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Public Policy and Sexual Geography in Portland, Oregon, 1970-2010

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Public Policy and Sexual Geography in Portland, Oregon, 1970-2010

by

Elizabeth Mylott Morehead

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy
in
Urban Studies

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Abstract

Drawing on the concept of sexual geography, this study examines the social and political meanings of sexualized spaces in the urban geography of Portland, Oregon between 1970 and 2010. This includes an examination of the sexual geography of urban spaces as a deliberate construct resulting from official and unofficial public policy and urban planning decisions. Sexual geographies, the collective and individual constructions of sexuality, are not static. Nor are definitions of deviant sexual practices fixed in the collective consciousness. Both are continuously being reshaped and reconstructed in response to changing economic structures and beliefs about sex, race and class. Primary documents are used to build a conceptual geography of sexualized spaces in Portland at points between 1970 and 2010 with an emphasis on the policy and urban planning decisions that inform the physical designations and social meanings of sexualized spaces including prostitution zones, pornography districts and gay entertainment areas.

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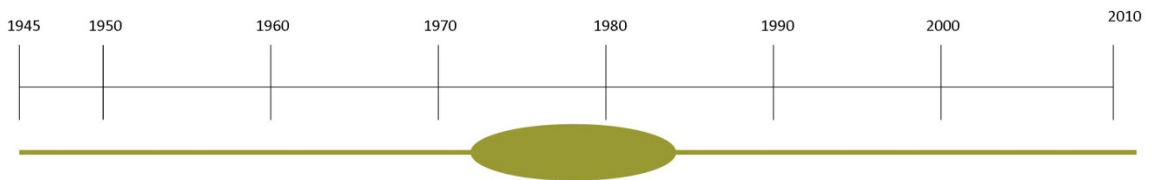
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Chapter 1: Introduction

In the early 1970s, Portlanders began to see new types of business open around the city – ones that specialized in adult entertainment. Parents walked young children to school past adult bookstores and massage parlors now operating out of the commercial nodes of their residential neighborhoods. The marquees of the neighborhood theaters that once showed mainstream films were increasingly covered with XXX. Visitors to the city drove past lotion studios and stores selling pornography on the way in from the airport. A concentration of adult businesses opened just blocks from Portland City Hall. Angry residents wrote to the Mayor and City Council, imploring them to step in and close the businesses. Or, if they could not be banned entirely, to segregate them in Old Town. City Hall turned to the City Attorney and Planning Bureau who spent nearly two decades trying to find a solution that would please angry city residents and still be legal under the state constitution.

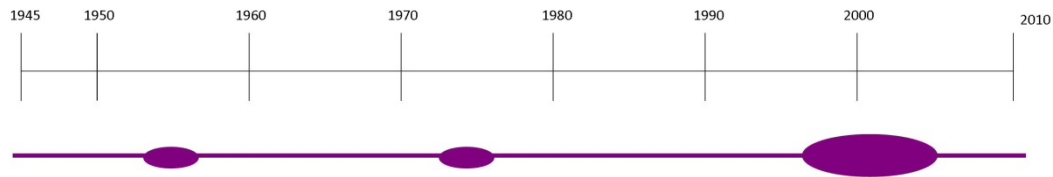
Figure 1: Timeline of adult entertainment policy



While city residents and city leaders focused their attention of Old Town, just blocks away the Burnside Triangle was struggling to maintain its role as Portland’s most visible gay entertainment district. For decades the small corner of the city had been the social and political center of the region’s gay community, but faced with redevelopment

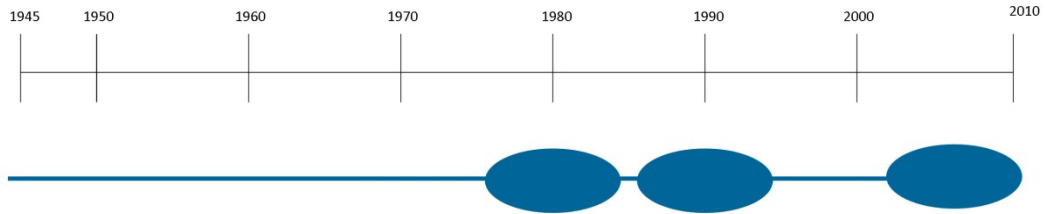
pressures and the changing needs of a community that now defined itself as queer or GLBTQ rather than gay, the future of the Triangle seemed unsure.

Figure 2: Timeline of policy relating to Burnside Triangle



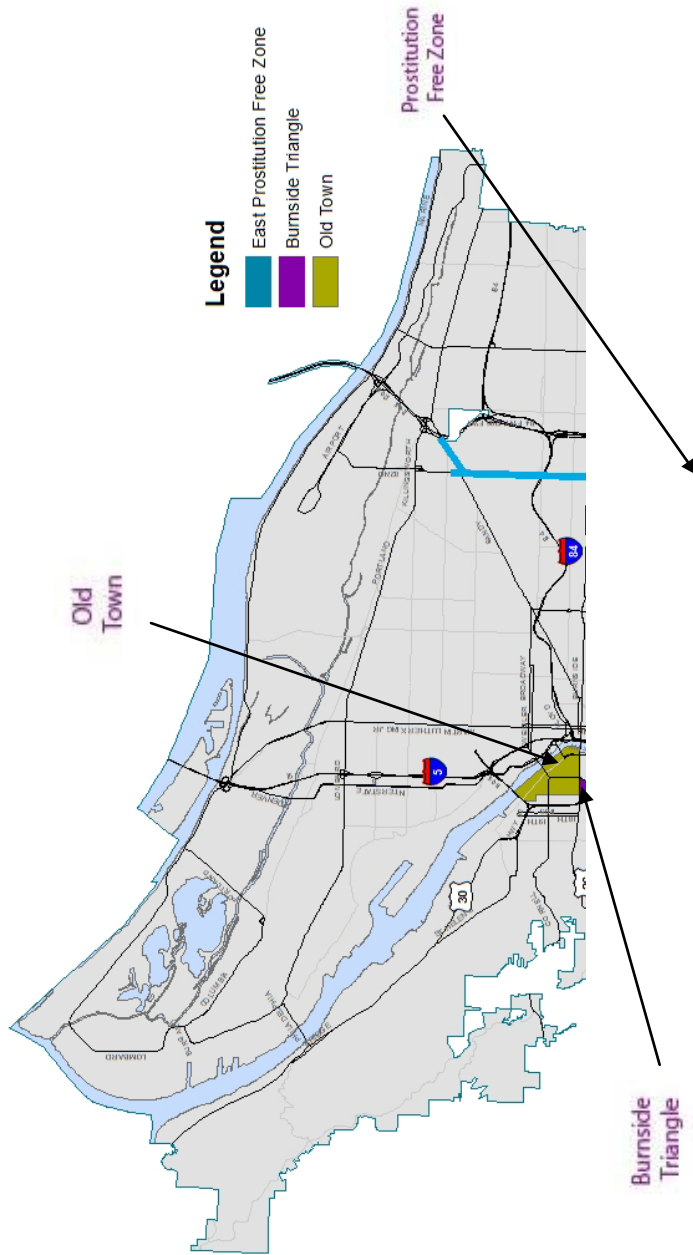
As the Burnside Triangle was struggling to maintain its connection with sexual expression, Montavilla was fighting to shed its association. By the 1990s, the mostly residential and solidly middle class neighborhood on the east side of Mt. Tabor found itself in the center of Portland’s most visible street prostitution market. Neighborhood residents awoke to find their yards littered with condoms and used needles. Young women and girls were propositioned while walking down the street or waiting for the bus. Men were approached as they waited in their cars at stop lights. The city stepped in and made the area a Prostitution Free Zone where people arrested for prostitution related crimes faced additional penalties and were barred from entering the neighborhood. When faced with constitutional challenges, however, the city allowed the zone to sunset and prostitution swiftly returned to the neighborhood. Neighborhood residents mobilized in an unsuccessful attempt to have the zones reinstated and were left feeling ignored and unprotected by the city.

Figure 3: Timeline of policy concerning Prostitution Free Zone



As these examples show, the sexual geography of Portland, Oregon has evolved, during the past forty-five years, in response to a number of factors including changing market forces, trends in the entertainment industry, new technologies, evolving social movements, and changing sexual norms. These factors have affected individual sexualized spaces and the sexual geography of the city as whole. Sexual geographies are also influenced by public policy and urban planning decisions. By tracing the way three sexualized spaces developed in Portland between 1970 and 2010, we can gain a fuller understanding of the city's history and the ways in which physical landscapes shape and are shaped by social and political forces.

Figure 4: Sexualized Spaces Case Studies



Sexual geographies can be understood as the collective and individual constructions of the relationship between sexual behavior, sexual identity, and physical

space. Spaces are sexualized when they are connected in the public consciousness with particular sexual behaviors or identities. Areas known to have prostitution markets, concentrations of strip clubs, or businesses catering to sexual minorities are all sexualized spaces. Parks or other areas known for cruising, certain types of night clubs, and hotels or motels can also be sexualized. Like other forms of cultural or social geographies, sexual geographies are not static. They shift in response to shifting land use patterns, property values, and economic realities. Likewise, beliefs about sexual practices and identities are not fixed. Both are continuously being reshaped in response to changing economic structures and beliefs about sex, class, and race.

The sexualization of a space alters the way that people view and use, or choose not to use, that space. An area known for a street prostitution market, for example, will attract people who wish to participate in the market, as prostitutes, pimps, or customers and those who wish to exploit or harm sex market participants, including rapists targeting prostitutes and robbers targeting prostitutes and their customers. It will also attract social service providers, including health care workers, and law enforcement officers. Others, who are embarrassed by the open prostitution or concerned about their safety in an area where crime is committed openly, will avoid the area. This dynamic is complicated, however, when multiple uses exist in the same place. In a street prostitution market located in a business district where all the legal businesses close at five and the prostitution market opens at seven there is little conflict. However, when the street prostitution market is in a residential area or in an area with businesses whose hours

overlap with the prostitution market, conflict arises, as do questions of ownership and belonging.

The sexualization of a space can also alter what opportunities are available to neighborhood residents and the quality of life they experience. Much of this is contingent upon the way the public views the sexual activity or identity associated with the space. Social, political, and economic inequalities are physically manifest in urban spaces. Influence, social standing, and financial resources are not distributed evenly. Disparate groups have unequal access to resources due to factors including race, gender, sexual orientation, and participation in the sex industry. Geography is one way inequalities are experienced. Property developers and business owners might be attracted to an area based on its relationship to sexual minority identity (i.e. the gentrification of many gay neighborhoods) and thus property values in the area rise. An area with a large concentration of upscale strip clubs might experience a similar increase in property values as customers are attracted to the area. Alternately, business owners may not wish for their businesses to be associated with adult entertainment and therefore move from an area when strip clubs or lingerie modeling studios open, driving rents and property values down.

Quality of life concerns can be intensified in sexualized spaces. Many women and girls who live or work in areas associated with prostitution or pornography face harassment from men who assume them to be prostitutes, exotic dancers, or otherwise sexually available. Men living in the area are likewise assumed to be johns and are approached by prostitutes. Confusion over who is and who is not participating in the sex

market can lead to embarrassing and unwarranted contact with law enforcement.

Additionally, areas near street prostitution markets are often littered with used condoms, cigarette butts, and drug paraphernalia which are both unsightly and potentially hazardous.

The sexualization of space is one piece of a larger geography of power, privilege and inequality that shapes the lives of people in urban spaces. Each of the public policies affecting sexualized spaces was born out of a specific historical moment and embodies the beliefs, fears, and technologies of that moment. At the end of the nineteenth century, for example, much of the visible sexual commerce in Portland was located in what was then Chinatown. The concentration of sexual commerce colored the perception of outsiders, many of whom came to associate all Chinese men with deviant sexual practices and all women who lived and worked in the neighborhood with sexual availability. In turn, the way people lay claim to space and use it to shape personal and group identities can not only reshape urban geography but also influence relationships of power. In many ways, sexualized spaces are a consequence of prejudice and exclusion. Social, political, and economic inequalities in social structures affect the level of access different groups have to social influence and money. Structural inequality can affect individual behavior and the process of social change. It can also limit the ability of individuals and groups to access geographic spaces and social capital. The values associated with places are associated with the people who experience those places.¹

¹ Arrighi, B. 2007. *Understanding Inequality: The intersection of race/ethnicity, class and gender*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

The history of Portland's sexual geography between 1970 and 2010 is a story about neighborhood activism and the fight to define whose claims to territory are legitimate. Again and again, groups of neighborhood residents came together to affect the use of spaces within their communities. Some groups have not been successful in defining and controlling their geography, trying but ultimately failing in their attempts to shape the sexual geography of their neighborhoods. Sexualization is not random, unpredictable, or without causation. There are both physical and social precursors to sexualization, which often is an extension of a structured inequality that operates beyond sexual behavior and orientation.

As cultural and social norms and economic realities change, so do beliefs about sexual norms and behaviors. Beliefs about adult entertainment and sexual minority identities have changed dramatically over the past sixty years. Beliefs about prostitution have also changed, although not to the same degree. Prior to 1970, the sale, manufacture and distribution of pornography were illegal in the United States. Although still the victims of prejudice, gay men have gone, in the past sixty years, from being portrayed as dangers to children and national security to desirable consumers believed to have the power to transform depressed neighborhoods through the infusion of both money and style.² Prostitutes, once viewed as mentally ill, with unnaturally high sex drives, are now more often cast as victims of unequal economic structures, substance abuse, and abusive men.³ At the same time, pimps gained popular cultural status during the 1990s when they

² Aldrich, R. 2004. Homosexuality and the city: An historical overview. *Urban Studies* 41 (9): 1719-1737.

³ Hobson, Barbara Meil. 1987. *Uneasy Virtue: The Politics of Prostitution and the American Reform Tradition*. New York: Basic Books. Hubbard, P.1998. Sexuality, immorality and the city: Red-light districts and the marginalization of female street prostitutes. *Gender, Place & Culture* 5 (1): 55-74.

were celebrated in music and film and “pimpin” became another word for cool. While prostitutes are victims, strippers and porn stars are sometimes celebrated as liberated, offering widespread appeal to both men and women. Corporate culture has embraced adult entertainment, using strip clubs as a location for business-related socializing. “Strippercise” classes are offered alongside aerobics and yoga classes in gyms and fitness studios offering every suburban mom the opportunity to be a stripper, if only in the privacy of her own gym.⁴

Spaces are thus infused with sexual, social, and historical meaning. While concern during one era might focus on the perceived social dangers posed by prostitution, in another era homosexuality is viewed as the dominant threat. The conflicts and transgressive behaviors that shaped sexualized spaces in each of the three identified time periods represent an area of major concern for the city and dominant society at that time. In the same way that the concerns changed, so did the way in which the city addressed the geography of sexuality and sexual activity. Thus, sexualized spaces can serve as a map to help us understand the way a variety of issues, including sex, sexual orientation, race, class, and gender are viewed and treated at different historic moments and within the context of changing social, economic, and political structures.

Moreover, sexual norms are continually being redefined and reinvented in response to the social, political, and economic structures of different groups at specific historical moments. While sexual norms and values are not strictly uniform across all of society, dominant norms can be identified and a dominant group is able to define and

⁴ Attwood, F. 2009. *Mainstreaming Sex: the sexualization of Western culture*. London: I.B. Tauris.

impose standards of behavior by which others are judged. As societies change, beliefs about acceptable or normal sexual practices evolve to meet changing realities. Not all people are able or willing to constrict their behavior to contemporary standards of behavior, however. Sexual activities and practices that do not meet the socially constructed definition of acceptable behavior are often seen as deviant and those who practice them as transgressing social boundaries. Deviant sexual practices, at different times and for different groups, have included pre-marital sex, homosexuality, and forms of commoditized sexual expression including prostitution and pornography. As social values and norms change, some activities previously seen as deviant are accepted as normal or even commonplace. Other activities might continue to be seen as deviant but views about the people participating in the activities change in response to economic, class, age, gender, and social constructs, the space in which the activity occurs or the events preceding or following the sexual activity. Embedded in the image, circumstances and treatment of deviant sexuality are commonly held beliefs about sex, gender, class, race, and sexual orientation.

The sexual geography of Portland, Oregon, like many urban spaces, is in part the result of official and unofficial public policy and urban planning decisions. The ways in which public policies affect the construction of sexual geography, which in turn shapes the experiences of those people who experience sexualized spaces, are not fully understood. Few public policies or urban planning processes specifically address sexual activity and even fewer speak directly to the spaces that shape or are shaped by sexual commerce and commoditized or deviant sexuality. Moreover, the effects of public

policies and planning decisions are often complex with unanticipated and far reaching consequences. By mapping sexualized spaces and tracing their history we can identify public policies that have influenced or shaped the geography of sexualized spaces in Portland, both deliberately and inadvertently. When spaces are defined in terms of their relationship to sexual activity, there are consequences for the people who move through those spaces. The relationship between sexual geography and public policies are not unidirectional. Just as public policy shapes sexualized spaces, an area's sexual geography also influences the public policies and planning decisions applied to the space. Through their use of sexualized spaces, individuals and groups have been able to shape identities, influence power relationships and redefine the meanings of deviance in relation to sexual practices.

Each of the elements that have played a role in Portland's changing sexual geography translates into and is influenced by urban planning and policy decisions. Some of the influences, including new technologies, trends in the entertainment industry, and the wave of central city gentrification during the 1970s and 1980s, affected many American cities in similar but not identical way. Case studies of sexualized spaces have been conducted in many urban areas and while distinct trends have been identified, each city's experience reflects its own distinct economic, social, and political culture. Furthermore, studies of sexualized spaces in urban policy and planning literature tend to focus on policies written specifically to address the sexualization of space, usually zoning codes. Portland's sexual geography has been influenced by a series of public policy, urban planning, and land use decisions that in concept have little if anything to do with

adult entertainment, prostitution, or other activities that mark a space as sexualized. By exploring the way these policies and planning decisions, which include economic development initiatives and transportation planning decisions, have shaped sexualized space in unanticipated ways, we will gain a better understanding of the connection between urban policy, land use planning, and sexualized spaces.

A fuller picture of the connection between public policy, urban planning, and sexual geography emerges through an exploration of three urban spaces in Portland at times when they were sexualized, or connected with specific sexual activities in the public consciousness: the pornography district in Old Town between 1970 and 1987, the gay entertainment district known as the Burnside Triangle between 1998 and 2010, and the Prostitution Free Zone in the Montavilla neighborhood between 1992 and 2010.

The sexual practices associated with each of these spaces were considered transgressive at some point during the past fifty years. Prostitution, homosexuality, and the public display and consumption of pornography challenged the bounds of what was considered acceptable sexual activity by dominant society. That some of these sexual activities continue to be seen as deviant while others do not adds a layer of interest and complexity to the examination of the land use and policy decisions which helped to shape each space. An examination of the way a society views sexual commerce, homosexuality, and the consumption of pornography during a specific historical moment and the way those views evolve over time can deepen our understanding of the connection between public policy, land use, and sexual geography.

Over the past fifty years, the Portland Planning Bureau, City Attorney, and City Council have attempted numerous times to use public policies and land use decisions to affect the city's sexual geography. During the 1970s and early 1980s, there were attempts to use zoning ordinances to segregate adult businesses. Neighborhood and civic groups have also supported land use and policy interventions. At different points various groups lobbied the city to create zones where pornography would be illegal, prostitution would be legal, prostitution would be illegal, and zones where sexual minority history and culture would be officially recognized. Ultimately, these official attempts to shape the city's sexual geography through land use planning and public policy had little effect. Interventions that did prove effective, like the Prostitution Free Zone, were short lived.

This isn't to say, however, that Portland's sexual geography was not shaped by urban planning and land use decisions. Some of the biggest impacts on the location of sex related businesses, prostitution markets, and sexual minority entertainment areas have been urban land use and policy decisions. The difference is that the policies that end up having the biggest influence on sexual geography are policies that in concept have nothing to do with sexualized spaces. For example, the physical design of Eighty-Second Avenue, the frequency of transit service on that street, and the surrounding land uses create a perfect market for prostitution. Alternately, in the case of the Burnside Triangle, urban redevelopment efforts led, in part, to the dispersment of the sexual minority community even though developers viewed the community as an asset. The following chapters explore both the ways Portlanders have attempted to shape sexual geography through policy and land use planning, and the way seeming unrelated policies and

decisions have affected the geography of pornography, prostitution, and sexual minority entertainment.

Chapter 2: Constructions of identity and urban space

This study draws on several theoretical frameworks that explore the relationship between physical and social geographies, individual and group identities, and their role in urban history during the second half of the twentieth century. Physical spaces have social and political meanings assigned to them which are both the cause and the result of unequal power relationships. Those spaces then influence and are influenced by group and individual identity formation. The meanings of specific locations and identities change over time in response to changing social and political movements and economic realities. The relationships between physical geography, social and political power relationships, and group and individual identities which shape the meaning of individual spaces however, tend to conform to set patterns. Groups with political and economic power have certain advantages when it comes to imposing their beliefs and preferences onto physical spaces. This is not to discount, however, the sometimes significant influence of less empowered groups through political action and dissent.

a. Construction of Space

The sexualization of space is one piece of a larger geography of power, privilege, and inequality that shapes the lives of people in urban spaces. The meanings assigned to physical and social spaces shape and are shaped by societal expectations and interactions. Sexuality and space do not exist independently of each other but instead are “constructive of each other in that sexualities are enacted and encoded in and across different scales and sites.”⁵ Urban areas have long been associated with sexual excess and

⁵ Gerodetti, N. and S Bieri. 2006. "(Female hetro) Sexualities in transition: Train stations as Gateways. *Feminist Theory* 7: p69.

deviance. “Cities and sexualities both shape and are shaped by the dynamics of human social life. They reflect the ways in which social life is organized, the ways in which it is represented, perceived, and understood, and the ways in which various groups cope with and react to these contradictions.”⁶

The relationship between space, value, and behavior is not unidirectional. Physical space plays a role in behavior at the same time that values shape physical space. To “explain why something occurs is to explain why it occurs where it does.”⁷ It does not suffice to say that one creates or causes the other. It is not possible to separate the social and spatial aspects of a phenomenon. “It is not just that the spatial is socially constructed; the social is spatially constructed too.”⁸ Spaces have meanings that evolve from “economic systems in time and space resulting from the positioning of bodies and is therefore permanently subject to change triggered by human action. Spaces are produced through the intertwining of various modalities of space, such as physical, mental, by conceptual abstraction, and social relations.”⁹ This is also true of sexualized spaces, which are created through complex actions by individuals and groups and influenced by economic systems and physical landscapes.

Bailey looked at neighborhood activism, theories of identity formation, and economic development as measures of the effect of gays and lesbians on urban areas and

⁶ Knopp, L. 2003. *Sexuality and urban space: A framework for analysis*. In Cuthbert, A ed. *Designing Cities: Critical Readings in Urban Design*. Oxford: Blackwell.

⁷ Sack, D. 1980. *Conceptions of Space in Social Thought: A Geographical Perspective*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

⁸ Massey, D. and J. Allen. 1984. *Geography matters! A reader*. Cambridge: The University of Cambridge.

⁹ Gerodetti, N. and S Bieri. 2006. "(Female hetro) Sexualities in transition: Train stations as Gateways. *Feminist Theory* 7: p73.

issues in local government.¹⁰ Hennessy and Badgett did similar work, linking gay and lesbian communities to economic development in their study of commercialism and consumerism and attempts by the market economy to capitalize on the ‘pink dollar.’¹¹

The location of sex markets is the result of various economies. Cameron explains that “coherent paid sex markets are intimately linked with various economies of agglomeration, synergy, complementarity and ‘laddering’ whereby an entrant to paid sex consumption may progress from low intimacy/low added values products to those of higher intimacy/higher value added. Physical clustering of traded sex commodities can also enhance the progression of the consumer’s ladder by heightening stimulus to enter such markets for the first time.”¹² Customers of a strip club may easily transition to a neighboring lingerie modeling studio and eventually to hiring a prostitute working on a nearby street corner, the physical proximity of the businesses having made it easier for the customer to increase his participation in the sex market. Clustering can also apply to the behavior of sex workers. Prostitutes who work on the street tend to cluster near one another. This allows them to attract more customers, provide protection for each other and socialize during times between clients. Additionally, prostitutes tend to cluster near supporting businesses including coffee shops that welcome their business, stores selling condoms or other paraphernalia, and motels.

¹⁰ Bailey, R. 1999. *Gay politics, urban politics: identity and economics in the urban setting*. New York: Columbia University Press.

¹¹ Badgett, M. 2001. *Money, Myths and Change: The Economic Lives of Lesbians and Gay Men*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; Hennessy, R. 2000. *Profit and Pleasure: Sexual Identities in Late capitalism*. New York: Routledge.

¹² Cameron, S. 2004. Space, risk and opportunity: The evolution of paid sex markets. *Urban Studies* 41 (9): p1643.

Spaces where sexual commerce is advertised, negotiated, and administered are an integral part of the process by which prostitution is tied to particular urban streets.¹³ Sex markets do not occupy haphazard or neutral spaces in the urban landscape. They are “highly politicized by competing interests such as community protesters, services that advocate for sex workers, and law enforcement agencies and the sex workers.”¹⁴ Thus, Hubbard and Sanders theorize “red-light district landscapes as emerging from (and produced by) an ongoing and recursive relationship between the ‘everyday’ spatial behavior of sex workers and the spatial strategies enacted by the state, law and latterly, community protest groups.” Furthermore, “the imaging (and imagining) of specific spaces associated with sex work is a crucial means by which the (contested) identity of the female street prostitute as Other is produced and maintained. . . the contemporary social marginalization of female street prostitutes is reproduced through their placement in particular sites on the margins of social and geographical imagination.”¹⁵

Sexualized spaces do not exist outside the social and political fabric. Although spaces of deviant sexuality are often cast as the “other” of urban geography, they are in fact closely tied to unsexualized spaces or spaces associated with non-deviant sexuality. Spaces associated with deviant sexuality play multiple roles in urban spaces, including a counterpoint for spaces associated with wholesome sexuality. Furthermore, ideas of victimization and privilege are closely tied to our understanding of sexualized spaces.

¹³ Ashworth, G., White, P. and Winchester, H. 1988. The red light district in the west European city: a neglected aspect of the urban landscape. *Geoforum* 19: 201-212.

¹⁴ Sanders, T. 2004. The risks of street prostitution: Punters, police and protesters. *Urban Studies* 41 (9): p1703.

¹⁵ Hubbard, P.1998. Sexuality, immorality and the city: Red-light districts and the marginalization of female street prostitutes. *Gender, Place & Culture* 5 (1): p56.

Sexualized spaces are created through a series of complex actions and reactions that associate spaces with specific sexual behaviors and actors.

Analyzing the ways in which a community uses and lays claim to space, both physical and social, has helped geographers and historians to better understand sexual minority communities. Some of the earliest works on “gay spaces” involved a mapping of gay owned and gay associated businesses.¹⁶ Manuel Castells’s 1983 geography of San Francisco identified gendered roles and gendered behavior in the way male and female sexual minority communities laid claim to space. Men were territorial while women were reliant on informal networks.¹⁷ In 1993, Valentine also identified the importance of informal networks in lesbian communities. In another study the same year Valentine found that lesbians manage multiple identities in everyday life. The lesbian network theory was challenged in 1992, however by Adler and Brenner who found that women did congregate but in ephemeral and quasi underground communities. Davis and Kennedy found that the lesbian community in Buffalo, NY used both public spaces (bars) and private space (houses) in cities for group identity formation.¹⁸ Support for this theory was found in case studies from North America, Britain, and France.¹⁹ In a study of Grand Rapids, MI, Peake found that the formation of lesbian residential communities was a

¹⁶ Loyd, B., and Rountree, L. 1978. Radical feminists and gay men in San Francisco: Social space in dispersed communities. In *Invitation to Geography*, ed. D. Lanegran and R. Palm, 78-88. New York: McGraw Hill.; Weightman, B. 1981. Commentary: Towards a geography of the gay community. *Journal of Cultural Geography* 1: 106-12.

¹⁷ Castells, M. 1983. *The City and the Grassroots*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

¹⁸ Davis, M., and Kennedy, E. 1986. Oral history and the study of sexuality in the lesbian community: Buffalo, New York 1940-1960. *Feminist Studies* 12: 7-26; Adler, S., and Brenner, J. 1992. Gender and space: lesbians and gay men in the city. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 16: 24-34.

¹⁹ Ettore, E. 1978. Women, urban social movements and the lesbian ghetto. *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 2: 499-519.; Winchester, H., and White, P. 1988. The location of marginalized groups in the inner city. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 6: 37-54.; Peake 1993 and Valentine 1995

political act, aimed at securing access to areas of the city without mediating through actions by men.²⁰ All of these studies demonstrate the importance to lesbians of establishing local territorial bases.

