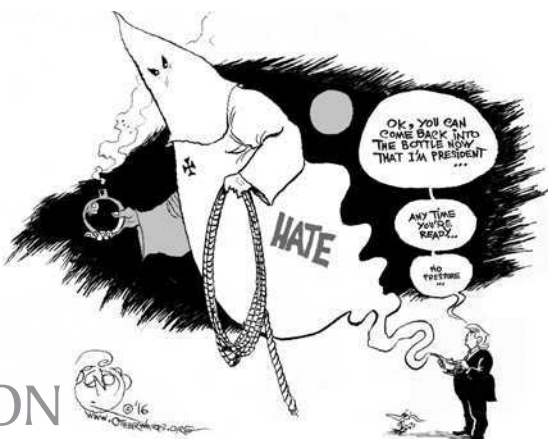


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# Fred Meyer

What's on your list today?®



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Colas Construction, an African-American and family-owned business, starts construction on the long vacant corner of Northeast Alberta Street and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, the future home of a Natural Grocers market and a second building to provide retail space for local, minority-owned businesses.

## Alberta Commons

### Construction begins on PDC-backed project

Construction has begun on Alberta Commons, a Portland Development Commission backed project to bring economic benefits to the heart of the historic black community at Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Alberta Street.

Rising up from the long vacant site will be a Natural Grocers market, a quality, affordable and organic grocery retail chain which is the primary business anchor, along with additional retail space for local, minority-owned busi-

nesses that complements the local businesses to the south at Vanport Square, providing needed goods and services to the community.

PDC will be owner for 50 percent of the non-anchor space to provide discounted commercial space to local, minority-owned businesses. Colas Construction, an African-American, family-owned business, is the general contractor for the project, and Majestic Realty of Los Angeles is the developer.

According to PDC officials,

Colas Construction is now finalizing contracts with subcontractors, and anticipates achieving 55 percent participation by minority, women and emerging small business firms, with 41 percent of that workforce employed by minority business enterprises.

The project also carries a public art element. Local artists Mehran Heard and Arvie Smith have been selected for the installation of public art along the east and south walls of the Natural Grocers building.

## Call to End Death Penalty Cases

### Justice group makes plea to governor

A Portland-based justice and civil rights group has called on Gov. Kate Brown to commute the sentences of the 35 people on Oregon's death row to life without the possibility of parole after a study showing the extreme high price of prosecuting death penalty cases.

The Oregon Justice Resource Center issued the call last week after doing a study with academics from Lewis & Clark Law School and Seattle University that

revealed that aggravated murder cases with death sentences in Oregon cost as much as a million dollars more or four times as much as comparable cases with life sentences.

In October, Gov. Brown reaffirmed a moratorium on executions that began in 2011 under her predecessor, Gov. John Kitzhaber, and was continued by her when she took office in 2015. At that time, she was reported as having "serious concerns about the constitutionality and workability of Oregon's death penalty law."

While a moratorium does prevent someone from being executed in Oregon, cases are still mak-

ing their way through the appeals process and new death sentences can be issued, so it does not address the financial costs associated with the death penalty.

"The revelation this week about the huge sums being wasted on a death penalty we are not using should give every Oregonian pause for thought," said Alice Lundell, director of communications for OJRC. "Even before the moratorium, Oregon had had only two executions in 50 years, meaning that we're spending millions of dollars on a system that is not fit for purpose."

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