

LOCAL, STATE & REGION

Frank, a homeless man, sits June 5 in his tent with a river view in Portland. The city is trying to emerge from one of its most wrenching periods, one that saw its reputation go from quirky "Portlandia" to violent dystopia in the minds of many on the outside looking in.

Paula Bronstein/AP photos



After tumultuous year, can Portland make a comeback?

BY SARA CLINE

The Associated Press/Report for America

PORTLAND — The smell of fresh empanadas wafted through the stands at Portland's Saturday Market. People talked through their masks with artists as others sifted through fork windchimes, crystal necklaces, tie dye dresses and clay mugs.

The weekly event was smaller than in years past, but longtime attendees say it was a sign of life being breathed back into downtown.

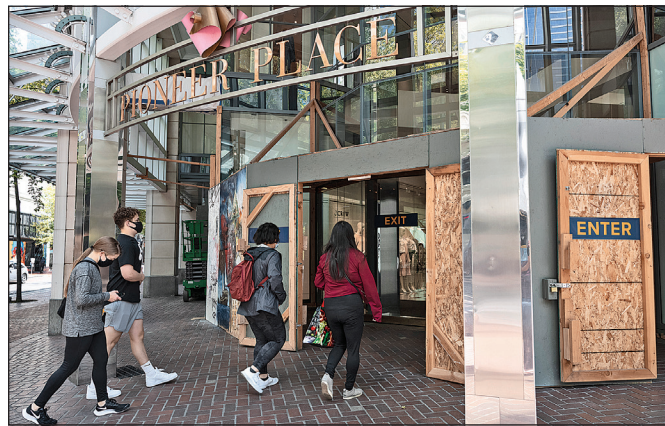
Nine blocks away, past the businesses still shuttered with plywood boards — the names of Black people killed by police painted onto them — a panhandler leaned against a fence outside the federal courthouse in an area that was choked with tear gas last summer as thousands of protesters seized the streets. It's now overwhelmed by a makeshift homeless camp.

The scenes are from a city trying to emerge from one of its most wrenching periods, one that saw its reputation go from quirky "Portlandia" to violent dystopia in the minds of many on the outside looking in.

The Pacific Northwest city had best been known nationally for its ambrosial food scene, craft breweries and nature-loving hipsters.

But last year, as a portion of its downtown was consumed by nightly protests that often turned violent and resulted in clashes with federal agents, former President Donald Trump and his administration labeled Portland an "anarchist jurisdiction."

"It does feel kind of like someone dropped a bomb in some areas (of Portland), but I think they're very contained areas," said Ocean Howell, a professor at the University of



Shoppers walk June 5 into Pioneer Place shopping mall, which is still protected by wooden panels to prevent windows being smashed by ongoing protests in Portland.

Oregon who teaches urban history and planning. "I think there's likely some businesses that are gone and aren't coming back. And there are just some people, generally, who are kind of spooked from everything."

City officials insist Portland is resilient as they launch a revitalization plan — in the form of cleanups of protest damage, aggressive encampment removals, increased homeless services and police reform — to repair its reputation.

But even the city's famously liberal locals grew weary of months of racial justice protests, increased shootings, a more noticeable homeless population and strict COVID-19 restrictions.

When the pandemic reached Portland in March 2020, businesses boarded up, turned off neon "open" signs and sent employees home.

"A year ago, when we were at the end of the longest economic expansion in post World War history in this country, we had 100,000-plus individuals coming in and out of downtown daily," said Andrew Hoan, president and CEO of the Portland Business Alliance. "And then, overnight,

they disappeared."

Portland's signature events, such as its Rose Festival, brew fests and drag shows, were canceled, postponed or held virtually. Tourists shied away. No other part of the city was so obviously altered as downtown, which saw an 80% decrease in foot traffic, based on a study conducted by the Portland Business Alliance.

A year later there are still "pockets" in the city that seem frozen in a scene from six months ago. However, officials say there is hope and already noticeable signs of recovery.

Gov. Kate Brown has begun to lift some of the country's strictest COVID-19 restrictions, and restaurants and bars have expanded capacity. The state has set a goal to completely reopen the economy by the end of June or early July.

"We're in a virtuous cycle now, where one element feeds the other," Hoan said, noting customers are again lining up outside the famous Powell's Books and fans are returning to Timbers' soccer games.

"Office workers start to breathe life into the retail scene and hospitality scene, and that sends a signal to other retail-

ers and hospitality owners," he said.

While all cities have dealt with the impact of COVID-19, Portland faced additional challenges over the past year — from a large homeless population, to nearby "once-in-generation" wildfires, to winter ice storms that left tens of thousands without power. But the events that challenged the city's reputation the most was political violence on top of racial awakening.