Our understanding of urban spaces is tied to a collective mental map of the activities and lifestyles we believe to occur or be connected with particular spaces. The map, drawn from a variety of sources including personal experiences, advertising campaigns, media reports, rumors, and myth, influences the way we experience and view the people who move through different urban areas. Those maps also influence the way we think about an area's future and the public policies we deem appropriate to shape that future. This is not to say, however, that just one map exists or that spaces hold a single meaning for the people who experience them. Perceptions of space are strongly influenced by factors including gender, race, sexual orientation, and class.

Much of this understanding of space, even the spaces within the cities where we live, is shaped indirectly by rhetoric, reputation, and representation. Without personal knowledge of diverse areas we are left to interpret and adopt the experiences of others. Thus, spaces are shaped in the popular consciousness through visual and written representations of the beliefs and fears of people who do not necessarily move through the spaces.

b. Identity Formation

The way people lay claim to space and use it to shape individual and group identities can not only reshape urban geography but also influence power relationships.²¹

²⁰ Peake, L. 1993. 'Race' and sexuality: Challenging the patriarchal structuring of urban social space. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 11: 415-32.

The meanings assigned to space are not static. They are continually shifting in response to changing social and economic structures. Furthermore, the meanings of spaces are experienced differently by different users. Those meanings are reproduced and reimagined by users of the space.

“Meanings of space are thus not stable but enacted repeatedly and performed through the way in which they are inhabited, acted, and spoken. The meaning of a denoted place is never fully encompassed by its assigned activity or physical properties. Instead, it is constituted by the interactions with specific subjectivities and signifying practices which bring out or conceal certain types of meanings.”²²

This is true on both large and small scales from the layout of the city to the uses to the space of an individual body.

Spatial and social boundaries are integral to the process of excluding and controlling groups that transgress dominant ideologies and practices.²³ Isolation and separation of those constructed as “others,” including sexual minorities and those whose sexual practices are considered deviant, is achieved through geographic policies and social processes.²⁴ Spaces are often used by multiple groups that assign different meanings to them. Skeggs examines the way three groups -- gay men, lesbians, and

²¹ Aldrich, R. 2004. Homosexuality and the city: An historical overview. *Urban Studies* 41 (9): 1719-1737.

²² Gerodetti, N. and S Bieri. 2006. "(Female hetro) Sexualities in transition: Train stations as Gateways. *Feminist Theory* 7: p73.

²³ Sibley, D. 1995. Geographies of exclusion: Society and difference in the west. London: Routledge.

²⁴ Skeggs, B. 1999. Matter out of place: visibility and sexualization in leisure spaces. *Journal of Leisure Studies Association* 18: 213-232.; Duncan, N. 1996. Renegotiating gender and sexuality in public and private spaces. In *Bodyspace* ed. N. Duncan, 127-145. London: Routledge.

heterosexual women -- use the same leisure space, the gay village in Manchester, England, to form individual and group identities. Using longitudinal ethnographic research she examines the process of individual and group identity formation, surveys to see who is using the space, and in depth interviews with key informants who have a particular investment in the area, including bar owners, bouncers, and community workers. Skeggs concludes that access to public space for women is controlled by the fear of straight male violence. While her research touches on the relationship between the three groups and their relationship to other urban spaces it does not explicitly examine the gay village as part of a larger context of urban space.²⁵

After World War II, distinct gay entertainment districts developed or expanded in cities across the United States. Characterized by a concentration of bars, restaurants, bathhouses, and other businesses catering to a gay and lesbian clientele the districts ranged in size and visibility. World War II has been credited by many historians as a turning point in the formation of modern gay and lesbian identities.²⁶ One effect of the war was a mass migration of men and women both for military service and to work in war related industries. Away from their families, many men and women were exposed to gay and lesbian culture for the first time. The newfound freedom allowed them to more fully understand and embrace their sexuality while building a group identity as homosexuals.

²⁵ Skeggs, B. 1999. Matter out of place: visibility and sexualization in leisure spaces. *Journal of Leisure Studies Association* 18: 213-232.

²⁶ Boag, P. 2004. Does Portland need a homophile society? Gay culture and activism in the Rose City between World War II and Stonewall. *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 105 (1): 6-39.

Much of the empowerment literature about gay spaces focuses on the importance of gay bars and bathhouses between World War II and the 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York. While the Stonewall Riots were a major turning point in the Gay Pride movement, they were part of a longer history of gay and lesbian community formation and group activism. Boag argues “gay rights activism did not suddenly spring forth from the Stonewall uprising but, rather, built on the “homophile movement” that had commenced in 1951.”²⁷ The gay and lesbian bar culture that developed in American cities between the 1930s and 1960s fostered a group identity and political consciousness that led to activism outside formal homophile organizations during the 1960s.

Bérubé argues that gay bars and bathhouses as identifiable spatial locations are “an integral part of gay political history” that acted as safety zones and sites of mobilization.²⁸ Tattleman also emphasizes the bathhouses as safe spaces for gay men: “As vital sites of everyday actions and spatial functioning, the baths provide the safety and freedom within which to enjoy a multiple set of interactions.”²⁹ Furthermore, he characterizes bathhouses as democratizing spaces reinforced by the absence of material goods. His analysis is based on the premise that once inside a bathhouse a man will possess only a towel and thus class distinctions will be lessened. As gay entertainment spaces are increasingly part of gentrified neighborhoods, others worry that class

²⁷ Boag, P. 2004. Does Portland need a homophile society? Gay culture and activism in the Rose City between World War II and Stonewall. *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 105 (1): p8.

²⁸ Bérubé, A. 2003. The history of gay bathhouses. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 44 (3/4): p34.

²⁹ Tattleman, I. 1998. Speaking to the gay bathhouse: Communicating in sexually charged spaces. In *Public sex/gay space*, ed. W. L. Leap, 71-84. New York: Columbia University Press.

distinctions will be reinforced as money is increasingly needed to gain access to spaces of gay identity formation.

Working from an urban development standpoint in her study of gay men and lesbians in Los Angeles, Kenney finds: “First, place and the city have importance for culture and politics; and second, place is created and altered throughout interactions in and with it.” Her work introduces the idea of mental, or cognitive, maps that combine real and symbolic sites. Place claiming, she argues, contributes to group identity. Kenney asks two questions, both of which are relevant to my work in Portland. First, how can the city be used and understood by the gay and lesbian communities in a particular city, in her case Los Angeles, and in mine Portland. Second, how do activities reshape the city through their actions and associations? “Physical manifestations of abstract ideas such as community, safety, legality, and pride can be located, as can the particular actions through which gays and lesbians make these abstract ideas into concrete reality.” She continues, “gays and lesbians live in cities they have mapped for their own purposes . . . the experience of being part of and subject to the life of the city, combined with the search for specific spaces, that permit and affirm one’s way of being are key elements of such maps.” This can be expanded to include other groups and their sexualization of space. Just as gay men and women know “street corners where kisses can be exchanged proudly,” prostitutes may know which corners are good for meeting customers, which blocks lack street lighting and thus effectively conceal sexual exchanges, and which hotels will accept their business. Kenney’s argument that sexualized spaces often develop

in “neighborhoods discretely appropriated in forgotten zones” has been true of multiple sexualized spaces for much of the twentieth century.³⁰

c. Sexualization of marginal spaces

In many ways, sexualized spaces are a consequence of prejudice and exclusion. Social, political, and economic inequalities affect the level of access different groups have to influence, social and financial resources. Structural inequality can affect individual behavior, social change and the ability of individuals and groups to access geographic spaces and social capital. Disparate groups have unequal access to resources due to a number of factors, including race, gender, sexual orientation, and participation in the sex industry. The values associated with places are often transferred onto the people who live and work in those places.³¹

American cities have long used geography as part of a strategy to address concerns about deviant sexuality. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, many American cities experimented with informal legalization of prostitution. Shumsky explains: “While laws against prostitution, solicitation, and pandering remained on the books, they were selectively enforced. Women who confined their activities to certain ‘segregated’ or ‘tolerated’ districts were generally left alone and allowed to practice their profession. . . . The red light district was a kind of ghetto, but instead of being an ethnic ghetto, it was an economic and social ghetto meant to segregate a certain group of

³⁰ Kenney, M.R. 2001. *Mapping LA: The Intersection of Place and Politics*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press, p6-10.

³¹ Arrighi, B. 2007. *Understanding Inequality: The intersection of race/ethnicity, class and gender*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

people.”³² As is the case with many geographical restrictions of sexual expression, the informal red light districts were designed to satisfy the perceived needs of one group (men) while protecting another (respectable women and children) at the expense of a third (women who did not fall into the previous category and those without sufficient resources to move from the designated area). While those experiments officially ended more than a century ago, informal red light districts have been easily identifiable in most mid sized to large American cities throughout the twentieth century. The spaces are formed and maintained through the actions of municipal governments, local police, sex workers, their customers, and community activists.

Formally, values and cultural norms regarding public expressions of sex and sexuality are embedded in and reproduced through zoning ordinances regarding pornography and other adult uses. In many cities, businesses producing and distributing adult entertainment are strongly regulated and controlled by zoning ordinances that spell out in detail where such business can be located, how close they can be to each other, to schools and churches and how they are allowed to advertise. When challenged in court, arguments about first amendment freedoms have routinely lost out to (contested) fears about secondary effects of adult entertainment, including increases in crime and decreasing property values.³³

Through zoning and licensing restrictions, sex-related businesses are thus limited to specific urban spaces. By constructing such sites as potentially disordered or transgressive the government is able to identify sex-related businesses as unquestionably

³² Shumsky, N. 1986. Tactic acceptance: Respectable Americans and segregated prostitution, 1870-1910. *Journal of Social History* 19 (4): p665.

³³ Blomley N, 1994 *Law, Space, and the Geographies of Power*. New York: Guilford.

deserving of regulation, allowing them to limit their visibility of so that they do not impinge on the lives of those who do not wish to be exposed to sexual commerce. This method of concealment allows the state to uphold the liberal principle that adults have the right to consume sexual performances and materials, yet maintains its insistence that obscenity threatens public order when freely available.³⁴

The zoning out of pornography is about more than public consumption of sexual images. Throughout the twentieth century there was a distinct class element to efforts to limit or exclude sex-related business from urban space. Although the majority of pornography is consumed privately in the home, public outcry over adult pornography is almost always linked to its public consumption. Concern over rising crime rates or lower property values result from the belief that “undesirables” will be attracted to neighborhoods where adult entertainment is located. While a causal relationship between the presence of adult entertainment and falling property values has not been demonstrated, it is still widely believed and expressed in zoning ordinances.³⁵

A belief in the connection between adult businesses, zoning, and property values can be seen as early as the 1930s, when the anti-obscenity movement gained a powerful new ally in property owners associations. Increasingly concerned that adult entertainment was lowering the character, and subsequently the property values in some neighborhoods, property owners associations pressured local governments to restrict the ability of adult entertainment businesses to be licensed. The working-class men, who frequented such

³⁴ Leonard, S. 2005. Pornography and obscenity. In Cokcs, H.G. and Houlbrook, M., ed. *The modern history of sexuality*, London: Palgrave.

³⁵ Papayanis, M. A. 2000. Sex and the revanchist city: zoning out pornography in New York. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 18 (3): 341-353.

establishments, they argued, would congregate on the streets outside theaters and harass female passers-by. In many cities property owners were successful and municipal governments began to play an increasing role in the location of adult entertainment.³⁶ Similar class biases have been identified in anti-prostitution and anti pornography movements.

While middle-class men have historically been leaders in censorship, including legislation against obscenity, they have used the need to protect women, children, and the working class from its influence to justify their actions.³⁷ Sex-related businesses are often closely related to notions of sexual danger. This has encouraged government to enact forms of spatial confinement, surveillance and exclusion intended to limit such businesses to marginal urban locations.³⁸ The “politically and morally charged arguments regarding sex, sexuality, and morality inform the construction of urban space,” argues Lasker “communicates and reproduces the very same assumptions and ideologies.”³⁹ Douglas argues that the middle-class aversion to the public consumption of pornography can be tied to the way in which its presence disrupts the division of public and private sex.⁴⁰

³⁶ Friedman, A. 2000. *Prurient interests: gender, democracy, and obscenity in New York City, 1909-1935*. New York: Columbia University Press.

³⁷ Hunter, I., Saunders, D., Williamson D., ed., 1993 *On Pornography: Literature, Sexuality and Obscenity Law* (Macmillan, London); Leonard, S. 2005. Pornography and obscenity. In Cokcs, HG and Houlbrook, M ed. *The modern history of sexuality*, London: Palgrave.

³⁸ Hubbard, P, Matthews R., Scular, J. and L. Agustin. 2008. Away from Prying Eyes? The urban geographies of ‘adult entertainment.’ *Progress in Human Geography* 32 (3): 363-381.

³⁹ Lasker, S. 2002. Sex and the city: zoning pornography peddlers and live nude shows. *UCLA Review* 49: p1143.

⁴⁰ Douglas, M. 1991. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge.

Restrictive zoning of adult entertainment may be designed in order to protect children, the middle class, or the sexually modest, but the consequences of the zoning codes, argues Lasker, are most harmful to women. Current zoning of adult entertainment “places both physical and conceptual barriers to women’s entrance into male-gendered social spaces, inhibiting their ability to wrest control of their sexualities away from the dominant male sexual economy.” Furthermore, “in constructing a particular function and use of urban space, the theory and practice of zoning pornography, primarily informed by the rhetoric of secondary effects, physically and conceptually separates women from pornographic sexual discourses, thereby denying women meaningful access to a powerful source of the construction of female sexuality.”⁴¹

Ryder also explores the role of local governments and civic leaders in the move to bar adult entertainment from locating in residential neighborhoods in order to prevent neighborhood deterioration.⁴² Regulations and codes designed to address sex related businesses allow municipalities to treat them differently than other entertainment venues.⁴³ Municipal governments are able to exert a key influence on the location and form of sex-related businesses by exercising discretion over planning and licensing enforcement.⁴⁴

⁴¹ Lasker, S. 2002. Sex and the city: zoning pornography peddlers and live nude shows. *UCLA Review* 49: p1151.

⁴² Ryder, A. 2004. ‘The Changing Nature of Adult Entertainment: Between Hard Rock or Going from Strength to Strength’, *Urban Studies* 41(9): 1659–86.

⁴³ Lewis, J. 2000. Controlling lap dancing: law, morality and sex work. In Weitzer, R. editor, *Sex for sale*, New York: Routledge, 203-16. ; Hanna, JL. 2005. “Exotic Dance Adult Entertainment: A Guide for Planners and Policy Makers. *Journal of Planning Literature* 20(2): 116-134.

⁴⁴ Kohm, SA and Selwood, J. 2004. Sex work and city planning: Winnipeg’s Red Light District Committee and the regulation of prostitution. Winnipeg: Institute of Urban Studies Working Paper.

In recent years, however, adult entertainment had been playing an increasing role in mainstream nightlife. Corporate culture has embraced adult entertainment as both a way to generate revenue and as part of corporate social culture. At the same time, popular culture has embraced select adult entertainment and sex industry figures. Middle-class women are increasingly enrolling in striptease themed exercise classes, the juniors section of department stores sell t-shirts with “porn star” across the chest.⁴⁵ The changing status of adult entertainment within mainstream entertainment raises important questions about the sexual geography of the contemporary city. Hubbard et al locate the “phenomena of adult entertainment at the convergence of geographic debates concerning the evening economy, urban gentrification, and the gendered consumption of urban space.”⁴⁶ The shifting geography of adult entertainment and sex related businesses is evidence of changing cultural and sexual norms.

d. Gentrification

Throughout the latter decades of the twentieth century, sexualized spaces have been closely tied to gentrification in a several ways. Spaces associated with prostitution, pornography, and adult entertainment have been subject to purification efforts intended to maximize the potential for capital accumulation via the promotion of family-oriented gentrification.

For example, in February 1998, the New York Court of Appeals upheld the constitutionality of the New York City zoning law prohibiting the operation of sex-

⁴⁵ Hall, A. C. and M.J. Bishop, ed. 2007. Pop-Porn: Pornography in American Culture. Westport: Greenwood Publishing.

⁴⁶ Hubbard, P, Matthews R., Scular, J and L Agustin. 2008. Away from Prying Eyes? The urban geographies of ‘adult entertainment.’ *Progress in Human Geography* 32 (3): p363.

related businesses in residential neighborhoods. “The move to zone out pornography in New York City,” argues Papayanis, “is imbricated within larger spatial practices that operate both to maximize the productivity of social space and to reproduce the social values of the majority.” The movement against pornography in New York was closely tied to gentrification and a new wave of urban restructuring: “Gentrification reflects a broad concern with social zoning, by which I mean to suggest spatial practices motivated, implicitly or explicitly, by the desire to promote patterns of neighborhood development and to discourage others.”⁴⁷ As people increasingly looked for urban areas in which to settle, municipal governments were tasked with “cleansing” the neighborhoods to make them more appealing to newcomers with higher incomes.

Hubbard identifies similar patterns in attempts to remove prostitutes from gentrifying areas in London and Paris: “policy-makers are seeking to demonstrate their ability to assert moral order by reclaiming red-light districts from sex workers. Simultaneously, it is suggested that this process of ‘purification’ is intended to maximize the potential for capital accumulation in city centers via the promotion of family-oriented gentrification.”⁴⁸ Local policies addressing prostitution tend to focus on “disorder” and lessening the effects of deviant sexuality on neighborhoods rather than making sexualized spaces and activities safer for those who experience them.⁴⁹ Hubbard’s work reinforces the long studied finding that sex work is read as anti family. It does not address, however,

⁴⁷ Papayanis, M. A. 2000. Sex and the revanchist city: zoning out pornography in New York. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 18 (3): p341.

⁴⁸ Hubbard, P. 2004. Cleansing the metropolis: Sex work and the politics of zero tolerance. *Urban Studies* 41(9): p1687.

⁴⁹ Sanders, T. 2004. The risks of street prostitution: Punters, police and protesters. *Urban Studies* 41 (9): 1703-1717.

the ways in which some sexualized spaces are being promoted as part of the new nighttime economy. Men and women are increasingly being encouraged to partake in sexual displays in sexualized spaces as part of a corporate and popular culture which embraces varying levels of adult entertainment.

While prostitution and adult entertainment have had an uneasy relationship with gentrification, gay spaces have been drivers of gentrification and are increasingly embraced and promoted by many city leaders. Bouthillette and Knopp examine the role of gay men in gentrification, including the growth of gay communities in depressed urban areas.⁵⁰ Rothenberg expands the conversation to include the experiences of lesbians in Brooklyn's Park Slope neighborhood arguing that: "In the process of creating a lesbian space, or perhaps more precisely a semi-lesbian or lesbian-congenial space, lesbians have been active participants in the gentrification of a neighborhood."⁵¹

Part of the reason the development of homosexual spaces have been a precursor to gentrification is that prejudice and exclusion traditionally lead to the establishment of homosexualized space in marginal urban areas. Collins elaborates on the development of urban gay villages. He identifies and outlines the four stages of gay village formation: 1) preconditions – involves a small cluster of gay residents of a gay-friendly bar emerging, typically, in a run-down inner-city area with low rents, vacant buildings, and a degree of liminal activity, such as crime or prostitution; 2) the emergence stage, gay venues enter or

⁵⁰ Bouthillette, A. 1994. Gentrification by gay male communities: A case study of Toronto's Cabbagetown. In *The Margins of the City: Gay Men's Urban Lives*, ed. S. Whittle, 65-83. London: Ashgate; Knopp, L. 1997; Gentrification and gay neighborhood formation in New Orleans. A case study. In *Homo economics: Capitalism, community, and lesbian and gay life*, ed. A. Gluckman, 45-64. New York: Routledge.

⁵¹ Rothenberg, T. 1995. 'And she told two friends': Lesbians creating urban social space. In *Mapping Desire: Geographies of Sexuality*, ed. D. Bell and G. Valentine, 165-181. London: Routledge, p150.

expand. This raises the precinct's attractiveness to gays, and the growing gay population attracts gay-oriented businesses that serve the nascent community as well as generate profits; 3) expansion and diversification, entails a growing number of gay households and businesses locating in the area; and 4) integration – gentrification and the popularization of gay bars attracts non-gays to the district. Men have greater access to financial resources than women combined with barriers to child rearing faced by gay men created high levels of disposable income which could be put back into the local community.⁵² Ruting adds a fifth step to the four stages of gay village formation: the “de-gaying” of gay villages. “De-gaying” happens when an area is discovered by non-gay users and their participation as visitors, or residents, change the meaning of the space.⁵³

When gay culture and space are commoditized equity issues can arise. As gay and lesbian identified venues are increasingly focused on the consumption of leisure experiences, claiming a lesbian or gay identity is no longer sufficient to gain access.⁵⁴ One reason sexualized spaces have historically developed in urban areas is exclusionary practices in suburban communities. Gay spaces, for example, are shaped by “planning discourse [that] advances heterosexuality and suppresses homosexuality through notions such as order, public, family, reproduction, and nature. Based on this discourse, planning strengthens spaces, places, and institutions that exclude on the basis of perceived orientation.” Frisk’s examination of the “fluidness of queer space” shows planning to be

⁵² Collins, A. 2004. Sexual dissidence, enterprise and assimilation: Bedfellows in urban regeneration. *Urban Studies* 41 (9): 1789-1806.

⁵³ Ruting, B. 2009. Economic transformations of gay urban spaces: revisiting Collins' evolutionary gay district model. *Australian Geographer* 39 (3): 259-269.

⁵⁴ Casey, M. 2004. De-dyking queer space(s): Heterosexual female visibility in gay and lesbian spaces. *Sexualities* 7 (4): 446-461.

repressive in the categorization of families.⁵⁵ He does not however include more recent examples which demonstrate the power of homosexuals to shape urban space through increasing economic and social power. Nor does he include examples of planning processes that include gay stakeholder groups. As cities recognize the power of gays and lesbians and in particular the power of gay spaces to attract tourists and increase the city's attractiveness to the creative class, gay stakeholder groups are increasingly incorporated in planning processes.

The presence of a gay culture is increasingly used to market tourism in second tier cities. "To stake a claim to cosmopolitanism, one of the most desirable forms of contemporary cultural capital, many emphasize their ethnic diversity. In a growing number of instances, "queer space" functions as one form of this ethnic diversity. Gay spaces are "tentatively promoted by cities both as equivalent to other ethnic neighborhoods and as an independent indicator of cosmopolitanism." Consumptive practices associated with gay spaces tourism can also raise issues of equity: "Might these consumptive practices inscribe new or reinforce current exclusionary practices along the lines of race, ethnicity, class, and gender? Are there parallels between the contemporary consumption of queer space and the long history of tourists traveling in search of the other? Queers and queer spaces are consumed by a broader, non-queer-identified public in ways that shape the evolution of these spaces and affect the everyday lives of the gays who inhabit them (whether as residents or as tourists themselves)."⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Frisch, M. 2002. Planning as a heterosexist project. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 21 (3): p254.

⁵⁶ Rushbrook, D. 2002. Cities, queer space, and the cosmopolitan tourist. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 8 (1-2): p184.

e. Summary

This study builds on the existing literature but is distinct in its focus on the public sector's role in the sexualization of space through policy formation and implementation and urban planning practice. The sexualization of space is in many ways a social phenomenon. Planning practice and public policy play major roles in affixing these social conditions to a space. Public policies are statements of values that voice public priorities and guide public expenditures. Urban planning practice is one mechanism by which public policies are enacted. Decisions about public policies and urban planning decisions are often complex, involving a number of practical, financial, and political considerations. While the best practices involve participation by a wide variety of stakeholder groups and consensus building, ultimately a small group has the final say in the adoption and enactment of policy and planning decisions. The way that values are embedded into policy and planning is at times very deliberate but in other cases the process is obscured. By unraveling the intentional and unintentional effects of public policies and urban planning decisions we gain a greater understanding of the way policy and planning practice shape the urban experience.

As I examine Portland's sexual geography, I expect to find distinct sexual geographies that have evolved over time. The economic and social factors that shape sexual geographies are not static and thus I do not expect the resulting sexual geographies to be static. The literature informing my research emphasizes the effects of economic factors, including disinvestment and gentrification, and social factors, including changing sexual norms, on sexual geographies. While distinct patterns exist for each of the three

geographies in this study, the geographies have varying relationships with economic and social factors which have changed over time.

If Portland's experience is similar to other cities in the United States and Western Europe sexual minority, prostitution, and adult entertainment geographies developed in poor neighborhoods. Although sexual minority, adult entertainment, and prostitution geographies developed in similar areas, if patterns established in the literature apply to Portland, it is likely that not all of them will have remained in poor or otherwise undesirable spaces, particularly because sexual norms change over time. As sexual norms change, so do beliefs about people who participate in different activities or communities. As stigmas change so too might the corresponding geographies.

Of the three geographies I am studying, prostitution has maintained the strongest negative stigma and I do not expect the geography of prostitution to become too far removed from economically depressed neighborhoods. Adult entertainment has lost some of its stigma but perhaps not enough to significantly alter its geography. While some studies have shown that adult entertainment is increasingly part of mainstream nightlife, it is still strongly considered anti-family and not likely to be welcomed into middle-class residential neighborhoods. If patterns identified by Papayanis and Hubbard are applicable to Portland, it is likely that there have been efforts to move prostitution and adult entertainment from neighborhoods as part of the gentrification process.

I expect to find the most significant change in the sexual minority geography. Social views of gays, lesbians, and other members of the sexual minority community changed dramatically during the period my research covers. Like adult entertainment and

prostitution, sexual minority geography is tied to gentrification. However, unlike the others, sexual minority geography, particularly that of gay men in urban areas, has been identified as a driver of gentrification. If the stages of gay village formation identified by Collins and expanded upon by Ruting are applicable, I will find a gay geography that emerged in a run-down area, where it then takes hold, expands and gentrified, was integrated into the larger social and political fabric of the city, and then began to lose ownership by and significance for the gay community.

Regardless of how the sexual geographies change over time, based on the literature I expect to discover that each has been influenced by the actions of “outside” groups including the city, land developers, neighborhood activists, and community activists. In the case of prostitution and adult entertainment, sexual geographies develop in marginal neighborhoods, often through the action of local governments which use official and unofficial policy, including police action and zoning, to segregate those land uses into economically depressed areas. As gentrification alters the status of urban neighborhoods from undesirable to desirable, I expect that prostitution and to a lesser extent adult entertainment will be displaced during the gentrification process.

Sexual geographies are also shaped by neighborhood and community activists and the people participating as sex workers, customers, or bar or restaurant patrons. If Portland follows patterns established in the literature, I expect to find that prostitution markets are contested spaces. I further expect them to be shaped by the actions of multiple groups, including neighborhood associations, law enforcement, sex worker advocates, social service providers, sex workers and their customers.

Group identities are shaped through the use of space. Established patterns indicate that amongst gay men political action, group and individual empowerment emerge out of a shared entertainment space. The entertainment spaces often developed as attempts to exclude and control gay men, by segregating them to particular urban areas. As the anti-gay stigma lessened, however, other non gay users began to use the space and the space's meanings changed over time.

The extent to which Portland's sexualized spaces conform to established patterns provides insight into the forces shaping the city's sexual geography. Does Portland's sexual geography conform to established patterns to the extent that we can assume that national trends are the dominant element in shaping sexualized spaces? Or are there distinct elements in Portland's culture and Oregon's legal system that led to a distinct experience?

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study is focused in Portland, Oregon for two reasons: the city's large sex industry and its strong history of planning practice.⁵⁷ I choose case studies that represent three distinct but overlapping eras within the larger time period, 1970-2010. Each case study focuses on a different sexual identity or sexual behavior: pornography, prostitution, and homosexuality. Over time, attitudes about pornography, prostitution, and homosexuality have shifted, revealing changing cultural norms and evolving attitudes about gender, crime, and family structure. At the beginning of the time period (1970) all three were illegal and widely considered immoral. Sixty-five years later the moral and legal lens by which the people participating in the activities are viewed has changed considerably. Of the three, prostitution is the only one that is currently illegal.⁵⁸ The inclusion of three distinct physical locations adds an additional layer to the study. The three locations, which vary significantly in size and proximity to the central city, have different built environments, relationships with surrounding neighborhoods, and

⁵⁷ Oregon has strict statewide land use laws that require all cities and counties to adopt comprehensive plans. The plans must align with statewide land use goals. The program was recognized by the American Institute of Certified Planners as a National Historic Planning Landmark in 1973. Since then the land use planning system in Oregon, and in Portland, has gained a national reputation as a leader in planning practice. In particular, Oregon has been recognized for its system of public participation in the planning process.

Abbott, C. 1983. Portland: Planning, politics and growth in a Twentieth-Century City. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.

Abbott, C., Howe, D.A., and Adler, S. 1994. Planning the Oregon Way: a twenty year evaluation. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press.

⁵⁸ Pornography in the context of this study refers to pornography featuring adults and produced for an adult audience. Child pornography is considered to be a separate category and not within the bounds of this study.

economic and social meanings, all of which except for the proximity to the central city, have evolved over time.

