

TRAVEL PORTLAND

Traveling to Portland? Key points on what awaits.

Reviewed April 3, 2023

- Downtown Portland is experiencing an uptick in activity, with new and longtime favorite events and activities serving to quench the thirst for connection, fun and adventure among locals and visitors alike.
- Portland is a safe, welcoming and caring city committed to humanely caring for its homeless population and has shifted increased resources toward housing solutions and mental health treatment.
- Portland has plenty of boots on the ground to keep the city clean, with city-led street and encampment clean ups, which are occurring often downtown and in the Lloyd District (Oregon Convention Center area).
- Portland is a large city with numerous vibrant neighborhoods for visitors to enjoy, the majority of which offer a safe and open environment. We recommend that visitors exercise the same caution, concern and common sense as when traveling to any new city.
- Like many metropolitan areas nationwide, Portland has experienced an increase in crime over the past year, and the Portland Police Bureau is actively, and successfully, recruiting to fill all authorized positions.
- Peaceful protests occur from time to time, but they are generally based on issues of national and international importance, such as the Roe vs. Wade decision and the alleged murder of Tyre Nichols by Memphis police officers. The rioting that occurred in the summer and fall 2020 have not been seen since then and there is no reason to believe they will return.

TRAVEL PORTLAND

Traveling to Portland? Quick takes on what awaits.

Reviewed March 28, 2023

Downtown is Open

Downtown Portland is experiencing an uptick in foot traffic and business activity. Longtime favorite [Portland Saturday Market](#) is going strong, and [Portland Night Market](#) has returned. Favorite local traditions, such as car-free [Sunday Parkways](#) events and the [Portland Cinco de Mayo Fiesta](#), are also in the works. This is just a sampling of Portland attractions that have powered up to quench the thirst for connection, fun and adventure among locals and visitors alike.

Homelessness Addressed with Compassion

Portland is a safe, welcoming and caring city. It is committed to humanely caring for its homeless population and has shifted increased resources toward housing solutions and mental health treatment.

The city committed to opening six Safe Rest Villages (SRV) to provide shelter and services to people in need, all made possible through funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA). Multnomah SRV in Southwest Portland and Menlo Park SRV in Southeast Portland opened in 2022. Construction on Sunderland RV Safe Park in Northeast Portland was completed in late 2022, and operating contracts are in approval. Three remaining sites are in the permitting and construction process. Additionally, two other culturally specific alternative shelters are supported by city ARPA funding: the BIPOC Village and Queer Affinity Village.

On November 3, 2022, Portland City Council passed [five resolutions](#) to fast-track construction of affordable housing, promote access to nonstandard work for people who are unhoused, and improve access to and resources for mental health and substance abuse services. The resolutions also seek to move homeless Portlanders closer to services and put an end to unsanctioned camping in the city. The ban on unsanctioned camping would be phased in over 18 months, "once funding has been secured," and it is not aimed at arresting homeless people. The first city-planned and sanctioned campsite will be located in [inner Southeast Portland](#) and is expected to be operational this summer.

In January 2023, Oregon Governor Tina Kotek signed three executive orders regarding homelessness throughout Oregon, including one that declared a state of emergency in the Portland metro area (and others in the state). The order gives greater flexibility in how resources are deployed and how regulatory agencies enforce land-use laws.

On March 29, Governor Kotek signed a \$200 million bipartisan housing and homeless package in House Bills 2001 and 5019, which immediately pushes \$30 million to local communities. The

rest of the funding will become available on July 1, 2023. At the signing, Governor Kotek remarked “This is just the beginning,” and that she plans to recommend further investments.

Citizens Beautify the City

Portland has plenty of boots on the ground to keep the city clean. City-led street and encampment cleanups are occurring often downtown and in the Lloyd District (Oregon Convention Center area). Such cleanups are made possible, in part, by a \$38 million investment in homeless services, by the city and Multnomah County. The city also recently renewed its five-year contract with the longstanding [Downtown Clean & Safe Ambassador Program](#), which works daily to clean Portland streets while helping visitors or providing individuals with safety and social services assistance. Finally, [SOLVE](#) Oregon conducts clean-ups statewide and follows a regular schedule for maintaining downtown and Lloyd District areas.

Voices Were Heard

Portland has not had a protest which required a police response since February 2022. Although peaceful protests do occur from time to time, they are generally based on issues of national and international importance, such as the Roe vs. Wade decision and the alleged murder of Tyre Nichols by Memphis police officers.

Mask Mandates Expire

Oregon’s remaining mask mandate for health settings is set to expire April 3. Businesses still have discretion to set their own masking policies as well as request proof of vaccination, so the best practice is to call an establishment for their policies in advance and pack a mask and copy of vaccination records.

Public Safety Remains Top Priority

Like many metropolitan areas nationwide, Portland has experienced an increase in crime over the past year. For a city of its size, it still has comparatively lower rates of violent crime, and like most cities, it is working steadily to recruit officers. In its March 16, 2023, [staffing report](#), the PPB notes that it has 810 sworn members, including 551 total officers with 98 in training. Over the past six months the PPB has made 100 new hires, including 48 sworn positions.

Auto Theft and Exercising Caution

Auto thefts have been rising for at least four consecutive years across the U.S., according to the [National Insurance Crime Bureau](#), and Portland has largely followed this trend. The Portland Police Bureau offers tips to prevent theft, including not leaving a vehicle idling, removing any valuables, locking doors and closing windows, parking in a secure lot (or in a well-lit lot or driveway), and parking in well-traveled areas with visibility to passersby. To report theft from or of a vehicle, call the non-emergency dispatch at 503-823-3333.

Public Safety Reporting and Resources Available

Portland is a large city with numerous vibrant neighborhoods for visitors to enjoy, the majority of which offer a safe and open environment. We recommend that visitors exercise the same caution, concern and common sense as when traveling to any new city. Should visitors need to

file a Portland Police Bureau report, certain crimes may be reported via an online portal at www.portland.gov/police/police-report-online-submission.

As always, anyone experiencing or witnessing an emergency should dial 9-1-1. The emergency line reaches police, fire and ambulance services as well as Portland Street Response, which sends unarmed responders to assist people experiencing mental health and/or behavioral health crises.

For non-emergency dispatch of first responders, the number to call is 503-823-3333. This number is for situations that are not an immediate threat to life or property, such as for reporting a stolen vehicle.

Portland also has a 3-1-1 number for non-emergency situations that do not require first responders. The number may be used for reporting — such as a campsite, a stolen bike, overflowing trash, noise complaints or debris in the roadway — or to get help with questions or requests.

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