The Rose City was thrust into the national spotlight over the summer as people attended nightly racial justice protests. Photos of thousands of people laying on the historic Burnside Bridge for eight minutes and 46 seconds in remembrance of George Floyd captivated the nation.

"We're doggedly determined to recover," Mayor Ted Wheeler said in his State of the City address this year. "Our community has what it takes to move forward to a much greater future."

TODAY

It's Sunday, June 20, the 171st day of 2021. There are 194 days left in the year. This is Father's Day. Summer begins at 11:32 p.m. EDT.

Today's Highlight in History: In 1967, boxer Muhammad Ali was convicted in Houston of violating Selective Service laws by refusing to be drafted and was sentenced to five years in prison. (Ali's conviction was ultimately overturned by the Supreme Court).

In 1782, Congress approved the Great Seal of the United States, featuring the emblem of the bald eagle.

In 1791, King Louis XVI of France and his family attempted to flee in the so-called "Flight to Varennes," but were caught.

In 1837, Queen Victoria acceded to the British throne following the death of her uncle, King William IV.

In 1893, a jury in New Bedford, Massachusetts, found Lizzie Borden not guilty of the ax murders of her father and stepmother.

In 1921, U.S. Rep. Alice Mary Robertson, R-Okla., became the first woman to preside over a session of the House of Representatives.

In 1943, race-related rioting erupted in Detroit; federal troops were sent in two days later to quell the violence that resulted in more than 30 deaths.

In 1944, during World War II, Japanese naval forces retreated in the Battle of the Philippine Sea after suffering heavy losses to the victorious American fleet.

In 1947, President Harry S. Truman vetoed the Taft-Hartley Act, which was designed to restrict the power of labor unions, but had his veto overridden by Congress. Gangster Benjamin "Bugsy" Siegel was shot dead at the Beverly Hills, California, home of his girlfriend, Virginia Hill, apparently at the order of mob associates.

In 1972, three days after the arrest of the Watergate burglars, President Richard Nixon met at the White House with his chief of staff, H.R. Haldeman; the secretly made tape recording of this meeting ended up with the notorious 18½-minute gap.

In 1990, South African Black nationalist Nelson Mandela and his wife, Winnie, arrived in New York City for a ticker-tape parade in their honor as they began an eight-city U.S. tour.

In 2014, the Obama administration granted an array of new benefits to same-sex couples, including those living in states where gay marriage was against the law; the new measures ranged from Social Security and veterans

benefits to work leave for caring for sick spouses.

In 2019, Iran's Revolutionary Guard shot down a U.S. surveillance drone in the Strait of Hormuz; it was the first time the Islamic Republic had directly attacked the U.S. military amid tensions over the unraveling nuclear deal. A U.S. official said preparations had been made for a military strike against Iran in retaliation for the downing of the drone, but that the operation was called off with just hours to go.

Ten years ago: Syrian President Bashar Assad promised a national dialogue to consider political reforms, but his vague overtures to a pro-democracy uprising fell flat as protesters took to the streets shouting "Liar!" and demanding his ouster. "Jackass" star Ryan Dunn was killed in a fiery car crash near Philadelphia; he was 34.

Five years ago: Donald Trump abruptly fired campaign manager Corey Lewandowski in a dramatic shake-up designed to calm panicked Republican leaders and end an internal power struggle plaguing Trump's White House bid.

One year ago: At a rally in Tulsa, Oklahoma, President Donald Trump defined the election as a choice between national heritage and left-wing radicalism; there were thousands of empty seats at the rally, believed to be the largest indoor event in the nation since the start of the pandemic. Most attendees bucked the guidance of health care experts and did not wear a mask. Six staffers helping to set up the Trump event tested positive for the coronavirus.

Today's Birthdays: Actor Bonnie Bartlett is 92. Actor James Tolkan is 90. Movie director Stephen Frears is 80. Singer-songwriter Brian Wilson is 79. Actor John McCook is 77. Singer Anne Murray is 76. TV personality Bob Vila is 75. Musician Andre Watts is 75. Actor Candy Clark is 74. Producer Tina Sinatra is 73. R&B singer Lionel Richie is 72. Actor John Goodman is 69. Rock musician Michael Anthony is 67. Pop musician John Taylor is 61. Rock musician Mark degli Antoni is 59. Actor Nicole Kidman is 54. Movie director Robert Rodriguez is 53. Actor Peter Paige is 52. Actor Josh Lucas is 50. Rock musician Jeordie White (AKA Twiggy Ramirez) is 50. Rock singer Chino Moreno (Deftones) is 48. Country-folk singer-songwriter Amos Lee is 44. Rock singer Grace Potter (Grace Potter & the Nocturnals) is 38. Actor Mark Saul is 36. Actor Maria Lark is 24.

— Associated Press



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