The three case studies are vernacular regions that are commonly recognized in Portland. City policies were aimed at altering and/or reinforcing those characters. Vernacular identity played an important role in helping to explain why people kept wanting to concentrate adult businesses in Old Town and where there was ambiguity about the Burnside Triangle effort. Although I characterize the three spaces as “sexualized,” their connections to sexual behavior and identity vary. The case study looking at adult entertainment and Old Town focuses on sexual information as a commodity. The case study looking at the East Prostitution Free Zone focuses on sexual behavior. The third case study, the Burnside Triangle, looks at sexual identity and group identity and to a lesser degree physical behavior.

My research question is based in geography and includes elements of history and public policy analysis. In order to analyze Portland’s sexual geography I had to first reconstruct it. I started by mapping the location of businesses that contribute to the sexual geography of the spaces during the designated time period.

Some sexual geographies are not easily identifiable to outsiders. Sometimes the features that sexualize an area are clearly marked, a rainbow flag in a bookstore window, a movie marquee with XXX next to a movie’s name, or a sign advertising live nude girls. In other instances, the geography isn’t physically marked but clues exist in the actions of people using the space: the woman loitering on the corner, a gesture to indicate interest in a casual sexual encounter. To unravel sexual geographies we must know how sexual

geographies are understood by outsiders and what the visible elements contribute to sexualized spaces.

a. Mapping

The geographies in this study are not static. They reflect change over time. In the case of the Burnside Triangle, I looked for bars, restaurants, bathhouses, and any other businesses which catered specifically to gay or lesbian clientele. The businesses can be identified through police records, newspaper articles, advertisements in newspapers and magazines, and other primary and secondary documents. I also looked for meeting spaces used by gay rights activist groups, including the Portland Town Council, a gay business association and civil rights advocacy group, formed in the 1970s. Headquartered in the Burnside Triangle. In the case of Old Town, I looked for the location of businesses offering pornography for public consumption, including bookstores and movie theaters. Business directories, phone books, police records, advertisements in newspapers and newspaper accounts are among the primary documents used to identify the location of such businesses. I also looked at strip clubs and other sex related businesses. In the case of Montavilla, mapping had already been performed by the Portland Police. Their maps of prostitution arrests determined the geography of the Prostitution Free Zone. Because this geography was officially designated by the city, I concentrated on understanding the way people understood and experienced the designated space. Articles in local newspapers also include information on prostitution related arrests and convictions as well as editorials and letters to the editor which can provide insight into the way areas of the city were perceived during a particular historical moment. Records collected by

neighborhood activists can provide dates, times and locations of sexual commerce as can the observations of neighborhood residents. Much of my research involved the analysis of primary documents, including planning documents, economic development plans, police records, and the minutes of City Council meetings. The minutes of the Portland City Council, Planning Commission, and Zoning Board Meetings are potential sources for information about the way city leaders viewed sexual commerce in specific urban spaces. By comparing and contrasting the content of primary sources I was able to reconstruct pieces of Portland's history.

After reconstructing historical maps of the sexual geography of each area, I worked backward to identify the public policy and urban planning decisions that helped to shape each space. This includes federal, state, and local policies governing land use and local official and unofficial police policies. My objective was to determine the extent to which public policies have shaped Portland's sexual geography. Many public policies including the ones I looked at are subject to a great deal of scrutiny. However, because this study focuses on both the intended and unintended consequences of public policies, my analysis of the policies, their meanings and legacies will be distinct.

b. Timelines

I constructed timelines for each of the three case studies. As I researched each case, I wrote down every event that contributed to the area's sexualization and date when it occurred. Each entry on the timeline was color coded to match one of the following categories: private business, police and criminal justice, planning/zoning, activism, Oregon law, news media, city council/Mayor office, national movement/outside event,

citizen groups formed by government, national legislation/action and neighborhood association. After completing the timelines, I looked at them to see when clusters of activity occurred. I turned those clusters into the timelines in figures 1, figure 2 and figure 3. The clusters of activity informed the periods of time on which each case study is focused.

To understand the meanings of Portland's sexual geography, it is necessary to understand the social and political meanings attached to sexual commerce over time. Magazine and newspaper articles about prostitution, pornography, and homosexuality have helped to inform my understanding of the changing social and political views about sexual commerce. Newspapers have also provided valuable insight into the ways sexualized spaces are discussed in the context of planning and policy decisions. Furthermore, letters to the editor provided insight into community responses to the existence of and response to decisions about sexualized spaces. A close reading of government records, including City Council meeting minutes, briefing memos, and police reports does much to illustrate the ways homosexuality, pornography, and sexual commerce were viewed through analysis of the language used to describe the offender and the crime.

c. Interviews

Interviews with business owners, community activists, social service providers, and planning staff have been instrumental to the understanding of Portland's sexual geography. Interviews with neighborhood activists and the owners of businesses in sexualized spaces helped me to understand the impact of planning and policy decisions

on neighborhood residents. Interviews with developers provided insight into the way differently sexualized spaces influence development decisions. Interviews with social service providers and law enforcement helped me to understand the way prostitution and related crimes have changed overtime as well as shifts in community responses. Interviews with urban planners helped me to understand how sexualized spaces have influenced policies and land use planning decisions while gentrification had influenced the city's development. Interviews with staff from the Office of Neighborhood Involvement helped me to understand the role and effectiveness of citizen participation in planning and policy processes. Finally, interviews with sex worker advocates helped me to understand the impact of planning decisions and policies on sex workers.

I recruited interview subjects based on the following criteria: people over age eighteen who fit into one of the following categories: 1) People who participated in urban planning and policy formation and enforcement connected to the sexualized spaces in Portland during the specified time period. This group includes urban planners, elected officials including City Council members, police officers, and members of planning and zoning boards. This group was asked to reflect on actions taken during their scope of the professional work and have been identified through plans and other documents bearing their names and 2) People connected to the sexualized spaces in other ways, including business owners, community members and citizen groups who actively participated in community action to affect public policies tied to the sexualization of distinct spaces. This group also includes the owners of sexualized businesses, including pornographic

bookstores and video stores, and the owners and operators of businesses in sexualized spaces, including owners of non sex related businesses.

Possible interviewees were identified through archival research. I compiled a list of the names of people working on relevant policy issues, including the names of current city council members, planners and other city personnel whose names were included in policy documents, the names of community activists who testified at council meetings. I added to that list names of people who were featured in newspaper articles about the policy issues in questions. I also included the names of owners of businesses in the Burnside Triangle. I also included names of people serving on neighborhood association boards and business association boards for each area during the relevant time period when that information was available. In the end the list included every name of a person I could identify through research who was connected to my case studies. The final list contained 101 names.

After identifying potential interview subjects I conducted internet, city directory and city records searches to find current addresses for each person on the list. I was able to identify current physical addresses for forty nine people and email addresses for an additional nine people. I mailed letters with requests for interviews to the physical addresses and send emails with the same information to the email addresses. I sent follow up letters and made phone calls to people who did not respond to my letters. Several times people responded to my request for an interview by recommending another person they thought would be relevant to my research. When that happened I added the name to my list and followed the original contact procedure. Fourteen people agreed to be and

were interviewed. Interviewees were asked to choose the location of the interview. Eight interviews occurred at the interviewees' current place of employment. One occurred at a church that serves as a meeting place for the group the interviewee represents. Two interviews were conducted over the phone. The remaining three interviews were conducted in coffee shops.

Interviews lasted approximately one hour, although several were considerably shorter. I stated the interview with a standard set of questions (see appendix B) and allowed the conversation to develop based on the information the interviewee had. Interviews were captured with audio recordings when possible. On two occasions a technology failure prevented an audio recording. I took extensive notes during all interviews, regardless of whether an audio recording was made.

After each interview, I transferred the audio recording to my computer and then transcribed the interviews. Hard copies of materials will be kept in a locked cabinet at the Portland State University School of Urban Studies. Materials will be maintained for a minimum of three years. At the point it is no longer deemed necessary to retain the raw data files, files will be purged from computer hard drives and versions on paper and other media will be destroyed.

Chapter 4: Portland: Single men, sex and the middle-class city

During its early years, the sexual geography of Portland, Oregon was shaped by the movements and desires of male workers. The large gender imbalance that existed in the city's early decades and the seasonal shifts in employment created a geography of sexual recreation centered around the places men lived and worked. As the city moved past its frontier roots, reformers stepped in to alter the city's sexual geography into something more suitable for a middle-class city. Although men were largely responsible for shaping the city's sexual geography, reformers focused their efforts on the actions of women. By dictating where women could work, which businesses they could own, whether they could immigrate, and even whether they were free to move around the city, moral reformers and politicians worked to shape the sexual availability of women, and thus alter the sexual recreation of men.

a. Frontier Town

Portland developed as a frontier town whose economy was closely tied to the area's abundant natural resources. By the 1870s, Portland had grown into an international port, a position which was strengthened in 1883 when the city was connected to the transcontinental railroad. The railroad allowed easier transport of bulk commodities, including wool, wheat, salmon, and timber which were shipped to foreign ports. The lumber, shipping, and agricultural industries, including fish and vegetable canning, built around the natural resources were labor intensive, requiring a large male workforce. In 1860, 2,917 people called Portland home. By 1869, the number of Portlanders had increased to 9,428, a disproportionately large share of whom were men. At the same time,

an even greater gender imbalance existed in the Chinese community, with 500 men and 220 women. Many of the men were young, and either unmarried or living apart from their families, moving between urban and rural areas to work seasonal jobs. A full generation later, a 1910 federal census found that ninety percent of lumber industry laborers in Oregon were single men.⁵⁹

When they were in Portland most of the men lived in boarding houses between the Central Business District and the warehouses, railroads, and docks that lined the river. Their neighbors were often unmarried men like themselves who also worked in construction, shipping, or on the railroad. During the second half of the nineteenth century, the main concentration of boarding houses was on the north side of Burnside, between Northwest Second Avenue and the North Park Blocks. The men spent their time and their money at the saloons, pool halls, vaudeville houses, and brothels interspersed with their boarding houses.⁶⁰

The large concentration of unattached men influenced the city's sexual geography in several ways. Brothels located near residential hotels, while street prostitution flourished in the shipyards and other sites where many men came together to work. The concentration of men created a market, while prostitution served as a way to keep workers happy. Brothels were also an important source of revenue for the men and

⁵⁹ Robbins, W. Political and Economic Culture, 1870-1920: A Work Force of Young Single Men. Oregon Historical Society. http://www.ohs.org/education/oregonhistory/narratives/subtopic.cfm?subtopic_ID=66

⁶⁰ Toll, W. Portland's Laboring Classes: 1860-1900. Oregon Historical Society. http://www.ohs.org/education/oregonhistory/narratives/subtopic.cfm?subtopic_ID=194

women who ran the brothels and the owners of the buildings from which they were operated.

Like so many other industries in the young city, prostitution was first located on the river. Some prostitutes worked on floating barges, moving up and down the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. In 1880, Nancy Boggs ran a two-story floating brothel. Boggs' boat would anchor in the middle of the Willamette River, while on either bank men would entice customers and then row them to the boat.⁶¹ During the final years of the nineteenth century, however, brothels began to move onto land, congregating in Whitechapel (now called Old Town). The main concentration of brothels was between Southwest Oak and Northwest Glisan Streets from First to Fifth Avenues. Most of the brothels in that area were cribs, small, densely packed rooms on the street level. Prostitutes could solicit customers through front windows and conduct their business in the back. In 1902, a visitor to the city recorded his surprise at seeing the cribs: "When I first walked north on Fourth . . . I was startled to find it bordered with one and two story frame buildings like little shops, each with a window against the sidewalk and a woman seated inside. Over each door was a girl's name – Jennie, Lulu, May, Yvonne, The Favorite . . . It was a jolt when a girl with a skirt above her knees would venture out of her crib and wave at me."⁶²

The cribs north of Burnside tended to be more densely packed and less expensive, while the more expensive brothels were located south of Burnside, closer to City Hall and

⁶¹ Lansing, J. 2003. *Portland: People, politics and power, 1851 – 2001*. Corvallis: University of Oregon Press.

⁶² Lansing, J. 2003. *Portland: People, politics and power, 1851 – 2001*. Corvallis: University of Oregon Press, p244.

the Multnomah County Courthouse. The geography of sexual commercial was racial as well as economic. Ethnic and racial minorities visited brothels north of Burnside including a concentration of “negro” brothels at Northwest Fourth Avenue and Everett Street and a concentration of Chinese brothels at Southwest Second Avenue and Couch Street.

Prostitution was also tied to the city’s many saloons. The saloons were an important revenue source for the city. In 1900, license fees from the more than 500 saloons accounted for half of the city’s total revenue. By 1915, the ratio of saloons to population had dropped dramatically but remained high with 360 saloons in the city, one for every 766 residents. While the ratio may seem high it represented a significant decrease from a ratio of 1:356 in 1895 and 1:139 in 1870. Although profitable, saloons were also problematic for a young city trying to recast itself as middle class. Saloons represented elements of frontier life that a new generation of city leaders were anxious to leave behind. It was not uncommon for women who worked in saloons to supplement their income with prostitution. Increasingly, the presence of women in saloons, regardless of whether they were participating in sexual commerce, threatened the emerging social order of the middle-class city. The Portland City Council responded by passing a series of ordinances that limited female employment in saloons.⁶³

In 1881, the Portland City Council made its first move to limit the presence of women in saloons, when it passed an ordinance prohibiting female wait staff. Two years later another ordinance prohibited female bartenders. Barring women from employment

⁶³ Sawyer, C. “From Whitechapel to Old Town: The Life and Death of the Skid Row District Portland, Oregon.” PhD diss., Portland State University, 1985.

in saloons made it easier, in the minds of many Portlanders, to differentiate respectable women from unrespectable women by altering the spaces in which they moved. Saloons, like brothels and boarding houses, tended to cluster near the river, and there were few reasons for respectable women to enter the area. In a letter to the Oregonian in 1897, a Portland Police Officer, commenting on women and saloon life, declared, “No decent woman needs to go on lower First and Second Streets.”⁶⁴ The implication was that any woman found in that area was not respectable. In 1898, the City Council passed an ordinance that prohibited singing, dancing, and immoral conduct in saloons. In 1904, another ordinance made it illegal to have passages or opening from saloons to other portions of buildings where women were employed. Four years later, women were barred from entering any place where liquor was sold. And in 1911, five years before prohibition came to Oregon; the Portland City Council passed an ordinance prohibiting women from ownership of all establishments, including restaurants, where liquor was sold.⁶⁵

During the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the sexual geography of the Old Town/Chinatown neighborhood was also influenced by immigration. While women already in Portland were finding their employment options increasingly limited, some of those outside the city were finding it impossible to get in. During the second half of the nineteenth century Portland, like many communities on the western coast of the United States, was experiencing a labor shortage. Chinese workers helped to fill the labor

⁶⁴ Hodges, A. 2007. “Enemy Aliens and Silk Stocking Girls: The Class Politics of Internment in the Drive for Urban Order During World War I.” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 6.

⁶⁵ Sawyer, C. “From Whitechapel to Old Town: The Life and Death of the Skid Row District Portland, Oregon.” PhD diss., Portland State University, 1985.

shortage but their presence posed its own challenges for an increasingly xenophobic society. City leaders and employers wanted to secure the cheap labor needed to support industry, while discouraging the formation of permanent immigrant communities. Community leaders and policy makers looking for ways to limit the impact of Chinese immigrant communities helped secure the passage of the federal Chinese Exclusion Act in 1882. In an attempt to prevent Chinese communities from taking root and growing, Congress severely restricted the number of Chinese women who were legally allowed to immigrate, thus limiting the size of permanent Chinese communities by preventing the formation of families. Legally prevented from marrying non-Chinese women, Chinese men, whose numbers were also limited by the act, would be unable to start families and might one day return to China.

The Chinese immigrants who did settle in cities generally lived and worked in designated areas. These spaces, created through unofficial policy, discrimination in real estate practices and the tendency of immigrant and ethnic groups to settle in close proximity, were distinct spatially, socially, demographically, and, at times, economically from other parts of the city. In the case of the Chinatowns in Portland at the end of the nineteenth century there were several important differences. The first involved Chinese organized crime which operated in the area under unofficial sanction from the local government. The second, a direct result of the Chinese Exclusion Act, was a large gender imbalance. These factors worked together to establish Chinatown as a center of prostitution, which served several economic functions. In her analysis of Chinese prostitutes in nineteenth-century America, Hirata explains: “In societies undergoing rapid

industrialization, prostitution serves a double economic function. It helps to maintain the labor force of single young men, which is in the interest of the capitalists who would otherwise have to pay higher wages to laborers with families to support. In addition, prostitution enables entrepreneurs to extract large profits from the work of women under their control and thus accumulate considerable capital for other investments.”⁶⁶ Non-Chinese officials, some of whom profited financially from sexual commerce in Chinatown, were more willing to overlook a vice industry in an ethnic neighborhood. Furthermore, by concentrating prostitution in Chinatown, not only was it easier to regulate the industry but it would be closely associated with one ethnic group to the benefit of the rest of the city. Prostitution could be seen as a Chinese problem, not a Portland problem. Never mind that Chinatown brothels were staffed by and served a wide range of racial and ethnic groups. The geography of sexual commerce in Chinatown was not without consequence for Chinese men who came to be associated with deviant sexuality.⁶⁷

b. Policing female sexuality during the Progressive Era

The restrictions placed on women in saloons, and eventually on saloons themselves, by the Portland City Council were part of a larger shift occurring locally and nationally in the way people viewed women’s sexuality and the proper role of government in policing it. Young women were increasingly entering the paid labor force,

⁶⁶ Hirata, C. 1979. Free, Indentured, Enslaved: Chinese prostitutes in Nineteenth-Century Americas. *Signs: Journal of Women and Culture in Society* 5: 3-29.

⁶⁷ Wong, M.R. 2004. Sweet Cakes Long Journey: The Chinatowns of Portland, Oregon. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

often moving away from the watchful eyes of parents. The rise of paid amusements including dance halls and amusement parks provided young women with opportunities to meet, and be alone with, young men. This coincided with a shift in the way women and girls were viewed. Victorian notions of innocence were replaced by a Progressive Era belief in a young women's sexual agency.

Between June 1 and October 15, 1905 the Lewis and Clark exposition drew more than 1.5 million visitors to Portland.⁶⁸ For the young city working to establish itself as an important middle-class commercial center, the Lewis and Clark Exposition was a time of great promise but also great anxiety. Estimates of the number of prostitutes working in Portland during the Exposition ranged from 500 to 2,500. It also raised concerns about the morals and sexual availability of women who did not work as prostitutes.

Young female visitors to the Lewis and Clark Exposition could avail themselves of the Travelers Aid Society established by the Young Women's Christian Association. The society, which helped women to find respectable employment and housing, "cared for" 10,825 young women between 1905 and 1907. In 1908, it became the Women's Protective Division (WPD) under the control of Portland city government and the first organization of its kind in the country, to be operated by a municipality. The WPD was directed by Lola Baldwin, the nation's first female police officer. Baldwin was charged with intervening in situations "when a woman was needed" including cases where young women were found to need protection from pimps or other men who sought to

⁶⁸ Abbott, C. 2004. *The Great Extravaganza: Portland's Lewis and Clark Exposition*, 3rd ed. Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press.

compromise their virtue.⁶⁹ The WPD, like the Travelers Aid Society before it, focused on protecting and patrolling female sexuality, particularly that of working class and immigrant women whom they viewed as particularly in need of protection. In 1912, the Oregonian ran an article about the WPD and their role “in looking after unsophisticated country girls in a large city and subject to temptations and pitfalls of a metropolis, to the foreign girl alone in a strange land, to the shop girl, the factory girl. There is always urgent need of help among the foreign working girls. As a rule they are guidable and easily mislead.” The WPD helped to find women jobs, often in domestic service in homes approved by the WPD and kept “a record of their lives from then on.”⁷⁰

As the role of city government in female sexuality was changing, so was the city’s stance on prostitution. In Portland, prior to 1908, prostitution was widely viewed as a necessary evil. It was a normal part of city life that while regrettable, also happened to be highly profitable. When a petition was presented to the City Council in 1890 to remove brothels, and the prostitutes who lived in them, from Whitechapel, the Council’s Judiciary and Elections Committee responded that it would be “very unusual to punish a crime by driving the criminals from their homes.” An 1895 lecture by Dr. Wallace, pastor of the Congregationalist Church focused on the need for concentration, not eradication of prostitution. “The social evil will not be destroyed. It will be restricted . . . Those known to engage in this life will be segregated from the leading thoroughfares of the city. The sense of decency demands this.” Dr. Wallace saw segregation as a way to further

⁶⁹ Myers, G. E. 1995. *A Municipal Mother: Portland’s Lola Green Baldwin, America’s First Policewoman*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, p107.

⁷⁰ *Oregonian*, January 14, 1912.

stigmatize prostitution. “The ban resulting from segregation will deter many from seeking that portion of our city associated with this disgusting evil and will thereby be greatly decreased.”⁷¹

Segregation was also favored by North End representative Fred Merrill. Merrill was elected to City Council in 1903, on a platform to “keep Portland wide open.” Merrill argued that prostitutes, gamblers, and the landlords who profited from their work, should be allowed to operate and their income taxed. Judge Henry McGann agreed. The Judge “publically and financially supported Portland’s vice industry.” He brought his argument before a board of police commissioners, arguing that any vice policy created in the city should not be a “detriment and injury to the business community.”⁷²

Between 1890 and 1907, the Portland police adopted a policy of segregation, encouraging brothels to move north of Burnside into the area now known as Old Town.⁷³ During the years following the Lewis and Clark Exposition, however, the city changed their strategy of segregating prostitutes. The progressive era ushered in a new climate of moral reform, and the Portland City Council was feeling pressure from the county sheriff, state officials, religious, and civic groups to address prostitution in new and more aggressive ways. In October 1908, the police raided the concentration of brothels they had worked so long to create. During the raid, the police’s “angel brigade” arrested roughly 200 prostitutes. Prostitutes were encouraged to change their professions and keep

⁷¹ *Oregonian*, April 8, 1895, p8.

⁷² Donnelly, R. C. 2011. *Dark Rose: Organized crime and corruption in Portland*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, p36.

⁷³ Hodges, A. 2007. “Enemy Aliens and Silk Stocking Girls: The Class Politics of Internment in the Drive for Urban Order During World War I.” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 6.

their addresses. Mayor Lane wrote to the City Council “It may be that the true interests of the city would be best served by keeping such places in a district by themselves, but I do not intend to allow this office, while I hold it, to be used as cat’s paw to force them from one place to another.” Mayor Lane was concerned that forced to move the prostitutes would grow more vulnerable and would eventually be driven “into the clutches and under the control of a job lot of rascals of infinitely less worth in every respect than are the prostitutes upon whom they pray.” Lane threatened to “close up every house in town quite regardless of the consequences.”⁷⁴

Mayor Lane was a physician and a champion of “social hygiene,” who wanted Portland to be “America’s healthiest city.” The social hygiene movement, which gained popularity after 1905, saw prostitution as both a public health issue and a moral issue. Lane’s campaign to close brothels in the North End was the first serious campaign against prostitution in Portland. In 1906 he fired the entire vice squad, who had been complicit in allowing brothels to operate. Unfortunately for Lane, the vice squad was not alone in aiding brothels and related vice organizations. “Corruption in higher circles stymied the crusading mayor,” explains historian Gloria Myers. “It was an open secret that many wealthy Portlanders reaped high rents from buildings housing so-called ‘disreputable businesses’ and that these same owners influenced selected public officials to minimize prosecutions.”⁷⁵

⁷⁴ Sawyer, C. “From Whitechapel to Old Town: The Life and Death of the Skid Row District Portland, Oregon.” PhD diss., Portland State University, 1985.

⁷⁵ Myers, G. E. 1995. *A Municipal Mother: Portland’s Lola Green Baldwin, America’s First Policewoman*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, p18, 93.

The 1908 raid did break up the prostitution “stronghold,” but instead of eradicating the problem all together, it created two concentrations of prostitution. In the fall 1909, one year after the raid, a report of the Municipal Association found prostitutes in the Lownsdale area near Southwest Front and Market Streets. South of Morrison Street there were 150 “disorderly women” some of whom worked from the boarding houses clustered around Southwest Third Avenue and Jefferson Street. The study also found one hundred prostitutes continuing to work in Whitechapel.

In 1911, a new mayor, A.G. Rushlight took up the campaign against vice. Just one month into office he launched a fifteen member Vice Commission. Led by Rev. Henry Talbot of St. David’s Episcopal Church, the Vice Commission went “block by block looking for evidence of immoral action.” The commission “investigated 547 hotels, apartment, rooming, and boarding houses and found the majority, over 439 locations to be immoral.”⁷⁶

The 1912 report of the Vice Commission found another concentration of prostitutes in the Lownsdale area near the courthouse and city hall. The Vice Commission proposed the creation of a morals court which would have “exclusive jurisdiction over all morally delinquent persons.”⁷⁷ The morals court would have the power to impose mandatory jail sentences and send inmates to a special house of detention. The City Council did not create the morals court but they did continue to pass ordinances focused on immoral behavior. In 1910, an ordinance placed restrictions on all dancing and dance

⁷⁶ Donnelly, R. C. 2011. *Dark Rose: Organized crime and corruption in Portland*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, p40.

⁷⁷ Third report of Vice Commission of the City of Portland, December 1912, Oregon Historical Society, p105-108.

hall behaviors. The following year women were restricted from working in certain types of theaters, moving pictures of concert halls. In 1912, women in Portland were banned from working in shooting galleries, where it was believed that young women were trained to be prostitutes. In 1915, women were banned from working in or even entering “any place where coffee, sweet drinks, tobacco, smoking materials or apparatuses or sweet meats or similar articles are sold or served.”⁷⁸

Portland Police tended to be better at raiding brothels than closing them. In the eighteen months prior to the release of the 1913 Vice Commission report, the Portland Police raided 216 suspected brothels but did not close any of them. The state legislature stepped in and established statewide standards and a state level morals court in Multnomah County, advocated by the Vice Commission. In 1913 the Vice Commission released another report which declared 431 venues in Portland “immoral.” The Vice Commission’s report included a map of immoral addresses. Owners of the buildings identified by the Vice Commission included prominent Portlanders Henry Corbett, Henry Reed, and Henry Weinhardt. Others were tied to the First National Bank and the US National Bank. “We can squarely face the fact that social vice is a large and powerful business,” commented the Oregonian. “It exists and spreads because it pays heavy profits.”⁷⁹

⁷⁸ Sawyer, C. “From Whitechapel to Old Town: The Life and Death of the Skid Row District Portland, Oregon.” PhD diss., Portland State University, 1985.

⁷⁹ Donnelly, R. C. 2011. *Dark Rose: Organized crime and corruption in Portland*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, p40.

When the Vice Commission released the map of illicit businesses in 1913 the street names were obscured, making it difficult to connect businesses with the owners of the buildings from which they operated. The report and connected anti-vice campaigns were powerful enough that soon Portlanders were not satisfied with measures that protected the wealthy men who profited from vice. The report led to the tin plate ordinance which required the name of the owner of a property used as a saloon or hotel to be posted outside. After a loophole which allowed names on the plates to be written in languages other than English was closed, the plates began to have to intended effect. “Once the city officials and real estate elites who had profited from the growth of vice were both threatened with humiliation and superseded by state authority, nobody with any substantial power had any real interest in tolerating open organized prostitution and it largely disappeared.”⁸⁰

Progressive era social hygiene reformers were in many ways successful in their efforts to close down the city’s brothels, at least temporarily. Their efforts to expose the wealthy men and women who profited from the city’s vice and a coordinated effort to reform the culture of corruption in city government led to the dispersal of the red light district and eventually to the closure of many of the city’s brothels. However, at that time prostitution was also changing in response to advances in technology. “Although brothel prostitution disappeared from Portland following the 1913 abatement and injunction law,” explains historian Gloria Myers, “innovative forms of the oldest profession on earth were still in evidence as the war approached. The now underground sex industry had

⁸⁰ Hodges, A. 2007. “Enemy Aliens and Silk Stocking Girls: The Class Politics of Internment in the Drive for Urban Order During World War I.” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 6, p438.

modernized along with the rest of society. By the mid 1910s, the telephone, private automobile or taxi, and the discrete hotel combined to assure males ‘in the know’ could still find intimate female companionship.”⁸¹

c. Same Sex Geographies

The anxiety over uncontained sexuality that influenced the Vice Commission’s work and the establishment of a Multnomah County based morals court was not entirely caused by concern over the actions of young women. In 1912, Portland was reeling from a same sex scandal that shed new light on another sexual geography that existed in the city, that of gay men. Like heterosexual geographies, same sex geographies developed in both urban and rural areas, around the places men lived and worked. In November 1912, a young man being questioned by police about petty crime, “nervously detailed to authorities the contours of a local homosexual subculture and connected it to others that were apparently flourishing in major cities up and down the West Coast.”⁸²

Several things were particularly alarming about the community the young man described. First, the extent of the sexual geography, both locally and regionally. The same sex subculture in Portland was tied to cities up and down the west coast and to other Pacific Northwest states. Portland Police quickly notified their counterparts in Seattle, Vancouver BC, and San Francisco and together they worked to arrest men fleeing from the scandal. There was also the local geography. The bars or bathrooms of a number of hotels, including the Washington on Southwest Washington Street, the Hotel San Marco

⁸¹ Myers, G. E. 1995. *A Municipal Mother: Portland’s Lola Green Baldwin, America’s First Policewoman*. Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, p130.

⁸² Boag, P. 2003. *Same Sex Affairs: Constructing and Controlling Homosexuality in the Pacific Northwest*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p1.

at Southwest Avenue and Southwest Washington, the Imperial Hotel at the corner of Southwest Broadway and Washington and the Nortonia Hotel (now the Mark Spencer Hotel) on Eleventh Avenue and Southwest Stark Street, the Young Men's Christian Association (YWCA), and local parks were all identified as places where men met other men.⁸³

The second element of the scandal that was particularly shocking about the same-sex subculture that came to light over the next few months was the participation of dozens of men, many of whom were middle-class and some of whom were prominent members of Portland society. Prior to this, the middle class generally associated homosexuality with immigrants and the working class. When working-class men were arrested for homosexuality in the North End the following spring it did not make the same impact.

In the aftermath of the scandal, police and law makers worked to strengthen existing laws and promote new legislation designed to punish more severely those who participate in homosexuality. In 1913, the Oregon Supreme Court declared fellatio "a crime against nature." In 1926, the Court upheld the right to prosecute men for attempted sodomy. In addition to being sentenced to prison, men and women convicted of homosexual in Oregon were often forcibly sterilized. Prison officials and the State Board of Eugenics, believed that forced sterilization was the only way to prevent those

⁸³ Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. June 1, 1999. Portland Archives and Records Center.

convicted of sodomy and other related crimes from reoffending. Oregon also forcibly sterilized almost 200 gays and lesbians between 1907 and 1921.⁸⁴

d. Portland Goes to War

During both World War I and World War II, the numbers of unattached male migrants in Portland swelled as workers came to work in shipbuilding and other war related industries. War related manufacturing expanded the city's workforce and focused concerns about deviant sexuality onto immigrants, African Americans, and working-class women. By the beginning of World War I, the geography and organization of prostitution had shifted from brothels to women working alone, often as streetwalkers. They worked wherever men concentrated, including shipyards. Concerns over sexuality were not focused exclusively upon sexual commerce, though. Armed with the newly established morals court, moral reformers refocused their efforts to "a campaign to contain the sexuality of working-class girls and young women in Portland."⁸⁵

Public health concerns were central to the construction of the prostitute and the working class girl, in the American collective consciousness in the years leading up to and surrounding World War I. A massive campaign against venereal disease, in particular syphilis, was underway at this time and the prostitute was cast as the enemy of not only

⁸⁴ Foster, G. 1991. *The History of Sodomy Laws in the United States*.
www.gplan.org/sodomylaws/sensibilities/oregon.htm

⁸⁵ Hodges, A. 2007. "Enemy Aliens and Silk Stocking Girls: The Class Politics of Internment in the Drive for Urban Order During World War I." *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 6, p450.

men and their unsuspecting families, but to the health, morality, and safety of the nation as a whole.

Before effective treatment was developed, syphilis caused an impact that today is hard to appreciate. Infection rates were high, and victims faced disfigurement, mental illness, and death. Public health workers, physicians and moral reformers of the early twentieth century believed that syphilis was most often contracted by men prior to marriage. Undiagnosed and untreated new husbands passed the disease to their wives who then passed it to their children during childbirth, thus affecting the entire family. Middle-class sexual norms were vastly different for men, who were allowed and even encouraged to have sex prior to marriage, and women who were expected to experience sexual intimacy only within the bonds of matrimony. Faced with a mounting public health crisis, public health workers turned their attention to the prostitute who they blamed for the high infection rates.⁸⁶

It was during the years leading to World War I that the view of the prostitute shifted from victim to predator. Once seen as the innocent victim of the white slave trade, she was recast as a hypersexual criminal whose existence threatened middle-class values as well as the physical and mental health of the nation. “When World War I was declared the prostitute was cast as the enemy on the home front. The white slave victim, a pervasive image in journals and popular novels of the prewar years, disappeared. War propaganda presented the prostitute as someone predatory and diseased who ‘could do

⁸⁶ Brandt, Allan M. 1987. *No Magic Bullet: A Social History of Venereal Disease in the United States Since 1880*. New York: Oxford University Press.

more harm than any German fleet of airplanes.’”⁸⁷ The military joined with public health workers to launch a massive campaign against the social problem of prostitution and the social diseases it spread. Mandatory testing and prophylaxis treatment of soldiers was just one part of a coordinated campaign that featured pamphlets, lectures, posters vilifying prostitutes.

Although widespread, propaganda was just one piece of the anti-prostitution campaign. Another more intense aspect of the campaign attempted to prevent the spread of venereal disease by physically preventing prostitutes from accessing soldiers. Spaces around military bases, both in the United States and France, were declared off limits to prostitutes (although technically all of the United States was off limits to persons practicing prostitution). In much the same way the Prostitution Free Zones operated in Portland at the turn of the twenty-first century, prostitutes caught in the heavily patrolled zones, around military bases were subject to greater punishment. Recruits were tested for venereal diseases when they arrived and the army released counts of those infected by state, with each state competing “to prove their purity in hopes of boosting development and obtaining war production contracts.”⁸⁸

Limiting access to military bases was not the only way that the anti-prostitution campaign of the war years affected sexual geography and restricted the freedom of movement of known or suspected prostitutes. In an attempt to segregate venereal disease

⁸⁷ Hobson, Barbara Meil. 1987. *Uneasy Virtue: The Politics of Prostitution and the American Reform Tradition*. New York: Basic Books.

⁸⁸ Hodges, A. 2007. “Enemy Aliens and Silk Stocking Girls: The Class Politics of Internment in the Drive for Urban Order During World War I.” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 6, 435.

and the women who carried them from wider society, women and girls who were known to be, or suspected of being prostitutes or having venereal disease were confined until they were deemed no longer a threat. The Chamberlain Khan Act was passed by Congress in 1918, and set aside several million dollars to fight venereal disease. The Act created an Interdepartmental Social Hygiene Board to coordinate all efforts to treat, contain, and research infected persons.

Policies that used geography to protect soldiers from sexually available woman and the sexually transmitted diseases they were believed to carry were written in Oregon and first put into use in and around Portland. Eager to compete for lucrative war contracts, the Portland establishment launched a proactive campaign against venereal disease. Portland was the first city in the United States to build an internment facility.⁸⁹ The Cedars Venereal Detention Facility for Women, a prison for women diagnosed with venereal disease, located on forty acres of city owned land, was authorized in 1917, months before the Chamberlain-Khan Act, with a commitment of \$25,000 from City Council. Historian Hodges argues that the Cedars was partly “the product of a national wartime climate hostile to threats to the moral and physical purity of the nation’s soldiers and potential recruits” and partly “a long awaited opportunity for local morals reformers and sympathetic municipal authorities in the West to bring moral order to environments made chaotic by rapid growth, while still promoting expansionism.”⁹⁰ The campaign

⁸⁹ Hodges, A. 2007. “Enemy Aliens and Silk Stocking Girls: The Class Politics of Internment in the Drive for Urban Order During World War I.” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 6, 438.

⁹⁰ Hodges, A. 2007. “Enemy Aliens and Silk Stocking Girls: The Class Politics of Internment in the Drive for Urban Order During World War I.” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 6, p447.

against prostitution fought during World War I was “the first time a national, concentrated policy sanctioned the total abrogation of civil rights for women on the streets.”⁹¹

Physicians and pharmacists were required to report infected patients to the Bureau of Health, but many were reluctant to break patient confidentiality. The Public Health Service took this seriously, threatening to “arrest and prosecute every doctor in Portland, who fails to report venereal diseases.” In the end though, they relied on the police and city health officers to enforce the ordinance. City health officers were authorized to “immediately use every available means” to confirm suspected cases of venereal disease “in the infection stages.” City health officers were authorized to conduct “examinations of persons reasonably suspected of being infectious” but no guidelines for reasonableness were provided. Poor women suspected and detained under the ordinance were sent to Cedars while wealthy individuals could go free for a thousand dollar bond and a promise not to infect anyone else.⁹²

The Oregon Social Hygiene Society (OSHS) continued to work with, or monitor, the women once they were released from Cedars. A full time parole officer tracked women after their release and closely monitored their romantic relationships. One young woman was instructed to bring her boyfriend into see the parole officer, who instructed him to either begin bringing her home earlier or stop seeing her. “Although internment

⁹¹ Hobson, Barbara Meil. 1987. *Uneasy Virtue: The Politics of Prostitution and the American Reform Tradition*. New York: Basic Books.

⁹² Hodges, A. 2007. “Enemy Aliens and Silk Stocking Girls: The Class Politics of Internment in the Drive for Urban Order During World War I.” *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 6, 452.

ended once the risk of communicable disease subsided, the OSHS monitored and circumscribed a prisoner's life for as long as deemed necessary after release." Not all of the women interned had venereal disease, some were unmarried and pregnant and other simply listed as "wayward." In 1921 alone, the WPD held 988 persons for the health department.⁹³

During World War II the need for industrial workers had a dramatic effect on the population demographics of many American cities, including Portland. Tens of thousands of men and women moved to Portland in search of jobs in war related industries. Many of the newcomers were young and single. For example, half of all shipyard workers in Portland during the war were single and their average age was thirty. The changing population and perhaps the wartime culture, led to an "alarming increase in vice activities," including prostitution, gambling, and bootlegging. Vice activities in Portland were highly organized, closely linked to each other, and operated under with the cooperation of law enforcement and city leaders. Earl Riley, who served as Portland's Mayor from 1941-1948, was himself connected to vice. While Commissioner of Finance he had issued business licenses to brothels. The owners and occupants of brothels in the North End signed "Riley for Mayor" petitions during the election. In an effort to distance himself from vice activities, Mayor Riley instituted a crack down on prostitution.

⁹³ Hodges, A. 2007. "Enemy Aliens and Silk Stocking Girls: The Class Politics of Internment in the Drive for Urban Order During World War I." *Journal of the Gilded Age and Progressive Era* 6, 452.

Between 1941 and 1942, 991 adults were charged with prostitution. The campaign was short lived. During the next five years just 727 adults were arrested for prostitution.⁹⁴

When the Portland City Club launched an investigation into vice activities, they found 248 locations where gambling, bootlegging and prostitution occurred.⁹⁵ They identified an additional 158 addresses where arrests for gambling and prostitution were made. The City Club report provided insight into the geography of prostitution during the war. Although the existence of brothels had diminished after the 1913 police raids, by World War II there were many operating in the city. They were not confined to a single red light district, but they were concentrated in several specific areas. Brothels were often adjacent to gambling parlors. The City Club also found brothels “such as the Saranac and Atlas Rooms, both located north of Burnside along Northwest Sixth Avenue, and the popular Richelieu Hotel, between Burnside and Northwest Couch, continued to operate despite a police report written in 1942 stating that the brothels had been closed.”⁹⁶

The brothels and related vice activities were operating under an unofficial policy of protection from law enforcement and city leaders, which was highly profitable. The City Club found that “this protection is provided in consideration of a substantial payoff to some police officers and public officials.” The payoff was believed to be as high as \$60,000 per month, much of which went directly to Mayor Riley. Mayor’s Riley’s

⁹⁴ Donnelly, R. C. 2011. *Dark Rose: Organized crime and corruption in Portland*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

⁹⁵ Portland Vice Commission. Report of the Portland Vice Commission to the Mayor and City Council ... Being a Compilation of All the Reports Made by the Commission on Various Phases of What is Commonly Known as the "Social Evil." Portland: 1913.

⁹⁶ Donnelly, R. C. 2011. *Dark Rose: Organized crime and corruption in Portland*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, p60.

successors took up campaigns against vice and during the 1950s much of the infrastructure was dismantled. Between 1956 and 1960 a number of organized crime and law enforcement officials were brought to trial, including the Chief of Police.⁹⁷

The shift in wartime employment also affected Portland's racial demographics. A large number of African Americans moved north, altering the racial demographic of urban spaces at a time when their populations felt especially vulnerable. The wartime industrial jobs were being filled not just with newcomers but for the first time with women. While women did not enter the workforce in larger numbers during World War II, the type of employment they had was different. Women working in typically "male" jobs like manufacturing, combined with the perception that more women were entering the paid labor force than at anytime during the past, created unease around women's sexuality and sexual expression.⁹⁸

In part, anxieties were expressed in fear and disapproval of interracial relationships, particularly relationships between white women and African American men, which received high levels of scrutiny. In Portland, Clarence Williams, a black shipyard worker, was fired for giving a Christmas card to a white, female co-worker. And after an interracial dance at Vanport, a racially integrated housing project just outside of Portland, police issued warnings to white women who had been seen dancing with black

⁹⁷ Donnelly, R. C. 2011. *Dark Rose: Organized crime and corruption in Portland*. Seattle: University of Washington Press.

⁹⁸ Kessleman, A. 1990. *Fleeting Opportunities: Women shipyard workers in Portland and Vancouver during World War II and reconversion*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

men that their actions could lead to a race riot.⁹⁹ Portland Police officers were also concerned with the wider implications of interracial sexual commerce. “The emphasis on female sexuality heightened the undercurrent of tension about race relations between white women and black men that lurked bear the surface in both women and the shipyard community.” When fifty women were found to be working as prostitutes in a Portland shipyard, in 1942, Business Week quoted a Portland policeman who was concerned that if white prostitutes consorted with Negro workers they might encourage black workers to “take liberties with white women,” which might lead to “serious race complications.”¹⁰⁰

e. Conclusion

A sporadic public interest in concentrating the geography of prostitution in the nineteenth century became more complex, extensive, and multifaceted over the first half of the twentieth century. During the 1910s and again during the 1940s, broad campaigns were waged to eliminate prostitution and other forms of vice from the city. In 1912 and again in 1945 methodical studies of vice, where it occurred and who was profiting from it, were conducted. Although each campaign was somewhat successful in attacking the specific institutions it targeted, it was not long before vice would reappear.

During the second half of the twentieth century, Portland’s sexual geography would continue to change in response to shifting market dynamics, trends in the entertainment industry, new technologies, evolving social movements, new regulations governing free speech and land use, and changing sexual norms. Beginning in the 1970s,

⁹⁹ Kessleman, A. 1990. *Fleeting Opportunities: Women shipyard workers in Portland and Vancouver during World War II and reconversion*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

¹⁰⁰ Kessleman, A. 1990. *Fleeting Opportunities: Women shipyard workers in Portland and Vancouver during World War II and reconversion*. Albany: State University of New York Press.

the geography of prostitution moved away from downtown, across the Willamette River and toward the city's eastern boundary. The area of downtown identified in the 1912 same sex vice scandal maintained its association with gay men, and a small subset of the area would continue to be the most visible gay male entertainment area in the city throughout the 1990s. Old Town also maintained its reputation as a sexual recreation zone for single men and increasingly for gay men as bars pushed out of the Burnside Triangle began to relocate to Old Town. As social and cultural beliefs about sexuality and sexual expression change, so did beliefs about the government's role in shaping those behaviors. What has not changed, however, is attempts by community activists, law makers, and politicians to shape sexual geography.

The following chapters explore three attempts to shape the sexual geography of three areas in Portland during specific historical moments. During the 1970s and 1980s Old Town, Portlanders frustrated over the spread of adult entertainment in their city, worked to segregate it in Old Town, a neighborhood long associated with sexual recreation. During the final decade of the twentieth century, Portland's sexual minority community struggled over what to do with the Burnside Triangle, a neighborhood that held historic significance to many members of the community facing development pressures. At the same time, community activists in Montavilla were fighting to alter the geography of sexual commerce in their neighborhood, calling on the city to enact policies that would limit the local impact of prostitution.

Chapter 5: Adult Entertainment & Geography, 1970-1987

Just north of the central business district, Portland's Old Town developed as a neighborhood of lodging houses for the mostly single men who worked in the city's timber, railroad, shipping, and construction industries and the bars, restaurants, gambling houses, and brothels they frequented. During the 1930s, the area easily transitioned into skid row, a reputation it would keep throughout the twentieth century. When adult entertainment spread throughout the city the 1970s and 1980s Portlanders mobilized against the new businesses. When it became apparent that they could not close the pornographic bookstores and movie theaters outright, they proposed one solution again and again: concentrate the businesses in Old Town. The neighborhood, with its large concentration of single men and decrepit housing stock, was so closely tied to the geography of sexual recreation in the minds of Portlanders that it seemed like a natural place to concentrate a new breed of illicit land uses. In the imagination of city planners, council members, and PTA presidents, Old Town was already a neighborhood of vice and thus the natural location for a concentration of pornography theaters and adult bookstores. For seventeen years, City Council members, Planning Bureau staff, and the City Attorney's office, prodded and encouraged by neighborhood and business associations, tried to find ways to use public policy to shift the geography of adult entertainment in Portland to Old Town.

The population of Old Town has been in decline for much of the twentieth century. At its height in 1910, more than 9,000 people lived in the neighborhood. By 1950, that number had decreased to 2,859. By 1980, the population was just 1,390, less

than half of the 1950 population and just fifteen percent of the 1910 population. Although the population was decreasing, it remained in many ways consistent. Men have always been overly represented in the neighborhood. During the second half of the twentieth century the male to female ratio was starting to even out, but as late as 1990, more than eighty percent of Old Town residents were men. This was a decrease from a high of 94.7% male in 1970. If there were few women to be found in Old Town, there were even fewer children. Between 1950 and 2010, children have never made up more than five percent of the population in Old Town. In 1990, just thirteen children lived in Old Town, accounting for less than one percent of the area's population. Most of the men and women who did live in Old Town rented their homes. In 1990, just four out of the 684 housing units in Old Town were owner occupied, just over half a percent.¹⁰¹

Table 1: Housing & demographic characteristics of Old Town population, 1950 – 2010

Year	Portland Population	Old Town Population	Under 18 Population Old Town	Owner Occupied Units	Males	% of Total Population
1950	373,628	2,859	141 (4.9%)	15 (0.62%)	2,513 (88%)	0.77%
1960	372,676	2,149	100 (4.6%)	11 (0.68%)	1,949 (90%)	0.58%
1970	382,352	1,487	13 (0.87%)	12 (1.61%)	1,393 (94.7%)	0.39%
1980	365,000	1,390	52 (3.74%)	8 (0.6%)	1,267 (91.2%)	0.38%
1990	437,319	1,590	13 (0.8%)	4 (0.58%)	1,285 (80.4%)	0.36%
2000	529,025	3,642	113 (3.1%)	292 (15.4%)	2,478 (68%)	0.69%
2010	585,429	7,926	300 (3.8%)	1,239 (25.1%)	4,812 (60.7%)	1.3%

Source: United States Census of Population and Housing, 1950; 1960; 1970; 1980; 1990; 2000; 2010

Notes: Old Town is in Census Tract 51.

The area considered Old Town prior to 2000 was bounded by West Burnside Street to the South, the Willamette River to the East, Northwest Twelfth Avenue to the West, and Interstate 405 to the North. Today, that area includes Old Town and the Pearl

¹⁰¹ United States Census of Population and Housing, 1910; 1920; 1930; 1940; 1950; 1960; 1970; 1980; 1990; 2000; 2010

District. The increase in housing stock and population after 2000 was caused by redevelopment in the Pearl District. The population numbers in Table 1 are for the entire area, Old Town and the Pearl.

In addition to the residents reported in Census records, in the years following World War II, there was also an increasingly large homeless population in Old Town. The population, which included many chronic inebriants, reached crisis proportions during the 1960s. The situation improved somewhat when the Hooper Detoxification Center opened in 1971. The Center, which provided services including substance abuse treatment and housing, had more than 19,000 admissions during the 1970s. Although the Center helped, the population of chronic inebriants remained high. Ed Blackburn, Director of Central City Concern, recalls that “during the 1970s and 1980s by noon on any given day 200 plus people could be found passed out in doorways.” Social service agencies including homeless shelters, drug and alcohol treatment, and soup kitchens moved into the area to be near the population they served. The Portland Rescue Mission opened at 111 West Burnside in 1949. Central City Concern began operating in Old Town as the Burnside Consortium in 1979 to fight alcoholism and alcohol abuse through treatment programs and supportive housing.¹⁰² That same year, Sisters of the Road, an outreach program for people experiencing homelessness, opened at 133 Northwest Sixth Avenue.¹⁰³

¹⁰² About Central City Concern. www.centralcityconcern.org October 8, 2011.

¹⁰³ About Sisters of the Road. www.sistersoftheroad.org October 8, 2011.

In many ways, Old Town presented an ideal area of the city for a concentration of sex-related businesses. It had a reputation for vice and prostitution dating back to the early twentieth century. Long an economically depressed area, after World War II Old Town was in a process of physical decline. With few families, high poverty rates and an increasingly large population of unemployed workers, Old Town property owners were not in a position to object to sex-related businesses. The neighborhood's proximity to the downtown business district provided a sizable customer base. Interstate 405 opened in the early 1970s, making the area more accessible for visitors from outside the city. Most importantly, though, Old Town lacked children, and their parents. Throughout the 1970s and early 1980s, the most vocal opponents to adult bookstores, movie theaters and later strip clubs were parents. Legislation focused on keeping adult entertainment away from schools first and protecting economic interests second.

Throughout the first half of the twentieth century the production and sale of materials considered to be pornographic or obscene was illegal in the United States. As recently as 1957, the United States Supreme Court ruled in *Roth v. United States* that obscenity was outside of the protection offered by the First Amendment. The suppression of obscenity, argued the court, was not censorship as obscenity was "utterly without redeeming social importance."¹⁰⁴ During the 1960s, however, many Americans began to reevaluate not only their own sexual values but also the role of government regulation in their lives. Ten years after *Roth v. US*, President Lyndon Johnson appointed a Commission on Obscenity and Pornography to reexamine the issue. The eighteen person

¹⁰⁴ *Roth v. United States*, 354 U.S. 476 (1957).

Commission was charged with evaluating the connection between obscene materials and anti-social behavior and determining whether such materials needed stronger regulation. The Commission released a report recommending “federal, state and local legislation should not seek to interfere with the right of adults who wish to read, obtain or view explicit sexual materials.” There were two exceptions to the no interference recommendation. The first was the sale of adult materials to minors and the second was public display and unsolicited mailings.¹⁰⁵

The Commission’s recommendations spoke to fundamental issues at the core of obscenity debates that shaped access to adult entertainment. The first was individual rights, the individual rights of adults to choose whether or not to view pornography. Under emerging standards, adults were given the right to view pornography if they choose but also, significantly, the right not to have pornography forced upon them. Adults, the Commission argued, should be able to view pornography but should not receive unsolicited pornography in the mail or see it displayed in a store window. An adult who choose to enter an adult bookstore, however, did not have standing to object to the images they might see inside. At the same time, the adult bookstore was prohibited from mailing fliers with explicit images or placing those same images in a window display. The line between the freedom to both view and be protected from viewing pornography would continue to be debated as the location and presence of adult businesses was contested. The second issue is the protection of vulnerable populations.

The Commission’s recommendation spoke directly to minors but in Portland’s battle over

¹⁰⁵ Commission on Obscenity and Pornography. Report of the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography. Washington D.C.: US Government Printing Office, 1970.

adult entertainment the argument would be at times expanded to include the elderly, people recently released from prison, and those experiencing drug or alcohol addiction. Non-vulnerable populations, including religious organizations and successful business associations have also argued they deserve protection from adult entertainment locating in the neighborhood.

Johnson's Commission on Obscenity was a watershed in the regulation of adult entertainment but it was far from the final word. In the forty years after the Commission's report, state and local governments have continued to struggle over the question of what to do with adult bookstores, movie theaters and strip clubs. Battles over the regulation of adult businesses have often started in the street, moved to city hall, and ended up in the courts.

a. Changes in Regulations Affecting Adult Entertainment

Between 1968 and 1987, several important obscenity cases appeared before the Oregon Supreme Court which would ultimately alter the landscape of adult entertainment in Portland. The Portland City Council, Bureau of Planning, and District Attorney's Office have generally been in favor of regulating adult businesses. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, they introduced, debated, and enacted numerous code amendments in attempts to shape adult land uses. Prior to the release of the Commission's report, in *City of Portland v Darlington* (1968) the Oregon Supreme Court found that the ordinance, which allowed the city to regulate nudity in live performance, only regulated conduct and did not interfere with freedom of speech. Two years later, the same year the Commission on Obscenity released their report, the Oregon Supreme Court ruled in *Oregon Bookmark*

Corporation v. Schrunck et. al., that the City Council could not deny a business license to a business because it sold pornography. When, in response to an application from Oregon Bookmark Corporation, the City held a hearing, found material sold to be obscene, and then refused a license renewal under its Charter authority to public nuisances, it had acted as an “administrative censor, “which was unconstitutional, under the fourteenth amendment of the United States Constitution.¹⁰⁶

Almost as soon as new regulations about the location or regulation of adult businesses were enacted, the regulations were challenged in court and most were ultimately overruled as unconstitutional. The Oregon State Constitution is widely considered to have the most liberal free speech provision in the country. Article 1 Section 8 of the State Constitution states: “No law shall be passed restraining the free expression of opinion, or restricting the right to speak, write, or print freely on any subject whatever; but every person shall be responsible for the abuse of this right.”¹⁰⁷ The Oregon Supreme Court has interpreted the constitution to the benefit of adult entertainment. The ruling dramatically limited the power of city governments to regulate pornographic businesses within their boundaries.¹⁰⁸ It would become the single most important piece of policy in the construction of the geography and culture of adult entertainment in Portland.

During the months between the passage and instatement of Senate Bill 40 the Portland City Commissioners and City Attorney scrambled to understand how the new

¹⁰⁶ Oregon Bookmark Corporation v. Terry Schrunck, et al. (1970).

¹⁰⁷ Oregon State Constitution

¹⁰⁸ OR SB 40

law would affect existing and proposed legalization. In July 1971, Commissioner of Public Affairs, Francis Ivancie, asked City Attorney Marion Rushing for help in finding ways to regulate adult entertainment. “As you are aware I am greatly concerned about the sale of pornographic type material in this city. I understand, however, that the courts have greatly restricted the meaning of what is considered pornographic and the new state criminal code virtually eliminates the sale or pornographic material as an offense. . . My feeling is that the city could regulate the sale of pornographic materials such as we do the sale of alcoholic beverages.”¹⁰⁹ The same week a memo written by Commissioner Neil Goldschmidt outlined ways in which Senate Bill Forty was at odds with proposed legislation: “Your particular attention is directed to Section 258 which appears to deal directly with the kind of behavior (topless, bottomless) with which the ordinance is concerned, and most explicitly, limits its effects to minors. This section is a clear statement of public policy on that issue and when taken together with Section 262a constitutes an affirmative ban on the kind of legislation being proposed to the City Council.”¹¹⁰

Multnomah County District Attorney Harl Hass was asked to review two proposed pieces of legislation in August 1973, Senate Bill 103 and House Bill 3153. The results were mixed. In a memo to Portland City Commissioner Mildred Schwab, Haas reported that in regard to SB 103 “almost every section is illegal” as judged against

¹⁰⁹ Francis Ivancie to Marian Rushing, 2 July 1971. Neil E. Goldschmidt Files, Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹¹⁰ Memorandum by Neil E. Goldschmidt. from Goldschmidt to Betty [city employee no further information provided]. December 31, 1972. Proliferation of Pornographic Institutions in Portland and the Problems They Cause Portland Archives and Records.

previous Oregon Supreme Court Decisions. House Bill 3153 was found to be “perfectly proper and constitutional.” Haas advocated for continued attempts to change legislation: “No one can state what the court will do in the area of pornography and the first amendment on any given day, but I do not think that is any reason for us to fail to make an effort in this session.”¹¹¹

The following month, a proposed loitering ordinance was the subject of a memo from the District Attorney to Mayor Terry Schruck. Haas wrote: “I think the conclusion is undeniable that the proposed ordinance will be unlawful after the effective date of SB 40 and one must seriously question the propriety of passing a law for five months out of a sense of outrage at what the legislature has done. It would merely confuse the law enforcement and create turmoil for businesses which the legislature has determined is not a threat to the public.”¹¹²

Feeling that their hands were tied, the Council tried to find creative ways to address the effects of adult businesses on the city. In a letter to Mrs. Beverley Mott in March 1972, Goldschmidt explained: “In the meantime I have asked the City Attorney’s Office to prepare an ordinance which has now been referred to the Planning Commission that will give us the power to regulate the paint on buildings in the design review zone in downtown Portland and also on buildings that are historical landmarks. While this does not get at the material being sold in the store, at least this would slow down the process of

¹¹¹ Harl Haas to Commissioner Mildred Schwab, 10 April 1973. Pornography. Portland Archives and Records.

¹¹² Memo from City Attorney Harl Haas to Mayor Terry Schruck, “loitering ordinance as it relates to Senate Bill 40.” August, 1971. Goldschmidt, Neil E. Files - Proliferation of Pornographic Institutions in Portland and the Problems They Cause. Portland Archives and Records Center.

“uglifying” the downtown of our city.”¹¹³

As letters continued to flow into City Hall from residents complaining that new adult bookstores were opening near elementary schools and advertising to eighteen year olds, city leaders held out hope, at least publicly, that SB 40 would be amended in ways that restored some power to the city. When Mrs. Elizabeth Lambert wrote to Commissioner Goldschmidt to “register my concern against pornography,” Goldschmidt replied, “I am sure that the next session of the legislature will see some meaningful amendments in those laws so that the City will have some grounds on which to act against the pornography industry.”¹¹⁴

Frustration over the limitations Senate Bill 40 placed on the City’s ability to regulate adult businesses is evident in the memos circulating between City Commissioners, the Mayor and the City Attorney. In August 1972, Commissioner Goldschmidt wrote to Don Barney at the Department of Public Works: “I think it is clear that the existing legislation is leaving hands tied everywhere. I would appreciate it if you would put your priority list development of a memorandum with the City Attorney and the District Attorney about possible lobbying efforts to block these laws.”¹¹⁵

b. Changing Geography of Adult Entertainment in Portland

¹¹³ Letter from Commissioner Neil Goldschmidt to Mrs. Beverly Mott, March, 1972. Goldschmidt, Neil E. Files - Proliferation of Pornographic Institutions in Portland and the Problems They Cause. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹¹⁴ Letter from Commissioner Neil Goldschmidt to Mrs. Elizabeth Lambert, August, 1972. Goldschmidt, Neil E. Files - Proliferation of Pornographic Institutions in Portland and the Problems They Cause. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹¹⁵ Memo from Commissioner Neil Goldschmidt to Don Barney, Dept of Public Works, August, 1972. Goldschmidt, Neil E. Proliferation of Pornographic Institutions in Portland and the Problems They Cause. Portland Archives and Records Center.

Prior to the 1970s, most of the adult entertainment in the city was located on the west side in Old Town and the downtown area between City Hall and the Willamette River. The then illegal businesses were conducted out of private homes, or the backrooms of bars. Pornographic magazines might be available at the local newsstand but the customer had to know which ones and how to ask.

Beginning in the early 1970s, adult entertainment businesses also began to open in other parts of the city. Massage parlors, lotion studios, and stores selling pornographic books and magazines opened in the small commercial centers of largely residential neighborhoods, especially neighborhoods where storefront rentals were cheap. Prior to the mid 1980s, eastside commercial strips were not trendy, high demand areas. It was not difficult for adult businesses to find inexpensive storefronts in central locations. As the location of the stores was expanding the stores themselves were consolidating. Many of the products sold in these stores were not new, as some were previously available in pharmacies or by mail. What was new was that the objects and media designed to sexually arouse were available openly and in one location, “an environment that left little ambiguity as to their sexual nature.”¹¹⁶

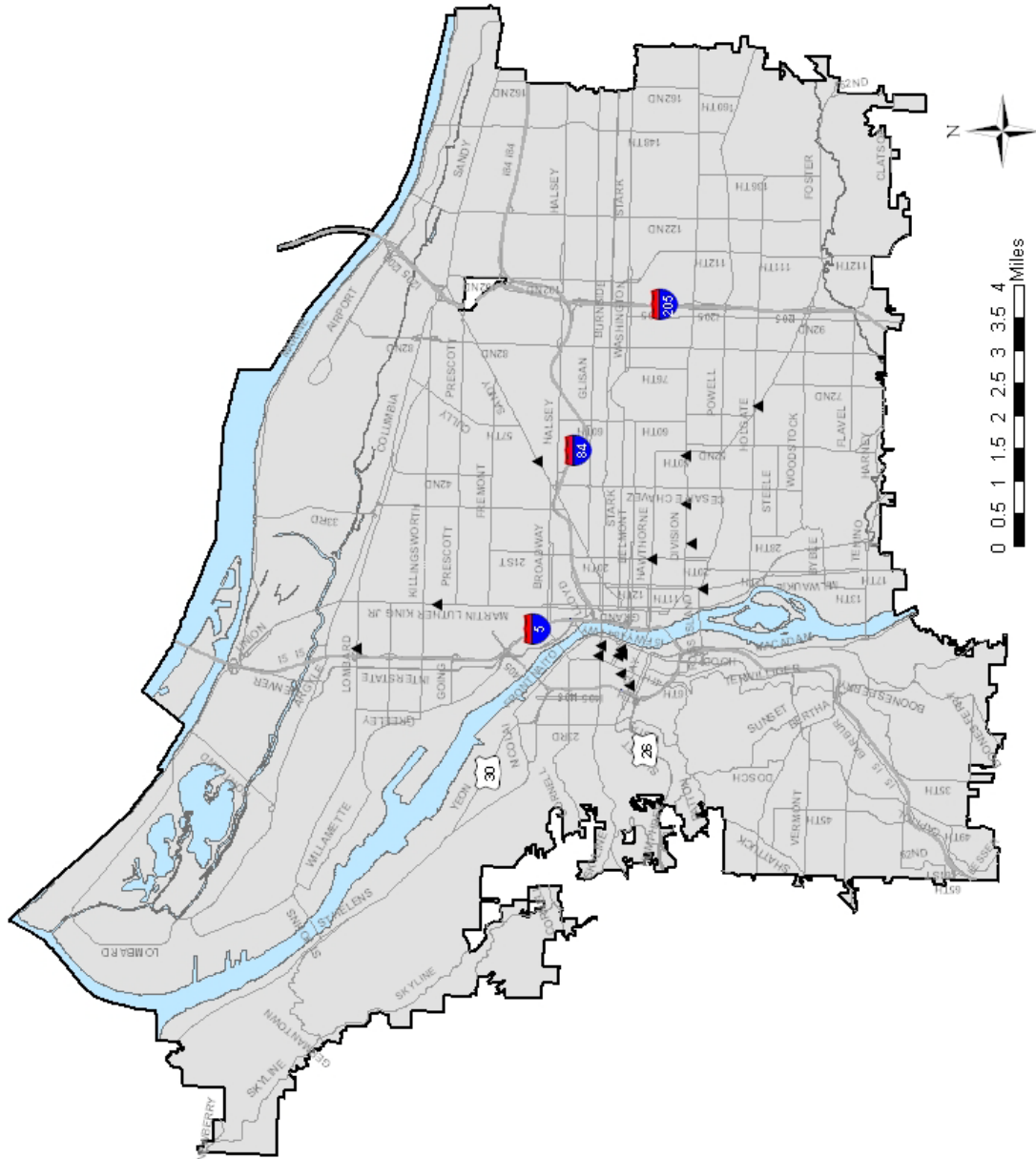
In 1970, there were at least sixteen adult entertainment businesses in Portland.¹¹⁷ By 1974, the number of identified businesses had increased to sixty-eight but from that point it dropped. By 1978, the number of businesses had fallen to thirty and by 1980 it

¹¹⁶ Hubbard, P., Coulmont, B. 2010. Consuming sex: socio-legal shifts in the space and place of sex-shops. *Journal of Law and Society* 37(1): 189-209.

¹¹⁷ Adult businesses were identified from advertisements, newspaper articles, letters to the Mayor and City Commissioners, interoffice memos between city agencies including the City Attorney and Bureau of Planning. The names and addresses were then cross referenced with City Directories for the following years: 1970, 1972, 1974, 1976, 1978, 1980, 1982 and 1984.

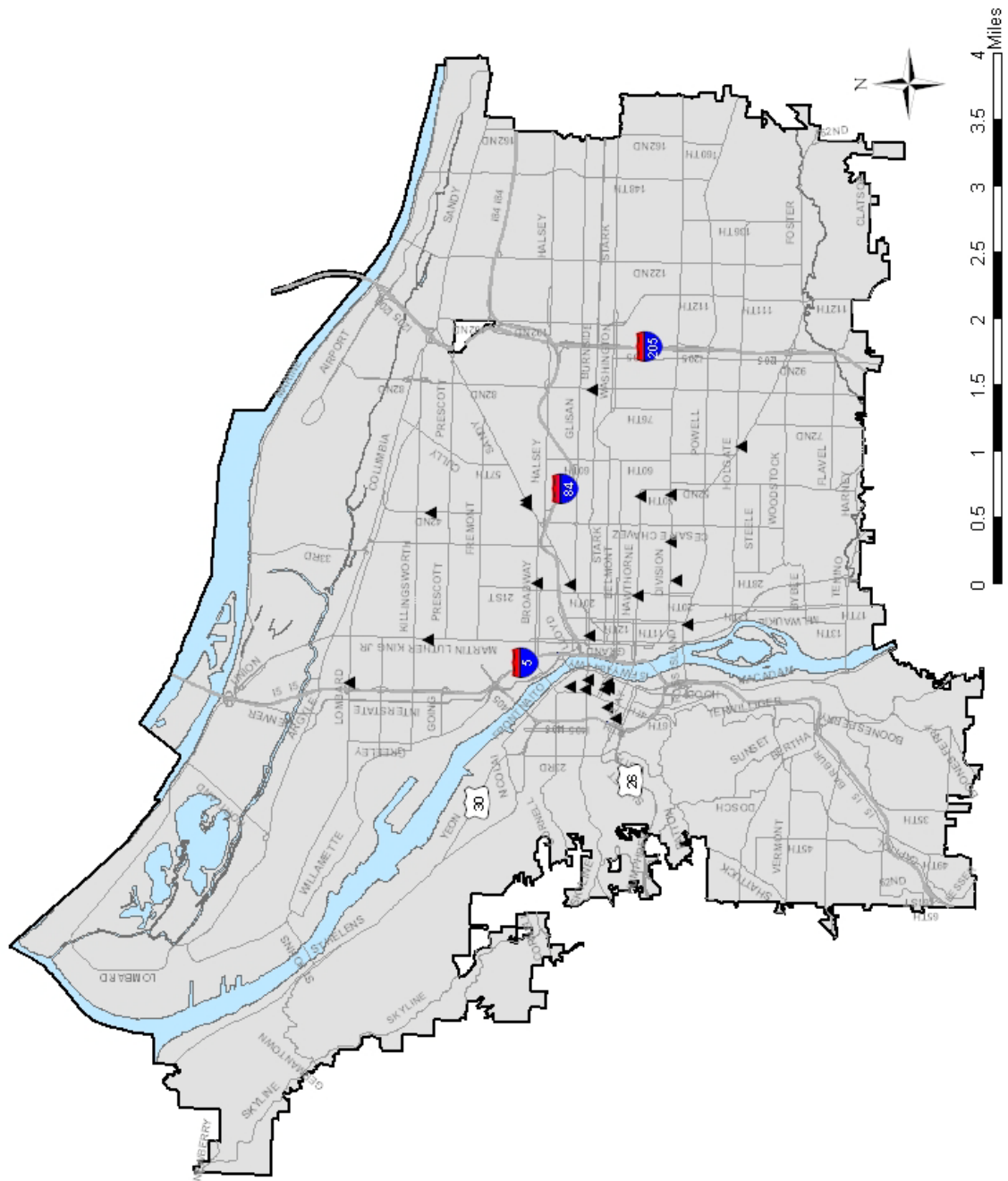
was down to just twenty two. Without knowing the total sales of pornographic media and adult objects, customers served, or dancers employed, it is difficult to know whether the decline in the number of businesses signaled that the overall impact of adult entertainment was becoming smaller or that businesses were consolidating and increasing the role they played in Portland's adult entertainment sector.

Figure 5: Adult businesses in Portland, Oregon, 1970



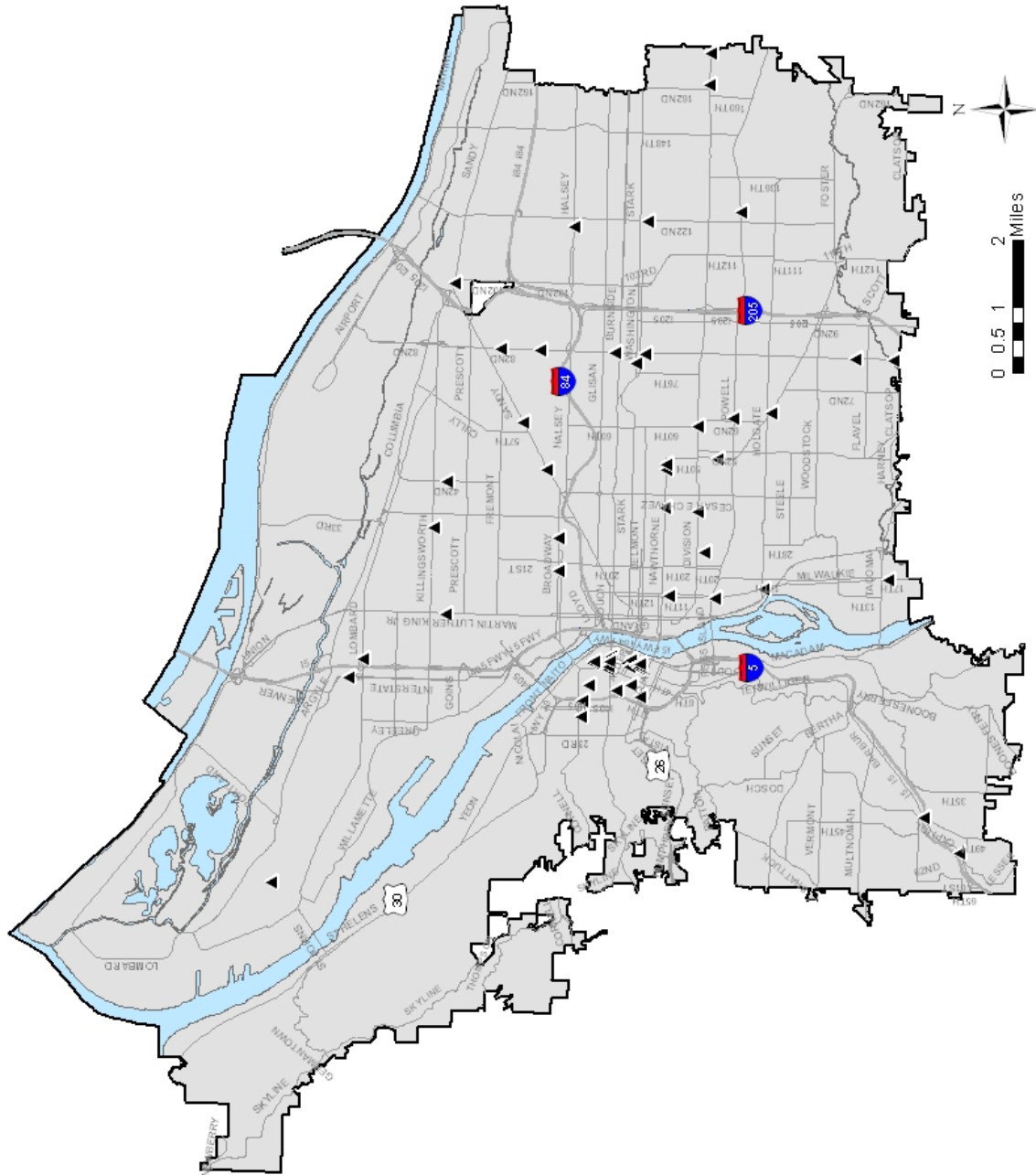
Source: RL Polk & Company. Portland City Directories. 1970-1984. Portland Archives and Records.

Figure 6: Adult businesses in Portland, 1972



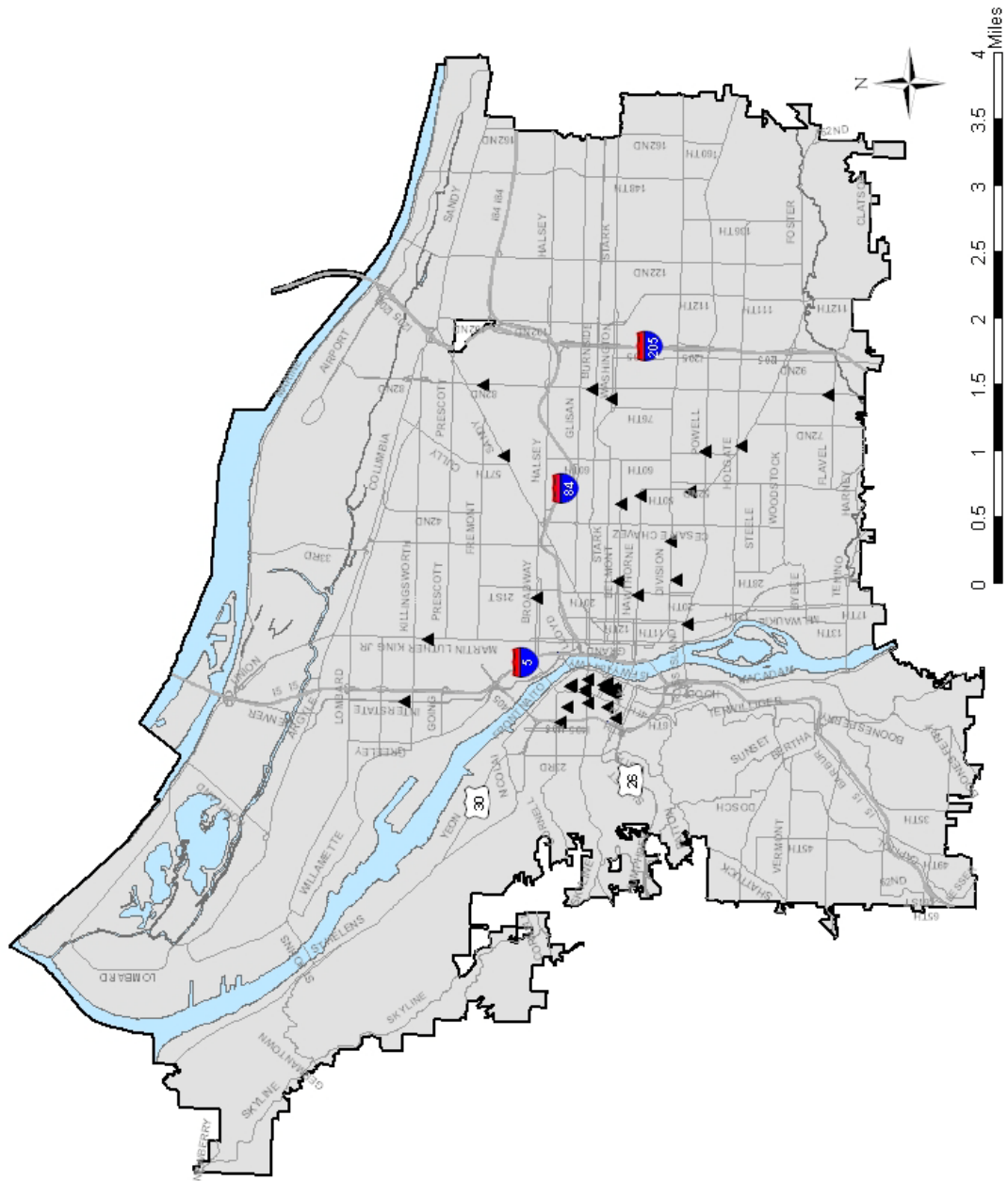
Source: RL Polk & Company. Portland City Directories. 1970-1984. Portland Archives and Records.

Figure 7: Adult businesses in Portland, 1974



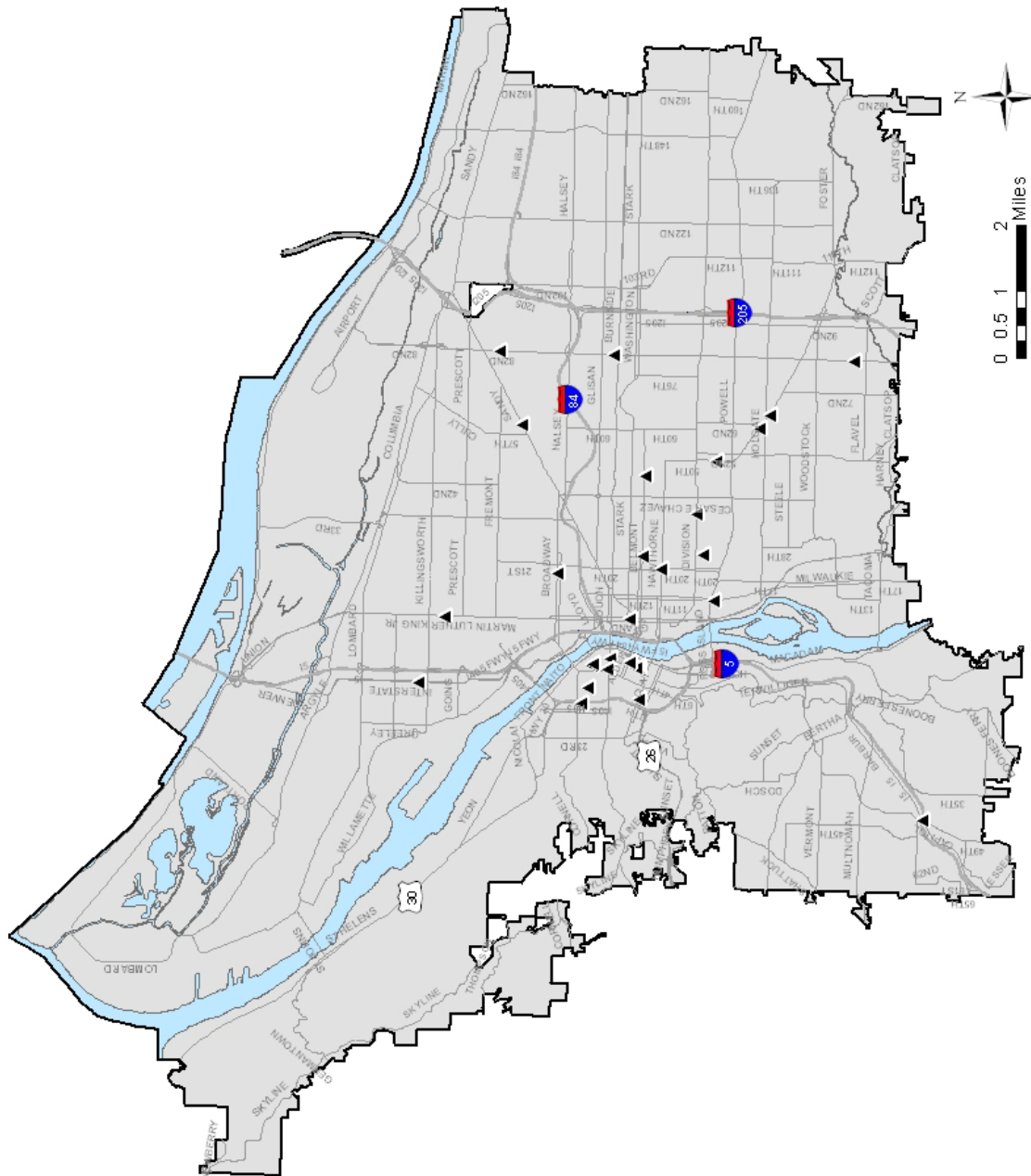
Source: RL Polk & Company. Portland City Directories. 1970-1984. Portland Archives and Records.

Figure 8: Adult businesses in Portland, 1976



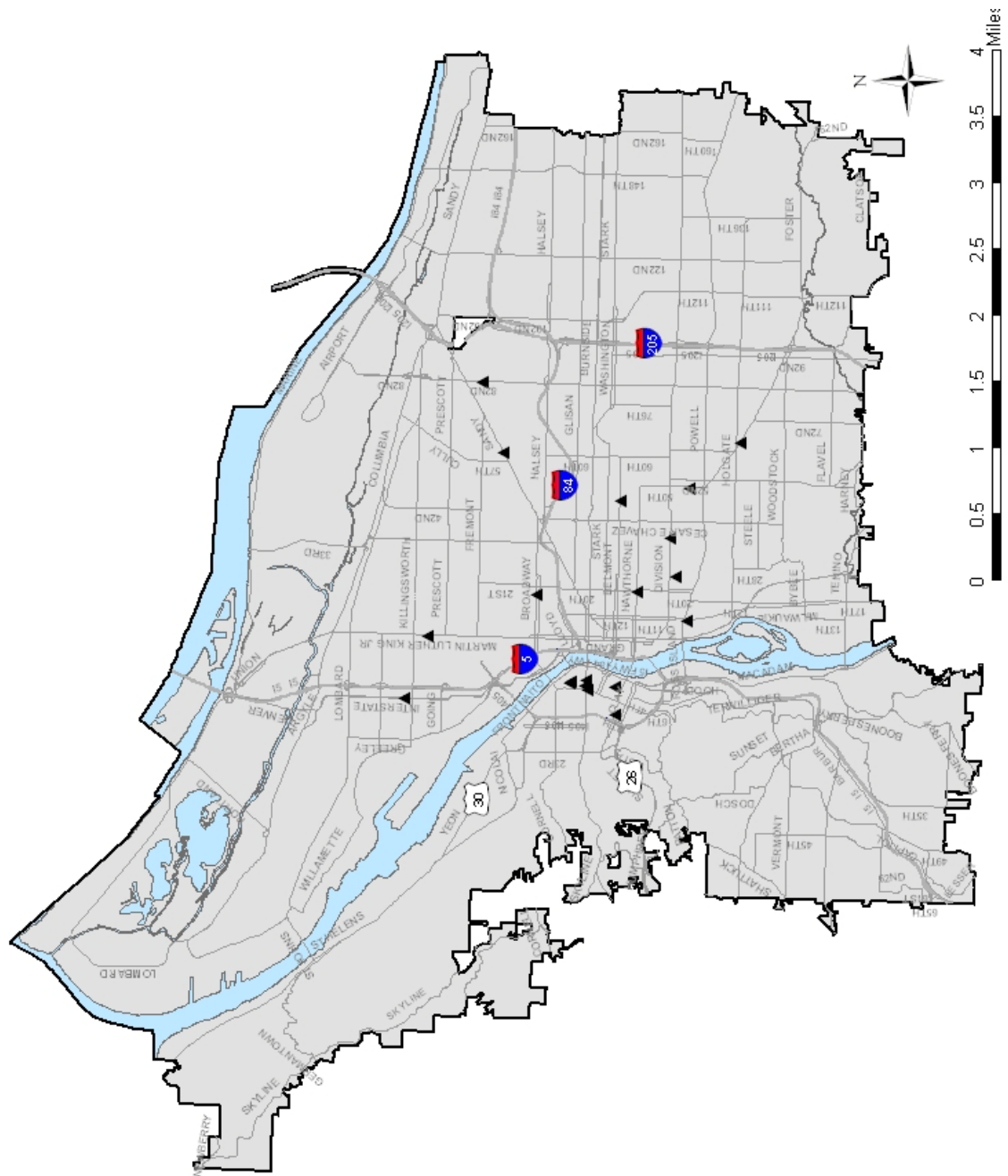
Source: RL Polk & Company. Portland City Directories. 1970-1984. Portland Archives and Records.

Figure 9: Adult businesses in Portland, 1978



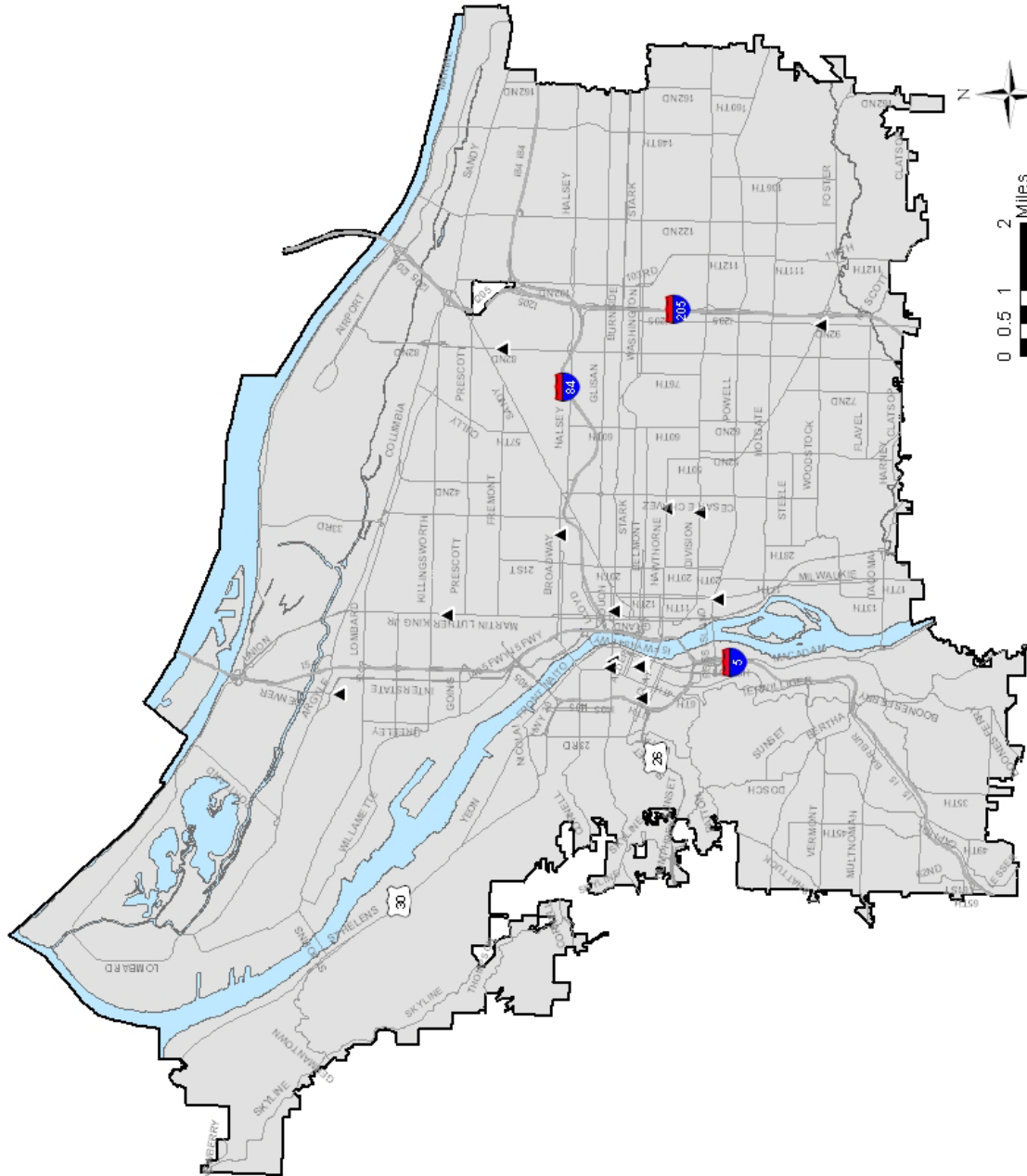
Source: RL Polk & Company. Portland City Directories. 1970-1984. Portland Archives and Records.

Figure 10: Adult businesses in Portland, 1980



Source: RL Polk & Company. Portland City Directories. 1970-1984. Portland Archives and Records.

Figure 11: Adult businesses in Portland, 1982



Source: RL Polk & Company. Portland City Directories. 1970-1984. Portland Archives and Records.

Several people owned more than one business. In 1970, Sol D. Maizels is listed in the City Directory as the owner of the Oregon Theater. In the 1972 directory, he is also

listed as the owner of the Aladdin and Encore Theaters. John Tidyman operated at least three adult theaters in Old Town including the Old Chelsea on Northwest Fifth Avenue, the Tom Kat Theater on Northwest Glisan Street and the New Paris Theater on Southwest Third Avenue. In 1974, Ralph Martin owned both the Centurion Twenty One Massage & Health Studio on Southeast Sandy Boulevard and the Continental Health Studio on Northeast Eighty Second Avenue. Shirley Danley (a.k.a Ginger Caldwell) operated Ginger's Sexy Saunas at five different locations during the 1970s, and at least three were open at the same time in 1976 and 1978.¹¹⁸

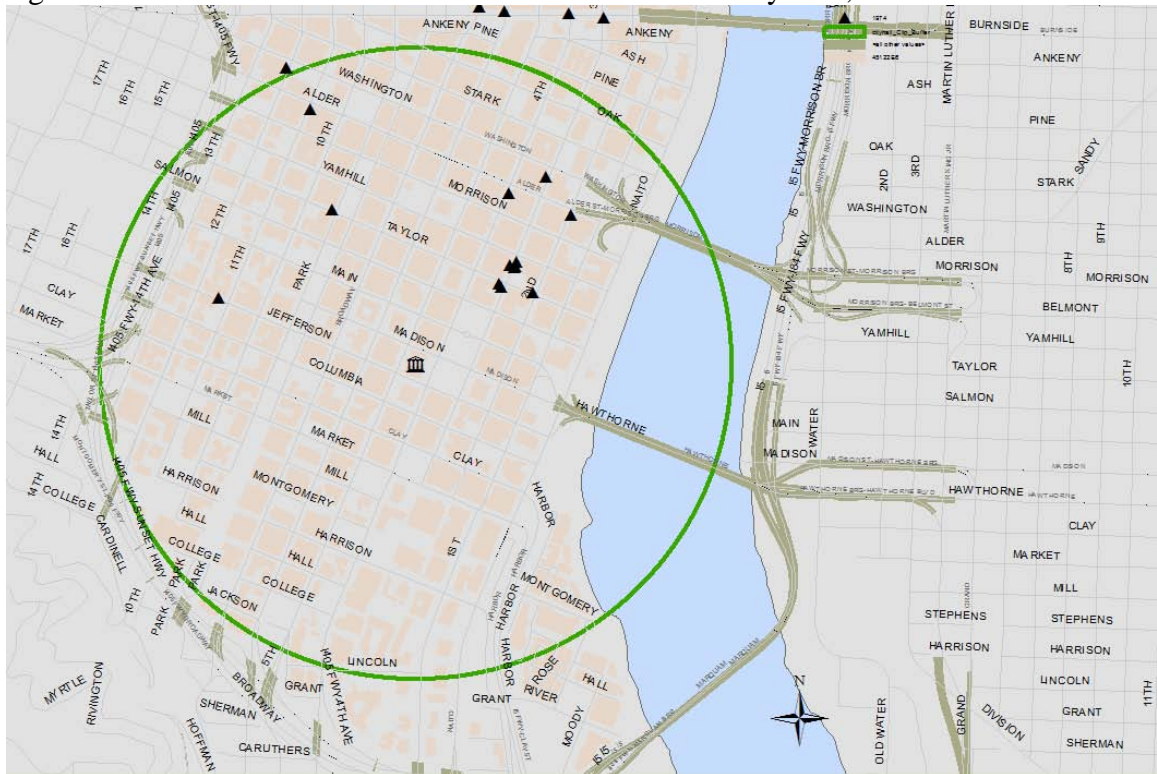
As the number of adult entertainment businesses grew and then declined during the 1970s, the percentage of the businesses located in Old Town steadily increased. In 1970 and 1972, more than twelve percent of identified adult entertainment businesses were located in Old Town. It dropped to ten percent in 1974 but from 1976 to 1980 rose steadily from thirteen percent to twenty three percent. The percentage of businesses in Old Town is more remarkable when compared to the percentage of the city's population living in the neighborhood. In 1980, when twenty three percent of adult businesses were located in Old Town the neighborhood was home to less than one half of one percent of the city's population. That year there was one adult business for every 278 Old Town residents.

There was one area of the city with a concentration of adult businesses even larger than that in Old Town – Downtown. Directly to the south of Old Town, Downtown is bordered by the Willamette River to the east, Interstate 405 to the West and South.

¹¹⁸ RL Polk & Company. Portland City Directories. 1970-1984. Portland Archives and Records.

Portland's City Hall sits across from a park a short distance from the Willamette River. Today the area surrounding City Hall boasts office towers that house banks and law firms, a County Justice Center and to the south is the expanded campus of Portland State University and to the west is the Cultural District. Until the 1970s, however, the area surrounding City Hall was mostly two-story hotels that housed the single men who worked in the timber and construction industries and the bars and restaurants where they drank and gambled. Then, in the mid 1970s, a new type of business began to open. In a neighborhood already known for prostitution, customers could find now find pornographic books, movies, magazines and live nude shows. By 1974, there were at least fourteen adult entertainment businesses within a half mile of Portland City Hall.

Figure 12: Adult businesses with a half mile of Portland City Hall, 1974



Source: RL Polk & Company. Portland City Directories. 1970-1984. Portland Archives and Records.

In 1970, five of the sixteen (thirty one percent) adult businesses in Portland were downtown. In 1974, there were sixteen adult businesses Downtown, twenty-four percent of the total adult businesses in the city. Two years later the number of businesses had dropped to thirteen but it represented a higher percentage of all adult businesses in the city – thirty-four percent. In 1982, there were seven adult businesses in Downtown, thirty-five percent of the total adult businesses in Portland.

The highest concentration of adult businesses in Portland’s Downtown was in or just outside the Lownsdale area. Lownsdale is a roughly twenty-four block area, bounded by Southwest Taylor Street to the North, Southeast Clay Street to the South, Southwest Fourth Avenue to the West, and Southwest Front Street (Natio Parkway) to the East. It sits between City Hall and the Willamette River. In 1974, eleven percent of adult businesses were in or within a block of Lownsdale. Two years later, thirteen percent of Portland’s adult businesses were in or within a block of Lownsdale. What made the situation remarkable was their proximity to City Hall.

Table 2: Stores selling pornography, by location

Year	Portland		Old Town		Downtown		Lownsdale	
1970	16	100%	2	12.5%	5	31.2%	0	0%
1972	24	100%	3	12.5%	5	20.8%	0	0%
1974	63	100%	6	9.7%	16	25%	7	11%
1976	38	100%	5	13.2%	13	34%	5	13.2%
1978	30	100%	4	13.3%	9	30%	2	7%
1980	21	100%	5	23.8%	4	19%	2	9%
1982	20	100%	3	15%	7	35%	6	4%

Source: RL Polk & Company. Portland City Directories. 1970-1984. Portland Archives and Records.

Prior to the mid 1960s, many businesses that provided adult entertainment worked to stay hidden. Laws against the dissemination of pornographic materials kept the businesses from having a public presence. By the 1970s, though, adult entertainment was

actively and publicly being advertised across the city. In addition to movie marquees, billboards, and advertisements in The Oregonian and other mainstream newspapers, Portland had at least two separate publications advertising local massage parlors, lotion studios, pornographic bookstores, movie theaters, and topless bars: the Oregon Playmate Guide and the Ginger & Spice Entertainment Guide.

Of the two, the Oregon Playmate Guide was more ambitious. While Ginger & Spice was printed on a few sheets of newsprint, each issue of the Playmate Guide was a small magazine featuring, in addition to ads for a variety of adult businesses, jokes, an advice column, and even a local playmate. The playmate section would include a short bio of the featured model and a number of explicit photographs. Readers of vol. 3 issue 11 learned that featured playmate, Dena Smith, was a twenty year old Portland native working as a topless dancer through the Eddie Heisler Theatrical Agency in Portland. Her parents lived in Sherwood, where her father operated a decorating company. Smith was a self described “professional groupie” who preferred her vodka straight.¹¹⁹

Although the format was simpler, Ginger & Spice was the more controversial of the two guides. Shirley Ann Danley, a.k.a. Ginger Caldwell, opened the first Ginger’s Sexy Sauna in October 1973, at 1123 Southeast Market Street. An ambitious businesswoman, Danley soon expanded and opened additional locations at 7400 Southeast Eighty Second Avenue, 2411 Southeast Belmont Street, and 949 Southwest Oak Street. By 1974, Ginger’s Sexy Saunas were operating in five Portland locations. Advertised in Ginger & Spice, the saunas drew the attention of not only a sizable

¹¹⁹ Oregon Playmate Guide, vol. 3 issue 11. Jordan, Charles R. Files. Portland Archives and Records Center.

customer base but also the Portland Police, District Attorney's Office, and City Council. Police targeted saunas including Ginger's under a 1973 update to Section 14.92.340 of the City Code regarding prohibited touching. Between March and May 1974, the Special Investigations Division of the Portland Police Bureau made sixty-five arrests for prohibited touching, involving nearly all of the massage parlors in the city.¹²⁰

In November 1974, the city successfully revoked the licenses of several massage parlors including the Playmate Club at 525 Southwest Twelfth Avenue, the Bunny Club at 2744 Northeast Broadway and East of Eden at 3574 Southeast Hawthorne. Information provided by the Portland Police showed that at each club there had been several arrests and at least one conviction for prohibited touching. Under Section 7.06.020 of the Code of the City of Portland, the City Council can revoke a business license for violating state or federal law. It was undoubtedly a victory for the city but one that would be difficult to repeat. After an Oregonian article reported a case where a police officer received an hour long massage before making an arrest, officers were reluctant to take the assignment. Meanwhile the owners and employees of massage parlors were increasingly savvy at avoiding arrest. Captain Paul Fontana, Commander of Special Investigations Division, explained the problem to Chief Bruce Baker in a memo: "The massage parlor assignment is a sensitive, difficult, distasteful duty that is performed by volunteers who are closely scrutinized and supervised. The massage parlor people have become aware of our tactics and limitations and are causing us concern as they require certain participatory actions of the customers in their attempts to cull our Vice Officers. We are leaning about as far as

¹²⁰ Memo from Richard A. Braman, to Mayor Goldschmidt . March 9, 1973 "Current status of cases involving prohibited touching ordinance." Pornography. Portland Archives and Records Center.

we should in order to make some cases and we foresee the time when their “testing” puts us out of Prohibited Touching enforcement.”¹²¹

While all the saunas in the city were included in the sting operations, Ginger’s received special attention. In a June 1974 memo to police Chief Baker, Captain Fontana, reported “We have been very active on the problems of Ginger Caldwell, her massage parlors, mobile unit and the Ginger and Spice publication.”¹²² Between 1973, when the first Ginger’s opened, and June 1974 there were fourteen arrests at Ginger’s locations for prohibited touching, prostitution, massaging without a state license, and promoting prostitution. Ginger & Spice was the subject of a twenty-one count federal indictment for interstate transportation of obscene material. The charges led to two of the saunas being evicted (1123 Southeast Market Street and 7816 North Interstate Avenue). “It would seem that as a result of public concern, cooperation and interest from the District Attorney’s Office, the Mayor’s Office inquiries and our new law enforcement efforts we may finally be able to perpetrate an effective thrust in regulation their criminal activities,” the officer handling the care, Mike Hentschell, wrote to Captain Fontana in a memo in June 1974.¹²³

¹²¹ Memo from Captain Fontana to Chief Baker, June, 1974 “Massage Parlor Arrest and Conviction Rates: SID Activities in Regards to Ginger & Spice Publications.” Charles R. Files. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹²² Memo from Captain Fontana to Chief Baker, June, 1974 “Massage Parlor Arrest and Conviction Rates: SID Activities in Regards to Ginger & Spice Publications.” Charles R. Files. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹²³ Memo from Officer Mike Hentschell to Captain Fontana, June, 1974. Charles R. Files. Portland Archives and Records Center.

Unfortunately for Officer Hentschell, the arrests were not the thrust he hoped they would be. Arrests for prohibited touching declined as sauna employees grew savvier and police resources were redirected. The second target, in Ginger Caldwell's organization, the Ginger & Spice Entertainment Guide, was equally difficult to attack. The District Attorney's office was unable to proceed with a case. Harl Haas explained to Captain Fontana: "As you know the problem concerning "Ginger and Spice" is the same problem that caused us to write and introduce SB 708. SB 708 prohibited live sex acts, sexual contact for a fee and the sale or exhibition of obscene material." Haas outlined the problems as follows:

"1) The dissemination of pornography in Oregon is legal. 2) That we have not been fortunate enough to be in a position to apprehend an individual who is illegally disseminating this pornographic material to a minor. 3) The very nature of the Oregon statute concerning minors and the scope of the statute makes us think there is a serious constitutional problem existing at this time for even a prosecution under that section of the law. 4) Concerning other approaches such as the violations of the City Ordinances and/or other existing county, city or state laws has not been brought to my attention that anyone has been actually observed in the act of dissemination of this information. 5) I suppose a prosecution of the violation of those ordinances for dissemination of this material if in fact such ordinances support such prosecution could be attempted against the public action itself, which would result in a small fine, no doubt, and do nothing to curtail the problem."¹²⁴

Danley was convicted in the United States District Court of Oregon for "use of the mails to ship obscene materials" in violation of 18 USC 1461. Danley tried to appeal the case again, this time to the United States Supreme Court, but they refused to hear her appeal. Facing a fine of up to \$5,000 and possible imprisonment, Danley's businesses suffered. In 1978, Ginger's Sexy Saunas were operating at three Portland locations: 7400

¹²⁴ Memo from City Attorney Harl Haas to Captain Fontana, 1974. Charles R. Files. Portland Archives and Records Center.

Southeast Eighty Second Avenue, 2411 Southeast Belmont and 535 Southeast Grand Avenue. By 1980, they were all closed.

c. Neighborhood Associations & Resident Complaints

Residents who were concerned or angry with the geographic spread of adult entertainment petitioned the Mayor and City Council. Residents complained about the morality, or lack thereof, of adult entertainment: “Our beautiful city shouldn’t have such POLLUTION.”¹²⁵ They also complained about the effect of “the encouragement of this moral decadence feeding our society” on youth: “Being actively engaged in working with today’s youth, I am aware of the lack of self discipline in our young people today. Therefore, I believe for the welfare of our children and society as a whole we must strengthen our laws rather than loosen them to the point that our law enforcing agencies are totally incapacitated.”¹²⁶ The Adams Elementary School Parent Teacher Association (PTA) wrote in to say that one adult bookstore in their neighborhood was within walking distance of six elementary schools and one high school. “Because of the undeniable influence on their surroundings, common sense would have at least placed limitations on areas that businesses of this nature could locate.”¹²⁷ The final straw for the Kellog

¹²⁵ Letter from Mrs CJ Selliben to Neil Goldschmidt September, 1972. Proliferation of Pornographic Institutions and the Problems they Cause. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹²⁶ Letter from Keith M Coburn to Commissioner Neil Goldschmidt September, 1972. Goldschmidt, Neil E. Files - Proliferation of Pornographic Institutions in Portland and the Problems They Cause. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹²⁷ Letter from Adams Elementary School PTA November , 1972. Pornography. Portland Records and Archives Center.

Elementary School PTA was a large billboard near the school, at the corner of Forty Second and Southeast Division that advertised adult entertainment.¹²⁸

Letters also outlined criminal activity believed to be associated with adult businesses and the extent to which they lowered the quality of life in surrounding neighborhoods. In reference to the Grecian Goddess massage parlor at 623 Northeast Twenty Third Avenue, Jeanne Wie wrote to the Mayor, City Council, and City Attorney: “The policy of the Monterey Apartments is to operate a quiet, clean, and respectable place for people to make their home. Although we keep our building quiet, the noise from the massage parlor has become intolerable to the residents. Fights, drunken brawls, and confrontation of the patrons in the late hours of night and early mornings have awakened and upset our people.”¹²⁹

In August 1972, Portland resident Helen Oliveria wrote to Commissioner Neil Goldschmidt: “All laws legislating these immoral pursuits should be amended. To have our city be called the Capital of Illicit Activities of the West is hurting to all good citizens. The Fourth Avenue string of pornography dives and these XXX movies are a blight before our City Hall and Court House. I feel our City and State candidates should speak out against the filthy activities and pornography. Many people feel as I do, we must vote for candidates that uphold decency for the sake of all children. I know you are a fine young man and can understand this immoral pollution spreading through our city must

¹²⁸ Letter from Kellog Elementary School PTA November, 1972. Pornography. Portland Records and Archives Center.

¹²⁹ Letter from Jeanne Wie to Mayor Neil Goldschmidt and the Portland City Council, January, 1973. Pornography 1973. Portland Archives and Reports Center.

disturb you too.”¹³⁰ With limited resources at his disposal Goldschmidt responded: “As you are no doubt aware, the last session of the State Legislature passed the new law under which Oregon is currently operating. I know that no one is currently satisfied with the way in which this law is functioning in the city today. I am confident that the next session of the State Legislature will see revisions and amendments to that law which will give the City of Portland a handle on the problem.”¹³¹

It is perhaps no surprise then that opponents of adult entertainment continually called on the City to relegate adult businesses to one area if it was unable to get rid of them all together. A 1972 letter to Commissioner Goldschmidt from Beverley Mott is typical. Mott, a twenty-five year old wife and mother, explained that she and her husband “were never interested in politics and never voted.” That changed when an adult bookstore moved into their neighborhood. The bookstore made them realize “the importance of taking an active part in our democratic system.” Since the stores opened, Mott and her husband registered to vote and developed an interest local government. “We, like many people, are very concerned about the blithe in this city, namely the Smut industry. . . . I am writing this letter to ask you to help us stamp out the filth that is growing in this city. I understand that we have forty-five Adult Bookstores, massage parlors, theaters, etc. in the downtown area alone.” Mott suggested City Council

¹³⁰ Letter from Helen Oliveria to Commissioner Neil Goldschmidt, August 1972. Goldschmidt, Neil E. Files - Proliferation of Pornographic Institutions in Portland and the Problems They Cause. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹³¹ Letter from Commissioner Neil Goldschmidt to Helen Oliveria, September 1972. Goldschmidt, Neil E. Files - Proliferation of Pornographic Institutions in Portland and the Problems They Cause. Portland Archives and Records Center.

segregate adult businesses to Old Town, “I would think that the very least the City Council could do would be to zone these places to two blocks around Third and Burnside and impose a high tax on these places.” Aware that her plan faced possible consequences, Mott urged the city to proceed, “I realize that the City runs the risk of lawsuit if this is done but as a tax payer I’m willing to take the risk.”¹³²

The spread of adult entertainment was occurring at the same time many Portland residents were rediscovering close in city neighborhoods. After several decades of disinvestment and sprawl, the residential areas near the city center, with their compact land use patterns, historic homes, and convenient locations, were regaining their appeal. At the same time new neighborhood associations were taking hold and changing the way residents viewed their place in the city and their relationship with City Hall. Residents took advantage of the city’s neighborhood association structure to shape their communities. The 1974 Ordinance that created the Portland’s Office of Neighborhood Associations described the new agency’s mission as “to provide standards and procedures whereby organized groups of citizens, seeking to communicate with city officials and city bureaus on matters concerning neighborhood livability.”¹³³ Many of Portland’s earliest neighborhood associations were formed in close-in residential neighborhoods where residents sought to rehabilitate existing housing and neighborhood infrastructure while

¹³² Letter from Beverley Mott to Commissioner Neil Goldschmidt, March 1972. Goldschmidt, Neil E. Files - Proliferation of Pornographic Institutions in Portland and the Problems They Cause. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹³³ Portland City Neighborhood Association. <http://www.portlandonline.com/oni/>. December 14, 2011.

stabilizing the population base.¹³⁴ The lotion studios, pornographic book stores, and movie theaters that found inexpensive storefront space in neighborhood commercial centers, were not a part of their vision and neighborhood associations including Brooklyn, Eliot, and Overlook, actively participated in anti-pornography campaigns.

There were several early victories in the fight against pornography. In September 1972, the Oregonian adopted a policy prohibiting advertisements for adult films in the newspaper. In 1973 Foster and Kleier, owner of billboards throughout the city stopped accepting advertisements from adult businesses. These victories were won voluntarily when the businesses, for whom adult entertainment revenue was a very small piece of total sales, responded to citizen complaints and choose to stop running the ads. The larger battle over the businesses themselves would prove much more difficult.

d. Land Use & Adult Entertainment

By the mid 1970s, City Hall had turned to the Bureau of Planning for help in keeping adult businesses out of residential neighborhoods. The Oregon Supreme Court ruled that adult entertainment was protected speech and despite their hopes of legislative action, in the mid 1970s the Portland City Council found their hands tied. No longer able to treat adult entertainment as a strictly moral issue they decided to treat it as a land use issue. In October of 1976, Planning Director Ernie Bonner was asked to look into the feasibility of using land use regulations to control adult entertainment in residential neighborhoods. Bonner passed the job to future Portland Development Commission Director and current Chief of Planning Don Mazziotti. Specifically, the city was

¹³⁴ Abbott, C. 1981. *The new urban America: growth and politics in Sunbelt cities*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

interested in the idea of a “combat zone” a physical area of the city designated through zoning where all adult entertainment business would be concentrated. At that time, Boston’s Combat Zone, a two block area near downtown which was the only place in the city where adult entertainment could legally locate, was gaining a lot of positive attention.

The idea of a combat zone, or an area where generally prohibited adult uses are permitted, was not new. American cities have long used geography as part of a strategy to address concerns about deviant sexuality. For example, in the late nineteenth century, many American cities experimented with informal legalization of prostitution. Prostitution remained technically illegal but anti-prostitution laws were selectively enforced. Certain areas of the city were unofficially designated as red light districts where prostitutes could practice their trade without interference from law enforcement. As is the case with many geographical restrictions of sexual expression, the informal red light districts satisfied the wants of men, while protecting respectable women and children, at the expense of women who did not fall into the previous category and those without sufficient resources to move from the designated area. While those experiments officially ended nearly a century ago, informal red light districts were easily identifiable in most mid-sized to large American cities throughout the twentieth century.¹³⁵ In the case of Boston, however, the city enacted official policy, in the form of zoning ordinances, in an

¹³⁵ Shumsky, N. 1986. Tactic acceptance: Respectable Americans and segregated prostitution, 1870-1910. *Journal of Social History* 19 (4): 665-679.

attempt to shape sexual geography. While the unofficial red light districts were technically illegal, the combat zone was legal.¹³⁶

In a December 28, 1976 memo to Commissioner Francis Ivancie, Commissioner of Public Safety, Don Mazziotti of the Bureau of Planning, outlined two ways to control adult entertainment uses, both of which were tied to location or space. The first was the Boston approach where zoning code made adult entertainment illegal in all places except within a specially designated, two block section near downtown. “The adult entertainment activities controlled under the Boston program include book stores, bars and movie houses. Also included are certain honky-tonk bars, pinball parlors, cabarets, pornographic book stores and night spots featuring nude dancing and displays.”¹³⁷

The second option outlined by Mazziotti was the approach taken by Detroit which, rather than clustering adult uses in one area, sought to keep business from clustering in one area. “Detroit maintains a city zoning ordinance which required that adult motion picture theaters and certain other adult uses not be located within 1,000 feet of certain other regulated uses. The Detroit ordinance requires that certain adult entertainment uses obtain a permit for operation through the zoning and land use control procedures of the city. Included as an adult use are the following: adult book stores, motion picture theaters, mini-motion picture theaters, cabarets, hotels or motels, pawn shops, billiard halls, public lodging houses, second hand stores, shoe shine parlors, and taxi dance halls.”

¹³⁶ Tucker, D. Preventing the secondary effects of adult entertainment: Is zoning the solution? *Journal of Land Use and the Environment* 12 (2): 383-431.

¹³⁷ Memo from Don Mazziotti to Commissioner Francis Ivancie, “Adult Entertainment Zone Control Through Land Use Regulations,” December, 1976. Combat Zone. Portland Archives and Records Center.

Mazziotti concluded that neither Boston nor Detroit provided a solution to Portland's situation. Instead, he recommended Portland "specifically avoid either approach. Boston's approach was "creating a greater problem than it pretends to solve" and "in the case of Detroit, the separation of uses accomplished through their zoning code has the potential for spreading these objectionable uses throughout the city, particularly along commercial strips like Sandy Boulevard or Eighty Second Avenue."¹³⁸

Although he did not support the idea of a combat zone, Mazziotti saw Old Town as the logical location should one be created. Reflecting back on the issue in 2011, Mazziotti said: Prostitution and adult entertainment cannot "be eliminated by drawing a line around it and saying you can't do that here." A combat zone would legitimize prostitution, "I think you might be able to create a zone where people can do anything that they want to do but if that's your alternative what you're really doing in providing and in effect sanctioning that activity in that area and I think that from a legal stand point meaning land use law I think its unlikely that such laws would be upheld." Zoning might work temporarily but it would not hold up in the long run, "Largely because of the equal protection clause in the constitution. But beyond that I think, and thought at the time that there are other legal impediments to establishing a Combat Zone. The Boston zone did not prove to be effective nor did Detroit." While they may not have been effective land use strategies, the Boston and Detroit examples "made good headlines for the politicians who sponsored the legislation that led to their establishment." In Portland, "we did not

¹³⁸ Memo from Don Mazziotti to Commissioner Francis Ivancie, "Adult Entertainment Zone Control Through Land Use Regulations," December, 1976. Combat Zone. Portland Archives and Records Center.

have leadership in the city at that time or at any time that I'm aware of that was trying to win political favor by pursuing enforcement of a moral code of that sort.”¹³⁹

City Hall accepted Mazziotti's recommendation and did not pursue the creation of a Combat Zone. Neither though did they abandon the idea of zoning as a method for addressing adult entertainment land uses. The Boston Combat Zone and Detroit is policy of requiring set distances between adult businesses were both part of a larger public dialogue occurring in the 1970s and 1980s about the benefits of dispersment vs. containment. Portland would enter the debate again in 1984 when the City Club applied the question to the issue not of adult entertainment but prostitution.

In the early 1970s, pornography wasn't just gracing the shelves of bookstores, it was also starting to appear on the big screen. In 1972, the release of Deep Throat ushered in a new era of pornographic films characterized by higher production values and, for the first time, storylines. These new films were being shown at small independent theaters which once showed mainstream Hollywood films. As studios opened multiplexes in suburban shopping malls, independent theaters turned to pornography to fill their screens and their seats. Unlike the bookstores and lotion studios, the theaters were preexisting businesses with an established geography. As preexisting businesses, the theaters also had preexisting relationships with their neighborhoods. A marquee announcing a pornographic film was perhaps especially offensive to parents who had once taken their children to the same theater to view a family friendly film.

¹³⁹ Don Mazziotti (Community Development Director, City of Beaverton), interviewed by the author, April 2011.

In 1970, there were ten theaters in Portland featuring adult films. The number increased for several years, peaking at eighteen theaters in 1974. This number did not include the arcades in some bookstores where customers could enjoy a private viewing of a short film (one that no doubt lacked a storyline). Like adult bookstores, the number of adult theaters decreased after 1974, dropping to nine in 1980 and five in 1982. The decline in the number of adult theaters reflected an early saturation of the market. As some theaters proved to be better than others and adult films were increasingly available in motels and then at home, the number of theaters that could be supported in Portland decreased. The theaters were geographically dispersed. In 1970, five of the theaters were in Southeast, one was in Northeast, three were in Southwest, two in Northeast and one in North Portland. The geographic spread had changed little in 1980: four theaters in Southeast, one in Northeast, one in Southwest and three in Northwest.

Neighborhood residents mobilized through their neighborhood associations and turned to City Hall who encouraged the Planning Bureau to find a solution to the problem of adult theaters. In 1981, the Planning Commission proposed a new zoning designation to address adult movie theaters and bookstores. Ordinance Number 153062 prohibited adult theaters and bookstores from locating in residentially zoned areas or within 500 feet of a residential zone, or any public or private elementary, junior high or high school. Under the ordinance adult bookstores and movie theaters would be prohibited completely in the RX (Downtown Multi Family Residential) and C4 (Neighborhood Commercial) zones. They would be allowed to operate in M3 (Light Manufacturing), MX (Central Services), CL (Central Commercial), C2 (Central Commercial) & C3 (Local

Commercial) zones as long as they met the minimum distance requirement and were not within 500 feet of residentially zoned land, public or private schools.¹⁴⁰ Existing businesses that did not conform to the ordinances were given six months to relocate.

Several cases were cited as establishing ordinance's legality. In *Young vs. American Mini Theaters, Inc.* the United States Supreme Court upheld the validity of a Detroit ordinance regulating adult theaters. The ordinance, which was the same one Don Mazziotti reviewed several years earlier, prohibited adult motion picture theaters from locating within 1,000 feet of two other regulated uses such as adult theaters, adult bookstores and cabarets and within 500 ft of a residential area. In *Berman v. Parker*, 348 US 26 (1954) the United States Supreme Court declared "The concept of the public welfare is broad and inclusive . . . The values it represents are spiritual as well as physical, esthetic, and monetary. It is within the power of the legislature to determine that the community should be beautiful as well and healthy, spacious as well as calm, well-balanced as well as carefully patrolled. The court ruled that private property could be taken by the government as long as it served the public good and property owners were justly compensated. They thus place the common good, as defined by the local planning department and city government above the interested of individual property owners. In

¹⁴⁰ Adult bookstores were defined as "an establishment having, as a substantial or significant portion of its merchandise items, such as books, magazines, other publications, films or video tapes which are for sale, rent or viewing on premises and which are distinguished or characterized by their emphasis on matters depicting specified sexual activities"

Adult Theaters were defined as "an establishment used primarily for presenting material for observation by patrons therein, having a dominant theme material distinguished or characterized as an emphasis on matter depicting specified sexual activities."

"Specified Sexual Activities means real or simulated acts of human intercourse, masturbation, sadomasochistic abuse or sodomy; or genitals in a state of sexual stimulation or arousal."

Village of Belle Terre v. Borass, 416 US 1 (1974) the court stated: “The police power is not confined to the elimination of filth, stench, and unhealthy places. Is it ample to lay out zones where family values, youth values, and the blessings of quiet seclusion and clean air make the area a sanctuary for people?”¹⁴¹ The court upheld a residential zoning ordinance that limited the number of unrelated individuals who could share a dwelling unit, this expanding the power of the local government to use zoning to enforce social values.

In 1981, there were five adult movie theaters in Portland (down from twelve five years earlier), four of which did not comply with the ordinance: The Aladdin on Southeast Milwaukie, the Jefferson on Southwest Twelfth Avenue, the Oregon on Southeast Division and the Walnut Park Theater on Northeast Union Avenue, now Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. The history of the Aladdin Theater is typical. Opened in the 1920s as a performance space for live vaudeville acts, the theater was remade into a neighborhood cinema before World War II. It functioned as a family friendly movie house until the 1960s when it switched from mainstream films to pornography. The theater has a prominent location on Southeast Milwaukie Blvd, in the Brooklyn neighborhood. The Jefferson Theater, which continued to operate as a porn theater until the summer of 2007, making it the second longest running adult theater in the city, was in Southwest Portland between the downtown business district and Goose Hollow. Walnut Park was on Union Avenue in what is now the King neighborhood. While Union Avenue is a commercial corridor, the surrounding area is mostly residential. The Oregon Theater

¹⁴¹ Memo from Kathryn Beaumont, Office of the City Attorney to Terry Sandblast, Bureau of Planning, September, 1981.

at Southeast Thirty Fifth Avenue and Division was the only one of the four still in operation in 2011. The one theater which conformed to the ordinance was the Star Theater at 9 Northwest Sixth Avenue in Old Town.

On October 20, 1981 the City Council held a public hearing on amendments to City Codes Title 33 Planning and Zoning and Title 14 Public Peace, Safety and Morals. More than 400 citizens attended the hearing where they heard testimony from Bureau of Planning staff, assistant city attorneys, business owners and neighborhood associations. A large map showed locations in the city where adult businesses could be established under the ordinance.

The Portland Branch NAACP also supported the ordinance but was in favor of additional restrictions: “We support all four proposed regulations as indicated on your October 5th correspondence. However, we propose that you amend proposal regulation #1 “Prohibit adult bookstores and adult theaters within 500 feet of a residential zone or a public or private elementary, junior high or high school or church.”¹⁴² The NAACP was not along in their desire to include churches in the ordinance.

Common themes in the letters submitted to the Council and public testimony at the meeting included protecting children from exposure to pornography, crime in the vicinity of adult oriented businesses and property values of land surrounding adult businesses. Southeast Uplift submitted a report detailing crime near two locations, Southeast Twenty Ninth Avenue and Belmont and Southeast Twenty Fifth Avenue and Belmont, between June and September 1980. They mapped crimes that were reported

¹⁴² Lucious Hicks IV, President NAACP Portland Branch to Terry D Sandblast, Director Portland Bureau of Planning,

within a one, two and four block radius from the location including assault, bike theft, car prowl, residential burglary, nonresidential burglary, larceny, shoplifting, arson, auto theft, vandalism, and robbery. They also tracked the time of day and the day of the week when the crimes occurred. Spencer Vail of the Eighty Second Avenue Business Association testified in favor of the proposal, arguing that it was more difficult to lease space in a building adjacent to an adult business. Asa Swindell, owner of several businesses near Eighty Second Avenue testified that he'd been propositioned twice near Madison High School and that one of his employees was propositioned at a school ballgame. Darlene Pannell testified that as a resident of the area around Madison High School she found the Flick adult bookstore "degrading." Pannell favored banning adult businesses from the city entirely.¹⁴³

Robert Portwood, vice chairman of the Woodlawn Improvement Association called adult establishment "a creeping blight." Eula Fedoris, a long time Kenton resident, testified that all the work done to upgrade the Kenton commercial district was undermined when the Adult Toy Shoppe opened at 8202 North Delaware. Robert Dorszynski favored banning adult businesses entirely but felt that if they were allowed to exist they should be permitted only on Government Island. J. Allen Green worried that adult bookstores like the Flick were "an intolerable encroachment on the economic, social, moral, and spiritual character of our family-oriented community." Such stores "threaten wives, sons and daughters, who would be accosted by the prostitutes, homosexuals, drug addicts, rapists, and other social perverts who frequented the stores."

¹⁴³ Portland City Planning Commission Minutes of the Meeting. October 20, 1981. Jordan, Charles R. - Subject Files - Inter Office Correspondence Record Number. Portland Archives and Records Center.

Green argued that the ordinance should be expanded to include motels, like the Kings Row, that showed pornographic movies. Ed Smisk testified that adult bookstores on Eighty Second Avenue were driving down housing prices in Gregory Heights. Michael Anderson testified that he lived one block behind the King's Row Motel, which advertised hourly rates and adult movies shown in rooms. He supported a ban on adult entertainment and encouraged the council to include adult motels in the ordinance. Anderson testified that he "had had problems with drunken people in front of his house yelling and screaming at 3:00 am during the summer hours. At least twice, someone had backed over his fence in a car. Cars at the motel had Washington license plates. He had seen what he thought were prostitutes walking on the street corners in the area. Robert Phillips, on behalf of the Black United Front, the Greater Northeast Police Precinct Advisory Council and Neighbors Against Crime, testified that the Walnut Park Theater brought prostitution to the neighborhood. Stefanie Vancura testified that a man propositioned her twelve year old daughter near the Aladdin Theater. Mrs. Ronald Myers testified that Portland should "Do like they do in Chicago. Keep bookstores and theaters in one section like Fourth and Burnside."¹⁴⁴

In summary, residents had a number of complaints against the adult businesses, most of which revolved around their effect on property values, harassment of neighborhood residents, including children, crime, and general nuisance. Not all residents agreed that the businesses should be banned entirely but there was strong support for segregating them to one area of town.

¹⁴⁴ Portland City Planning Commission Minutes of the Meeting. October 20, 1981. Jordan, Charles R. - Subject Files - Inter Office Correspondence Record Number. Portland Archives and Records Center.

Public testimony also included some who were uneasy with or opposed to the ordinance including Charles Williamson, who testified on behalf of the Oregon Theater Owners' Association. The Association did not represent owners of adult businesses. They did worry, however, that the wording of the ordinance was too broad and could affect theaters that showed movies with any sexual content or situations.¹⁴⁵

The City Council reviewed the ordinance on November 19, 1981. At that time, representatives of adult movie theaters objected, arguing that four of the five theaters currently operating would need to be moved or closed under the ordinance. They also argued that adult movie theaters did not present the same problems as adult bookstores. Furthermore, adult theaters were located in older buildings that were no longer suitable for other uses. The Council took their objection into consideration, passing the ordinance for bookstores only. The Planning Bureau was given ninety days to investigate adult movie theaters and propose appropriate legislation. During that time no new adult bookstores or movie theaters would be allowed to locate.

At the November 19 hearing, representatives of the Buckman Community Association voiced their concerns that under the new ordinance certain neighborhoods including their own would bear the brunt of adult entertainment and the "increased crime, vandalism, noise, and traffic associated with these kinds of establishments." The Council

¹⁴⁵ Portland City Planning Commission Minutes of the Meeting. October 20, 1981. Jordan, Charles R. - Subject Files - Inter Office Correspondence Record Number. Portland Archives and Records Center.

directed Planning Bureau staff to “examine the need and options available to prevent high concentrations of adult bookstores and other adult businesses in allowable areas.”¹⁴⁶

In order for the ordinance to be deemed constitutional, it could not ban adult entertainment from the city entirely. Churches were not included in the ordinance because doing so would restrict the geographic area in which adult businesses could locate to a degree that would render the ordinance unconstitutional. Bureau of Planning staff had to demonstrate there would be sufficient space in the city for legally allowed adult entertainment businesses. Of the five adult theaters and thirteen adult bookstores identified, four bookstores and four theaters did not meet the requirements.¹⁴⁷

The Bureau of Planning determined that there were ten sites where new adult businesses could locate under the separation requirements in Downtown and the inner-eastside. This would leave adequate space for the four bookstores that were required to close or relocate by May 19, 1982. Bureau of Planning staff also calculated “the maximum number of sites which could conceivably locate in the allowable areas under the 1,000/5,000 foot separation requirements” and found that “including all land in the Downtown/inner-Eastside allowable area, approximately eighty-four adult businesses could open.”¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁶ Testimony from Buckman Neighborhood Group to City Council. December 31, 1982. Jordan, Charles R. - Subject Files - Inter Office Correspondence. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹⁴⁷ Testimony from Buckman Neighborhood Group to City Council. December 31, 1982. Jordan, Charles R. - Subject Files - Inter Office Correspondence. Portland Archives and Records Center.

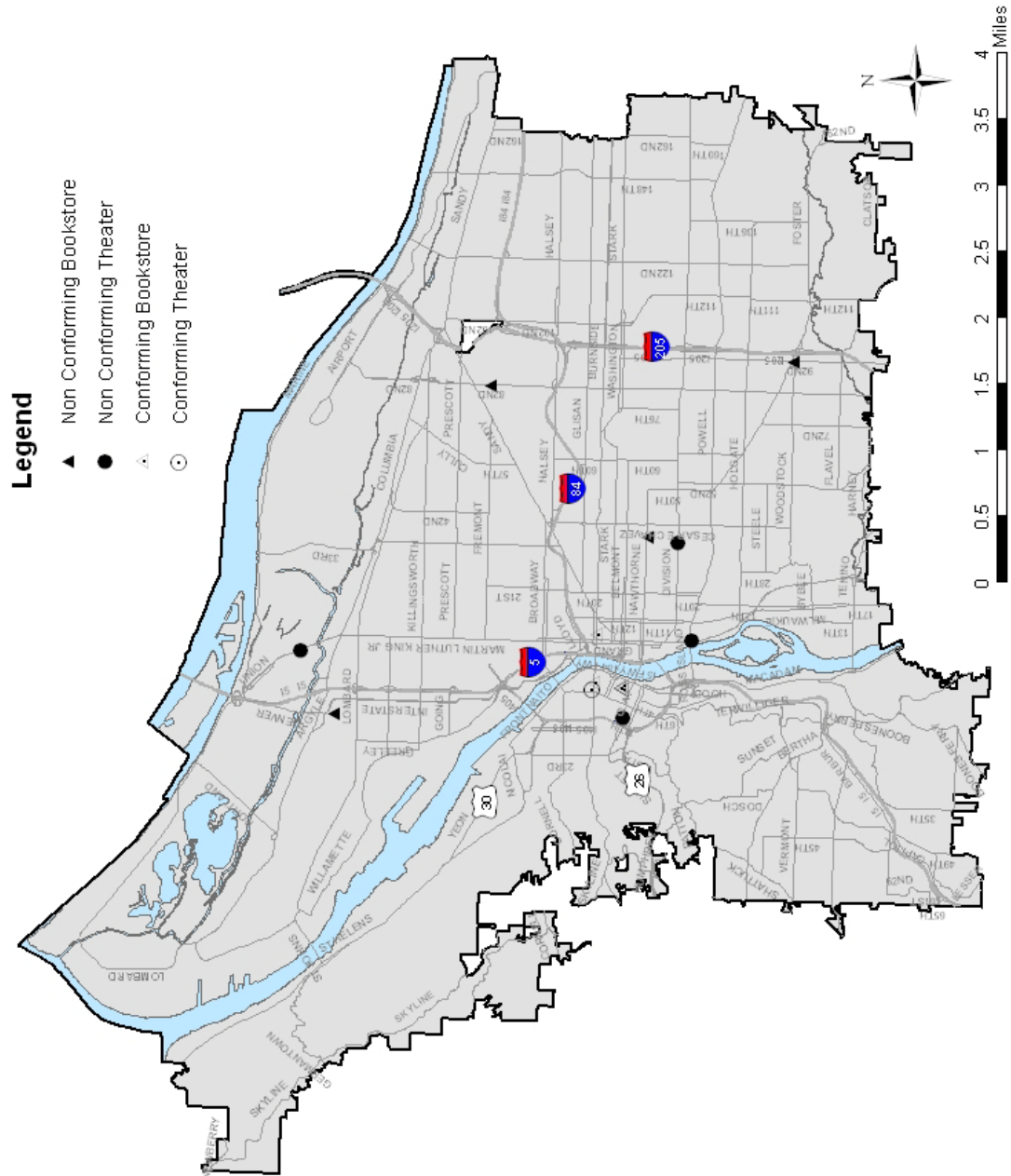
¹⁴⁸ Letter from Harold Bahls, Portland Planning Commission, to Mayor Frank Ivancie and the Portland City Council, February 1982. Charles Jordan Files. Portland Archives and Records Center.

Table 3: Conforming and non conforming adult businesses, 1981

Movie Theaters	Location	Conforming?
Aladdin Theater	3017 SE McLoughlin Boulevard	No
Jefferson Theater	1129 SW Jefferson Street	No
Oregon Theater	3520 SE Division Street	No
Star Theater	9 NW Sixth Avenue	Yes
Walnut Park Theater	5029 NE Union Avenue	No
Bookstores	Location	Conforming?
Adult Bookstore	628 E Burnside	Yes
Adult Center	3574 SE Hawthorne	No
Adult Toy Shoppe	8202 N Denver	No
Cal's Adult Books	5941 SE 92nd	No
Cindy's	NW Fourth and Burnside	Yes
Film Follies	915 SW Third	Yes
Flick	3520 NE Eighty Second	No
Hardtimes	926 SW Third	Yes
Little Susie's	828 SW Third	Yes
One Plus One	830 SW Third	Yes
Scorpios	209 SW Taylor	Yes
Sin City	838 SW Third	Yes

Source: RL Polk & Company. Portland City Directories. 1970-1984. Portland Archives and Records.

Figure 13: Conforming and nonconforming adult theater and bookstores, 1981



Source: RL Polk & Company. Portland City Directories. 1970-1984. Portland Archives and Records.

When the City Council reconvened after the ninety day period, they voted to recommend “New adult bookstores, adult theaters, and relaxation treatment and related

businesses be prohibited from locating within 500 feet of another adult business in the C1 and MX zones and within 1000 feet from another adult business in the C3, C2 and M3 zones.” The City Council passed Resolution 33138 the four non-conforming theaters were monitored for a period of six months to determine whether they had a “detrimental effect on surrounding residential neighborhoods.” Responsibility for policing adult theaters was assigned to two agencies, the Bureau of Police and The Office of Neighborhood Associations. The Police were charged with keeping records of the number of times police responded to calls for service at each theater and arrests that resulted. They were also responsible for collecting and collating all information on adult theaters forwarding to it by other city bureaus. The Office of Neighborhood Associations was responsible for keeping records of all complaints, correspondence, and information received by neighborhood associations concerning the adult theaters.¹⁴⁹

Community leaders worked with the police department and the Office of Neighborhood Associations in an attempt to demonstrate the negative impact of adult theaters on their neighborhoods. The theaters, they argued, were diminishing the quality of life through nuisance and law breaking, complaints ranged from excessive noise to accusations that the theaters were fostering prostitution. The rhetoric of the neighborhood associations took the freedom of speech argument and adopted it to a new actor: the neighborhood. “City Council will determine Brooklyn’s chance for livability, as well as, all Portland neighborhoods. Freedom of expression is for everyone. Freedom to develop a sense of community, a sense of livability, and a sense of fulfillment within the concept of

¹⁴⁹ Resolution 33183. December 31, 1982. Jordan, Charles R. - Subject Files - Inter Office Correspondence. Portland Archives and Records Center.

a larger home base, that is, the neighborhood is a new idea, it is a trifle overdue but within reach. Portland can allow neighborhood freedom of choice without banning another segment of the populations sexual freedom.”¹⁵⁰

Residents of Brooklyn received a letter from their neighborhood association explaining the need to monitor the Aladdin Theater. “City agencies are not going to do anything about this problem unless they receive input from citizens like us. If you have any complaints about the Aladdin Theater of any nature whatsoever, not just for the present, but extending back for as long as you have lived in the neighborhood, you should report them by telephone to Lee Perlman, who is with the Office of Neighborhood Associations for the City of Portland.” Brooklyn Action Corps instructed their neighbors to focus on “livability and quality of life in surrounding residential neighborhoods.” Complaints that could be “attributed to adult theaters, in whole or in part” including: noise, traffic, litter, vandalism, harassment, visibility, or pornography from the street, decline in residential and commercial land values, vacancy rates, and the length of time property stays on the market. They were also asked to look at the proximity of adult theaters to transit and pedestrian routes, particularly routes children take to school.

The fight against the Walnut Park Theater was coordinated by the Northeast Neighborhood Office and Northeast Neighborhoods Against Crime. In a memo to Patti Jacobson, Director of the Office of Neighborhood Associations, and Sherry Sylvester, Director of Neighborhoods Against Crime, Edna Robertson, Coordinator of the Northeast Neighborhood Office, and Sharon McCormack, coordinator of Northeast Neighborhoods

¹⁵⁰ Letter from Kathy H Bare, Chairperson Brooklyn Parents Advisory Council to Portland City Council, October, 1981. Council Documents. Portland Archives and Records Center.

Against Crime, laid out the results of their organizations' two month surveillance.¹⁵¹ Many of the complaints recorded were tied to prostitution in and around the theater, including: "prostitutes loitering the alley behind Walnut Park Theater between Northeast Union and Northeast Garfield at noon trying to catch the lunch clientele going into the Walnut Park Theater before they enter theater or after they leave theater; clientele of theater harassing neighborhood residents; pimps dropping prostitutes off and then hanging around Northeast Garfield behind Walnut Park theater; prostitutes meeting "johns" on Northeast Garfield Avenue and "working" on Northeast Garfield between Northeast Alberta Street and Northeast Emerson Street; and theater clientele loitering on Northeast Garfield Avenue between Northeast Alberta Street and Northeast Emerson Street looking for prostitutes, when they cannot find one they continue on to the Theater."¹⁵² Prostitution around the Walnut Park Theater was part of a thriving prostitution market that continued to plague the neighborhood throughout the 1980s. Rev Kathy Myers Wirt, who was pastor at the Mallory Avenue Christian Church just two blocks from the theater, remembers prostitutes "coming in the building hiding from

In a February 11, 1982 memo to Mayor Francis Ivancie and Members of the Council, Bahls voiced his support for Ordinance No. 152549. "Because the proposed ordinance will respond to the concerns of area residents and successfully counter the blighting effects of adult business clusters, yet will allow continued access to adult

¹⁵¹ Neighborhoods Against Crime was a citywide program established in December 1978 and operated with federal funds. During the 1980s they would be active in the fight against prostitution in NE Portland.

¹⁵² Memo from Kathryn Beaumont Imperati, Deputy City Attorney to Chief RR Still, Chief of Police. "Monitoring of Adult Theaters." 1982. Jordan, Charles R. - Subject Files - Inter Office Correspondence. Portland Archives and Records Center.

material, the Planning Commission urges the Council to adopt the proposed minimum separation requirements contained in this ordinance.”

Two petitions were introduced in favor of allowing the theaters to remain. “We as patrons of the _____ Theater, do hereby petition the City Council to allow this adult theater to remain in business at its present location. We feel the adult theaters are a valuable asset to our community and we have not experienced or know of any criminal or social problems arising from the theaters existence.” The signature count for each theater is as follows: Walnut Park 180, Aladdin Theater 560, Oregon Theater 640 and the Jefferson Theater 1,200. A second petition demonstrated support from the owners of nearby businesses: “We the undersigned business owners, in close proximity to the _____ Theater, do hereby petition the City Council to allow the said _____ Theater to remain at its present location.” Eight businesses supported the Oregon and Aladdin theaters while twenty-one supported the Jefferson.¹⁵³

At the end of the ninety day period the Bureau of Planning recommended that “Adult theaters would be regulated in the same manner as adult bookstores and theaters not meeting the regulations should be given a six month amortization period to close, or change format.” The decision was based on several factors: as a land use, adult theaters were incompatible with residential and local commercial activities, high crime and arrest rates at theaters. There was also sufficient space for theaters to locate in allowable

¹⁵³ Petitions submitted to Planning Commission. October 20, 1981. City Recorder - Council Documents – 3573 99 10. Portland Archives and Records Center.

areas.¹⁵⁴ On April 7m 1982 City Council passed Ordinance 153062, a slightly amended version of Ordinance 152549, which limited the location of adult theaters in keeping with the Planning Bureau's recommendations.

e. The Old Town Option

Even after the Ordinance 153062 was passed, theater owners continued to fight. Petitions supporting existing adult theaters were circulated and sent to City Hall. In April 1982, land use lawyer Dan Cooper wrote to the Portland City Council "to respond formally to testimony received by the City Council on March 11 and March 25 from Thomas Dulcich and others representing the Brooklyn Action Corps." Cooper argued that testimony in front of the Council did not demonstrate that the Aladdin Theater had an adverse impact on the neighborhood. Cooper also reported that Mr. and Mrs. Maizels, owners of the Walnut Park Theater, "are willing to work out any type of arrangement for the Walnut Park Theater. It needs some improvements and they would lease it for less than \$1,250 per month. The current lease expires January 1, 1982 and they would want at least a five year commitment lease from the new lease. I think this will be an excellent opportunity for the community to decide what type of use they want in the building."¹⁵⁵

While many people supported the move to segregate adult businesses in one part of the city, the question was where? Under the new zoning statutes the Bureau of Buildings needed to identify locations where adult theaters and bookstores could legally

¹⁵⁴ Letter from Harold Bahls, Portland Planning Commission, to Mayor Frank Ivancie and the Portland City Council, February 1982. Charles Jordan Files. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹⁵⁵ Memo from Cooper and Cooper, Attorneys at Law to Portland City Council "Proposed Adult Theater Ordinance." April 2, 1982. Jordan, Charles R. - Subject Files - Inter Office Correspondence Record. Portland Archives and Records Center.

be located. When the land survey identified seven locations currently for lease of sale in the Central East Side where the businesses could legally locate the Central East Side Industrial Council wrote to the Mayor and City Commissioners.¹⁵⁶ “An aggregation of adult businesses would seriously jeopardize our ability to preserve this vital area as a location for the creation of a strong employment base, maintenance of a vital tax base and provision of social services (three large private social providers are located in our district). We support the previous ordinance that prohibited adult businesses from residential areas but the unfortunate consequence was to delineate allowable areas.” The CEIC went on to list the reasons they opposed “an aggregation of adult businesses.” The list included fear that the new businesses would not be maintained to community standards, the customers of the businesses are not reflective of community standards of morality, the need to segregate incompatible land uses, after all “the industrial community does not need adult businesses to facilitate the production or distribution of goods and commodities,” and finally that the residents of the neighborhood, the elderly, handicapped and people being reintegrated into the community, should be allowed to live in a safe community. “Adult businesses are not conducive to creating an environment where these people can live in safety.” Under the CEIC’s argument both vulnerable populations, including the elderly, handicapped, and people reentering society, and less vulnerable populations – successful business owners, needed protection from adult entertainment. “The businessmen and women of the CEIC respectfully ask you to protect us from the potential of social decay. We are capable and willing to accept our social

¹⁵⁶ Dick Burhman, President and Earl Bolliger, Vice President Central Eastside Industrial District to Portland City Council, 9 April 1982. Charles R Jordan Files, Portland Archives and Records Center.

responsibilities but we simply can not cope with an influx of an allowed but incompatible land use.”¹⁵⁷

After accepting minor revisions, a report was released the following month and on April 7, 1982 the City Council passed the ordinance. Three years later all four of the nonconforming theaters, as well as Star, the conforming theater, were still in operation at the same location and still showing pornography. While none of the existing theaters were forced to close, no new theaters opened until 2007 when the Paris Theater was reopened at its original location at 6 Southwest Third Avenue. It is difficult to determine whether this was a victory for neighborhood associations or the effect of outside forces which were changing the way people consumed pornography. The Ordinance might have made an impact if passed a decade earlier but by the early 1980s adult theaters were losing much of their customer base. Already the number of theaters in Portland had decreased from eighteen to five. The VCR allowed consumers to watch adult films in the privacy of their own homes, signaling a major shift in the way pornographic movies were marketed and consumed. Pornographic movies also became widely available in hotels, appealing to business travelers and customers of prostitutes alike. It is likely that even without Ordinance 153062 few if any new pornographic theaters would have opened within the city. Furthermore, most of the existing pornography theaters had opened in existing movie theaters that once showed mainstream movies. The development of multiplexes had left the door open for older theaters to be converted into music venues, pornographic theaters or repurposed all together. Opening a new theater was expensive

¹⁵⁷ Dick Burhman, President and Earl Bolliger, Vice President Central Eastside Industrial District to Portland City Council, 9 April 1982. Charles R Jordan Files, Portland Archives and Records Center.

and once the existing theaters had been converted to other uses there was little effort to establish entirely new theaters. Of the five theaters operating in 1981, only the Jefferson and the Oregon Theaters continued to operate as pornography theaters after 1993. In 2012, the Oregon is the only theater still showing pornography. The others have all either closed or been repurposed. The Aladdin Theater is a popular music venue, the Jefferson Theater closed in 2007 when the building where it was located was slated to be torn down and the location where the Walnut Park Theater stood is now a vacant lot.

Four and a half years after Ordinance Number 153062 was passed City Council was still grappling with how to regulate adult entertainment. In December 1986 the Council asked Dennis Nelson, Director of the Bureau of Licenses to reengage the City Attorney's Office about developing new regulations. The City Attorney, Jeffrey Rogers, however, felt the new regulation wasn't wise. "Although I understand the council's sense of urgency, I believe that the adoption of new City regulations at this time might make things worse." At the time Portland was involved in three lawsuits concerning existing adult entertainment legislation *City of Portland v. Tidyman* questioned the city's zoning regulation that distinguished adult bookstores from other types of businesses. The case challenged the way zoning limited adult businesses to certain areas of the city as a violation of the Free Speech provision of the Oregon Constitution. *Sekene v. City of Portland* questioned the city's prohibition of nude dancing in establishments that serve alcohol. That case also cited the free speech clause in the Oregon Constitution. *Dougal V. City of Portland* questioned whether it was constitutional for the city to regulate juice bars and their employees.

Rogers argued that the three cases, which were all under review by the courts, approached adult entertainment in separate ways: licensing, outright prohibition, and location restrictions. “Since all three are being reviewed at present, there is nothing else available that could be implemented as a successful interim regulatory measure. The Courts are presently defining the scope of Oregon’s constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression. The Supreme Court’s decision this week invalidating Oregon’s obscenity law is another step in that process. That opinion also suggests the Court anticipates they will soon be confronting issues of zoning adult businesses. That reinforces my belief that our efforts are best directed to the Courts now.” New regulations he concluded would create more litigation, weaken the city’s position in pending litigation, and weaken credibility before the legislature.¹⁵⁸

The City Council was most likely still considering Rogers’ recommendation in 1987 when the decision in *Henry v Oregon* decision was made. In *Henry V. Oregon* the Oregon Supreme Court ruled specifically that nude dancing, including lap dancing, was protected speech. The ruling abolished the offense of obscenity in Oregon state law and ushered in a new era of adult entertainment in Portland.

f. Conclusion

Between 1971, when the Commission on Obscenity recommended that governments refrain from interfering with the rights of adults to view pornography, and 1987, when *Henry v. Oregon* ruled that nude dancing was free speech, neighborhood activists, politicians, law makers, and city planners worked to control the sexual

¹⁵⁸ Jeffrey L. Rogers to Portland Mayor and City Council, 14 January 1987. Adult Entertainment, Portland Archives and Records Center.

geography of adult entertainment in Portland. When they could not ban adult entertainment entirely they tried to segregate it into one neighborhood. Again and again Old Town was put forth as the logical place to locate a cluster of adult bookstores, movie theaters, and strip clubs. Throughout the 1970s, Portland residents wrote to the Mayor's office and city council urging city leaders to relocate adult entertainment to Old Town. The Planning Bureau researched and eventually recommended amendments to the zoning code that would have segregated adult entertainment in Old Town. Looking back Don Mazziotti recalled "I would have put it in Old Town. I would have put it in Old Town, it was there so there probably would have been minimal resistance, at that point in time. And that's what I was looking at, trying to figure out where could these people go without being persecuted, in an area where it's permitted or encouraged or flourishes. I looked at the Central East Side, looked at the Albina Yards area, what's known as the Albina Yards Area but the School facilities plan included a prospective headquarters for the public schools in that area and the Coliseum has already been built so there was a lot of public activity there."¹⁵⁹

In the case of Old Town, the neighborhood's relationship to adult entertainment in the public view was most strongly influenced by national trends and municipal level policies.

¹⁵⁹ Don Mazziotti (Community Development Director, City of Beaverton), interviewed by the author, April 2011.

Table 4: Influences on Adult Entertainment in Old Town

Factor	National Trend	Municipal Policy	Neighborhood Policy	State Level Policy	Technological Change
Legalization of pornography	X			X	
Redevelopment of CBD during 1970s	X	X			
Concentration of aging housing stock/institutional ghetto in Old Town	X	X			
Decline in pornography theaters					X
Adult entertainment is free speech				X	
Old Town embraces adult entertainment				X	

Like many close in urban neighborhoods, particularly those with aging building stock, Old Town entered a period of decline during the Depression that intensified during and after World War II. With a large population of chronic inebriants and few families with children living at home, Old Town attracted many of the social service agencies that served its population. The social service identity and the adult entertainment identity both derive from the area’s skid row history. Social service agencies, including homeless shelters, drug and alcohol treatment centers, low cost health clinics, and soup kitchens located in the neighborhood to be near the populations they served. The presence of social service agencies then solidified the area’s identity as skid row, making it less

desirable for other businesses and residents. Adult entertainment is tied to the neighborhood in part because of the area's past as a neighborhood with a high concentration of single men. Although single men are not necessarily the primary customer base for adult businesses the association between the two exists in many people's minds. Arguments against adult entertainment often focus on protecting families and particularly children from exposure to adult entertainment. In a neighborhood where few if any children are present this argument loses power. By segregating adult entertainment in an area with few kids, you are in effect protecting the majority of children in the city from exposure to adult entertainment businesses. Furthermore, when Portland's citizens were looking for a place to cluster adult businesses, Old Town seemed a good choice because the neighborhood population was less likely to effectively protest it than the population of other neighborhoods.

Although Old Town was not the neighborhood with the largest concentration of adult entertainment businesses during the 1970s the area was connected in the city's mind with sexual deviance. When asked what to do with the adult movie theaters and bookstores opening around the city residents had one answer again and again – the businesses should be congregated in Old Town.

Beginning in the early 1980s, technological change, in the form of the VCR and later the internet, shifted the way adult entertainment was consumed and thus altered the city's sexual geography by reducing the demand for pornographic theaters and bookstores. As theaters and bookstores in some other parts of the city began to close, the relationship between Old Town and adult entertainment was strengthened by state and

neighborhood policy decisions. On a state level, the Oregon Supreme Court ruled exotic dance was protected speech, thus limiting future attempts to restrict the location of adult entertainment venues. The Old Town/ Chinatown neighborhood association responded by formally inviting adult entertainment into the neighborhood in order to strengthen the area's role as an entertainment destination.

In many ways, Old Town is typical of neighborhoods with concentrated clusters of sex related businesses. Old Town has always been an economically depressed neighborhood. The population consistently has a disproportionate share of men and very few children. In the 1970s, however, Lownsdale was also an economically depressed area, with similar population demographics and a declining building stock. During the 1970s when Portland was struggling to address the increase in adult entertainment, Old Town was not the only area in the city that fit these criteria.

When it came to sexual recreation, Lownsdale and Old Town have very similar histories. During the nineteenth century both neighborhoods had large concentrations of single men, and the boarding houses, bars and restaurants where they lived, ate and drank. The 1908 brothel raid intended to shut down brothels in Whitechapel (Old Town) instead split the concentration of prostitution in two, one in Old Town and one in Lownsdale. During the 1970s there were more adult businesses in Lownsdale than in Old Town, both in number and percentage of total adult entertainment businesses in the city. Why then were people so focused on Old Town as a home for the city's burgeoning adult entertainment sector?

What Lownsdale had was a better location. Portland's City Hall is in Lownsdale and during the 1970s and 1980s the two-story boarding houses that lined the avenues between Lownsdale Park and the Willamette River were being torn down and replaced by office towers, new parks, and expensive apartment buildings. The eighteen-story Edith Green Wendell Wyatt Federal Building opened in 1975, separated from City Hall by a public park. The Justice Center opened next door in 1981. The redevelopment was driving property values up. Not only did adult bookstores in Lownsdale increasingly not fit into the sleek downtown but their owners could not afford to keep them open in their current locations. Old Town, just half a mile to the north was not experiencing redevelopment during that period. Instead it was continuing to lose population.

Seven years after *Henry v Oregon* the members of the Old Town/Chinatown Neighborhood Association made a decision that would solidify their neighborhood's relationship to adult entertainment. In September 1994, Stars Cabaret applied for a liquor license. The new strip club would be at the corner of West Burnside and Northwest Second Avenue. The social service community in Old Town voiced their strong objection to City Council. Deni Starr of the Council for Prostitution Alternatives called the club "covert prostitution" and asked Mayor Katz to "stop this exploitation and degradation of women."¹⁶⁰ In response to protest from social service agencies, the Portland City Council did refuse the license but Stars' owners appealed to the Oregon Liquor Control Commission (OLCC). The protests continued, now directed at the OLCC. Deborah Wood of Central City Concern wrote "I hope the OLCC will join the Portland City Commission

¹⁶⁰ Deni Starr, Council for Prostitution Alternatives to Mayor Vera Katz, 15 March 1995. Licenses, Portland Archives and Records Center.

in recognizing the needs of the Old Town Impact Area, and deny this license.”¹⁶¹ At issue was the impact of adult entertainment on the neighborhood population which contained numerous drug and alcohol rehab facilities. “Within six blocks of Stars, there are four units of transitional and permanent alcohol and drug free housing . . . The residents of these alcohol and drug free communities are participating in programs that are assisting them to turn their lives around, from drug addiction and drug and alcohol violence, to clean and sober lives of recovery. The addition of a nude nightclub, with its links to drug abuse, alcohol consumption, and prostitution will be a grave detriment to the lives of the men and women who live in clean and sober housing in the neighborhood.”¹⁶²

The Old Town/Chinatown Neighborhood Association, however, came out in favor of Stars Cabaret. In a letter the Association outlined their position. Although initially uncomfortable with the idea of another strip club in the neighborhood, board members had worked out what they thought was a good compromise with Stars’ owners that included: “1) active participation by Stars’ management in the Oldtown/Chinatown Neighborhood Association, 2) special attention to security procedures for employees and customers, 3) an employee training program about sexual harassment 4) an annual \$10,000 education fund for employees and another funded program to assist employs who seek help for drug and/or alcohol rehabilitation, 5) prohibition of drug-trafficking, weapons, prostitution and/or the promoting of prostitution inside or outside the

¹⁶¹ Deborah Wood, Central City Concern to Ms Katie Hilton of the Oregon Liquor Control Commission, 24 September 1994. Licenses, Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹⁶² Deborah Wood, Central City Concern to Mike Sanderson, Portland Bureau of Licenses, 28 September 1994. Licenses, Portland Archives and Records Center.

establishment, 6) maintenance of the sidewalk environment, 7) valet parking, and a number of other conditions.” They were an entertainment district and adult entertainment would help, not hurt, that. “Our neighborhood association agenda is, of course, to watch after the interests of a very diverse Old Town neighborhood, which is characteristically residential, commercial, and made up of a number of human service agencies. It is a neighborhood which also anticipates becoming a prominent night-life entertainment district in Portland.”¹⁶³

In the years since the Old Town neighborhood Association supported Stars Cabaret, the area’s reputation as the city’s night spot has increased. Nightclubs, strip clubs, restaurants, and bars share the neighborhood, attracting an overlapping customer base. As you will see in the next chapter, Old Town is increasingly home to many gay bars and clubs.

Even as Old Town’s position as Portland’s night spot increases, pressures from surrounding areas raise questions about the future of adult entertainment in the area. During the late 1980s and 1990s, large parts of inner Portland were redeveloped by city residents and newcomers taking advantage of supportive government programs. As gentrification spread through the Alphabet District down through the newly developed Pearl District, city officials began to eye Old Town as both a liability and an area with great potential. More recently residents of the Pearl have worked to make it a family-

¹⁶³ Richard Berg, Old Town Neighborhood Association to the Portland City Council from Richard Berg, Old Town Neighborhood Association, 24 August 1974. DUI/Prostitution Automobile Forfeiture 1987-1990, Portland Archives and Records Center.

friendly neighborhood. Children's clothing and toy stores are opening, the parks are filled with children and a new elementary school is planned for the area. Until now, Old Town and the Pearl District have been home to very few residents under the age of eighteen. With the increase in youth population there is a good chance there will be renewed resistance to adult entertainment.

Chapter 6: Prostitution, Land Use and Neighborhoods, 1980-2010

In September, 2007, Portland Mayor Tom Potter allowed the Prostitution Free Zone (PFZ) Ordinance to sunset. Explaining his decision, Potter cited a report that found racial bias in the enforcement of a related ordinance that designated areas of the city as “drug free zones.” Potter explained, “I have concluded that both programs are no longer serving their intended purpose and act only to suppress a serious community problem rather than solving it.” The decision ended a decade long experiment with using zoning to address the effects of street prostitution of urban neighborhoods. Civil rights advocates, who saw the PFZs as an unconstitutional assault on the rights of sex workers, supported Potter’s decision. Residents of the Montavilla neighborhood, however, were angry. Arrest records show that the prostitution market swiftly returned to the neighborhood. In response, Montavilla residents organized and lobbied to have the zone reinstated. To them, the decision to let the ordinance sunset was yet another example of the city’s lack of interest in, or support of, their neighborhood, which was widely believed to be neglected by city government. Their campaign drew considerable attention to questions about the extent to which individual neighborhoods should shoulder the burden of unwanted land uses and where the city’s responsibility lies in lessening the impact of such uses.

The ordinance that created the PFZs was signed into law by Mayor Vera Katz and the Portland City Council in 1995. It was modeled after the Drug Free Zones Ordinance which was adopted by Portland City Council in 1992. The ordinance identified three areas of the city as PFZs where people arrested for prostitution related crimes were

subject to additional penalties, including a ninety day period of exclusion from any public right of way or park in the designated PFZ.¹⁶⁴ A one year exclusion took effect the day after conviction. The ordinance was focused on acts of prostitution committed on the street, allowing an exception for crimes committed entirely within a private residence. Those convicted of prostitution related crimes were allowed to enter the PFZ for non-prostitution related activities, including attending school, meeting with an attorney, or accessing a social service agency. Of the three original zones, one was located in inner Northeast Portland and included the area along Union Avenue and the Rose Quarter, a second was in inner Southeast and Northeast Portland and included the area along East Burnside Street, and the third ran along Eighty Second Avenue from Southeast Crystal Springs Boulevard to Northeast Skidmore Street and then up Northeast Sandy Boulevard to Northeast Ninety Second Avenue. A fourth zone in the Alphabet District, was added later and included the area between Northwest Johnson, Northwest Fourteenth, Northwest Twenty Third, and West Burnside Streets. The East PFZ ran along Northeast and Southeast Eighty Second Avenue and up Northeast Sandy Boulevard.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁴ Within the zones, people arrested and cited to appear in court for the following crimes - attempted prostitution, prostitution, attempted promoting prostitution, promoting prostitution, attempted compelling prostitution, compelling prostitution, loitering to solicit prostitution and unlawful prostitution procurement activity.

¹⁶⁵The East Prostitution Free Zone Boundaries are as follows: Beginning at a point at the intersection of the west curb line of N.E. Eighty Second and the north curb line of N.E. Skidmore; thence westerly along the north curb line of N.E. Skidmore to a point 1000 feet from the point of beginning; thence southerly following a line that is at all times parallel to and 1000 feet from the west curb line of N.E. Eighty Second Avenue as it crosses E. Burnside Street and becomes S.E. Eighty Second Avenue; thence southerly following a line that is at all times parallel to and 1000 feet from the west curb line of S.E. Eighty Second Avenue to a point that is 1000 feet to the west of the southwest corner of S.E. Crystal Springs Boulevard; thence easterly along the south curb line of S.E. Crystal Springs Boulevard to a point that is 1000 feet to the east of the southeast corner of S.E. Crystal Springs Boulevard; thence northerly following a line that is at

The PFZs were the latest in two decades of policies developed and enacted by city leaders in an attempt to lessen the impact of prostitution on city neighborhoods. City Commissioners, police officers, and district attorneys are charged with creating and implementing policies to control prostitution. The policies and enforcement strategies change as society reevaluates questions about the cause and nature of prostitution: Should prostitutes be protected or punished? Is prostitution a law enforcement problem, a public health problem, or a land use problem?

Supporters of the PFZs saw them as a way to address quality of life concerns in city neighborhoods. Prostitution markets tend to cluster in specific areas and the negative effects of prostitution markets are thus borne disproportionately by certain neighborhoods and their residents. The PFZs would provide relief for the areas with the most active sex markets. The zones, however, drew fierce criticism from human rights activists, who argued the ordinance violated due process, equal rights protection, and freedom of travel. Advocates for sex workers agreed. They feared the PFZs would force sex workers to

all times parallel to and 1000 feet from the east curb line of S.E. Eighty Second Avenue as it crosses E. Burnside Street and becomes N.E. Eighty Second Avenue; thence northerly following a line that is at all times parallel to and 1000 feet from the east curb line of N.E. Eighty Second Avenue to a point that is 500 feet to the south of the south curb line of N.E. Sandy Boulevard; thence easterly following a line that is at all times parallel to and 500 feet from the south curb line of N.E. Sandy Boulevard until it intersects with the west curb line of N.E. 92nd Avenue; thence northerly along the west curb line of N.E. 92nd Avenue until it intersects with the north curb line of N.E. Sandy Boulevard; thence easterly along the north curb line of N.E. Sandy Boulevard to a point that is 200 feet to the east of the centerline of N.E. 92nd Avenue; thence southerly along a line that is at all times parallel to and 200 feet to the east from the centerline of N.E. 92nd Avenue to a point that is 500 feet from the south curb line of N.E. Sandy Boulevard; thence easterly following a line that is at all times parallel to and 500 feet from the south curb line of N.E. Sandy Boulevard to the east curb line of N.E. 122nd Avenue; thence northerly along the east curb line of N.E. 122nd Avenue to a point 500 feet north of the north curb line of N.E. Sandy Boulevard; thence westerly following a line that is at all times parallel to and 500 feet from the north curb line of N.E. Sandy Boulevard until it intersects with the west curb line of N.E. Eighty Second; thence southerly along the west curb line of N.E. Eighty Second to the point of beginning.

work in more dangerous locations. Furthermore, many sex workers, they argued, live in the neighborhoods where they work and the ordinance would allow police to harass workers while they were not working.

Similar to the battle over regulation of adult entertainment, the battle over prostitution was often fought in City Hall and the courts. During the 1980s and 1990s, the Portland City Council passed a number of ordinances aimed at stopping prostitution or lessening the effects on city neighborhoods. Ordinances were aimed at controlling the physical space of the street, the use of media, and property belonging to the customers of prostitutes. They were also aimed at behavior surrounding the crime of prostitution. Many of those ordinances were quickly ruled unconstitutional by state courts. As policy makers struggled to find legal and effective ways to address the problem, neighborhood residents organized to fight prostitution on their streets.

Working alone or in collaboration with police, residents of neighborhoods affected by prostitution lobbied City Hall for stricter enforcement of existing laws. They organized neighborhood watches, publicized the names of prostitutes and johns, and conducted outreach campaigns to provide support for sex workers.

a. Prostitution 1980 – 1995

During the 1970s, while adult entertainment businesses were opening in commercial centers throughout the city, the geography of prostitution was shifting east. For many years, prostitution in Portland centered on the Willamette River and the single men who lived and worked in riverfront districts. The decline of the lumber, shipping, and railroad industries combined with redevelopment in the city's downtown shifted the

geography of Portland's prostitution market east. The center of Portland's sex market moved across the Willamette River and took hold in inner North and Northeast neighborhoods, including King, Eliot, Boise, and Overlook.

In the early 1980s, the epicenter of Portland's street prostitution market was two and a half miles of Union Avenue (renamed Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd in 1989) between the Lloyd District and Ainsworth Avenue. The King, Boise and Elliot neighborhoods were traditionally black. American cities have a strong tradition of pushing vice into minority neighborhoods. The prostitution market was also expanding in size. Portlanders driving down Union Avenue were likely to see large numbers of women waiting to meet customers day and night. In 1983, nearly 2,000 people were arrested and charged with prostitution related crimes, the most of any year during the city's history.¹⁶⁶ The 1983 arrests represented an increase of twenty seven percent over 1982 arrest levels and an 830 percent increase from 1973. One Friday night around 10 pm while working as a Neighborhood Crime Prevention (NCP) worker, Ed Blackburn counted ninety prostitutes working on Northeast Union Avenue.¹⁶⁷ The prostitutes working along Union did not limit themselves to the street. They also worked in local motels and the Walnut Park Theater on Union Avenue. At the time the Walnut Park showed pornographic movies. Prostitutes would meet customers in the theater or in the alley behind the theater.

Union Avenue runs through the King, Boise, and Eliot neighborhoods in Northeast Portland. During the 1980s, this area was facing a combination of

¹⁶⁶ *Oregonian*, March 9, 1984.

¹⁶⁷ Ed Blackburn (Executive Director, Central City Concern), interviewed by the author, March 2011.

disinvestment, segregation, and crime which created the preconditions for a prostitution market. King, Boise, and Eliot are in Portland's Albina district. Between 1950 and 1980, the area lost 27,000 residents. In the 1980s, home values in the area were fifty-eight percent of the city's median. In 1988, the King and Boise neighborhoods made up one percent of the city's land area but contained twenty-six percent of its abandoned housing units. More than ten percent of single family homes in Boise, King, and Eliot were abandoned and many others were owned by absentee landlords. In 1989, just forty-four percent of homes in Albina were owner occupied. Local banks wouldn't lend to properties valued at less than \$40,000 which led to further disinvestment as predatory lenders took the place of the traditional banking industry. At the same time, crack cocaine took hold in the neighborhood. Gang members from Los Angeles moved into the neighborhood early in the decade, influencing an increase in local gang activity. In 1987 warfare broke out between the Bloods and Crips over the drug market.¹⁶⁸ Gang members also profited from prostitution, acting as pimps for local prostitutes.

Neighborhood residents, community activists, police, and city leaders attempted to address the prostitution through a number of policies and programs. The strategies they used addressed different aspects of prostitution, including its effects on sex workers and city neighborhoods. The goals of anti-prostitution efforts can be divided into four sometimes overlapping categories: punishing prostitutes, punishing pimps and johns, protecting neighborhoods, and protecting prostitutes. They included legal measures to make arrests easier and sentences longer, social measures to address the needs of women

¹⁶⁸ Gibson, K. 2007. Bleeding Albina: A history of community disinvestment, 1940-2000. *Transforming Anthropology* 15:1, 3-25.

working in prostitution, community outreach efforts to get business leaders involved, and spatial measures to designate areas as either for or not for prostitution.

As prostitution grew increasingly visible on the streets of North and Northeast Portland, police officers worked to arrest prostitutes and their customers. Arrests and convictions for prostitution were difficult to make, however, as police officers had to catch people in the act. In an effort to increase officers' ability to make arrests, the City Council tried criminalizing behavior activity associated with prostitution. An ordinance was introduced in the summer of 1984 to make "prostitution procurement activity," including loitering and cruising, illegal. Police officers would no longer have to witness an exchange of money before they could make an arrest. They could anticipate the act before it happened. Commissioner Mike Lindberg agreed with the intent behind the ordinance but felt it "is overbroad and likely to catch entirely innocent people with its net." Lindberg argued that by defining a "substantial step in furtherance of an act of prostitution" as "lingering near any street or public place, or repeatedly circulating an area in a motor vehicle." The ordinance was criminalizing "inherently innocent activities which any of us at one time or another has engaged in." The ordinance stated that such activities must be accompanied by the intent to solicit prostitution, but Commissioner Lindberg pointed out "intent is a state of mind that can easily be misinterpreted or even abused by law enforcement officials."¹⁶⁹ Even with Lindberg's objections, the ordinance ultimately passed. The ordinance might have made arrests easier but convictions were

¹⁶⁹ Memo from Commissioner Mike Lindberg to Mayor Frank Ivancie, Commissioner Charles Jordan, Commissioner Mildred Schwab, and Commissioner Margaret Strachan. "CC 1716 ." August 1, 1984. Council Ordinances 156367 Title 14, Public Peace, Safety and Morals of City Code to add a new provision regarding prostitution. Portland Archives and Records Center.

another matter. James Hennings of the Metropolitan Public Defenders office called the code “unconstitutional” and “absurd.” He added that finding it unconstitutional would be “like shooting fish in a barrel.”¹⁷⁰

Four years later, City Council once again moved to criminalize an activity associated with prostitution. In 1988, Portland enacted an anti-hitchhiking ordinance. Customers who stopped and picked up a prostitute could be cited for picking up a hitchhiker. The ordinance was protested by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and KBOO, the local community radio station. Opponents worried that the police might abuse the authority granted to them by the ordinance and harass innocent people.¹⁷¹ Others were opposed to the ordinance because it did not address the root cause of prostitution. “This measure is a mere band-aid approach to the social condition called prostitution,” Northeast Portland resident Lora Wilson wrote to Commissioner Mike Lindberg in March, 1988. “The hitchhiking ordinance will do little for prostitutes. All it will do is help the Mayor appear to be solving a problem that won’t go away.”¹⁷² Residents of neighborhoods hard hit by prostitution supported the ordinance. Michelann Orloff, President of the Eliot Neighborhood Association argued that neighborhood residents wanted to see johns and pimps penalized as well as prostitutes and the hitchhiking ordinance was a step in that direction.¹⁷³

¹⁷⁰ *Portland Observer*, August 8, 1984.

¹⁷¹ Hank Stratton, “Police Given Power to Curb Prostitution,” *Portland Skanner*, August 18, 1984.

¹⁷² Letter to Commissioner Mike Lindberg from Lora Wilson. March 23, 1988. Police Bureau General Correspondence. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹⁷³ “Prostitution Zone Proposed,” *Portland Observer*. August 8, 1984.

Tools designed to allow police officers to make more arrests were a start but prosecutors also wanted prostitutes and their customers to face longer jail sentences. The relatively short sentences meant prostitutes were back on the street days or even hours after being arrested. Mandatory sentences would serve as a deterrent while physically removing sex workers from the street. On July 13, 1983, the Portland City Council adopted ordinance 14.08.025 requiring mandatory fines and/or jail for repeat offenders. While the mandatory sentences, which would soon face constitutional challenges, would keep prostitutes and johns off the street for slightly longer than before, they caused problems and expenses for an already overburdened judicial system.¹⁷⁴

Mandatory sentences could not be enforced due to the city jail's limited capacity. Ronald Still, Chief of Portland Police, made the case for additional jail space in a March, 1984 piece in the Oregonian. "Defendants charged with prostitution related offenses are brought to the Justice Center and go through the booking process. But because of the lack of jail space, they usually do not stay long and are back on the street without having to post bail." Chief Still argued that the city needed to address the root cause of prostitution. "The pursuit of meaningful rehabilitation programs should and must be constantly in the mind of sentencing judges. Simply stated, the courts do not have rehabilitation programs and jail space to sentence convicted prostitutes. As a result, the Police Bureau arrests the same person again and again while those who profit laugh at the justice system and the

¹⁷⁴ Memo to All RU Commanders from Sgt Dave Kinnaman, Legal Advisor "New City Prostitution Ordinances: 14.36.065, Prostitution Prohibited and 14.08.025, Mandatory Sentencing." August 11, 1983. Police 47 Prostitution.. Portland Archives and Records Center.

public.” He gave the example of one woman who had been arrested for prostitution seventeen times but never incarcerated.¹⁷⁵

Chief Still’s support for rehabilitation programs reflected a growing movement that sought to help, rather than punish, prostitutes. There was an increased focus on arresting and punishing johns and pimps and a growing belief that prostitution was the result of social and economic problems including poor education, domestic violence, and drug and alcohol addiction. “I’m not going to say that arresting doesn’t do any good,” explained Blackburn, “but it can also drive them further in.”¹⁷⁶ Criminal histories, court fees, and fines added to the problems which led women into prostitution to begin with and made it more difficult for them to find different work.

Social service providers and sex worker advocates were working to show that prostitution was not a victimless crime. Prostitutes faced violence from customers and pimps. In 1979, Portland City Commissioner Charles Jordan testified on behalf of Oregon Senate Bill 483. “We cannot get convictions of pimps until someone is physically assaulted. In Portland, we have had fifteen homicides in the past five years where prostitutes have been murdered. In every single case the Police Bureau can tie these murders to the prostitutes trying to leave their pimps or trying not to get involved with pimps.”¹⁷⁷

¹⁷⁵ *Oregonian*, March 9, 1984.

¹⁷⁶ Ed Blackburn (Executive Director, Central City Concern), interviewed by the author, March 2011.

¹⁷⁷ Speech to State Legislature. March 13, 1979. Jordan – Personal Correspondence. Portland Archives and Records Center.

Others sought to help the prostitutes by providing counseling, and other support services to enable them to leave prostitution. A memo from Portland City Commissioner Margaret Strachan's office outlines the origins of one of the programs. At the hearing for the mandatory sentences ordinance, there was discussion about the need for alternative opportunities for prostitutes, which led to meetings between representatives from Commissioner Strachan, County Commissioner Gladys McCoy, and the Department of Justice Services.¹⁷⁸ In November, the group presented their ideas to a group of social service providers and sex worker advocates and from that meeting came the Council for Prostitution Alternatives (CPA). Funded by the Portland City Council, the CPA would coordinate resources, initiate community education projects, and facilitate neighborhood discussions. A \$60,000 services fund available for job training, education, counseling, child care, housing, legal advice, and medical care. The CPA acted as an umbrella group coordinating the work of more than twenty organizations including Our New Beginnings, Friends of Sisters on the Street, Friendship Unlimited, Project Luck, and Options. Our New Beginnings provided resources for ex-offenders including counseling, job development, housing, clothes, transportation, and survival workshops. Friends of Sisters of the Street was a voluntary, church sponsored group which works with prostitutes to help them leave prostitution. Friendship Unlimited is a shelter for women involved with prostitution and drug abuse. Project Luck provided support services to youth involved in

¹⁷⁸ Memo to Mayor Frank Ivancie, Commissioner Charles Jordan, Commissioner Mike Lindberg, and Commissioner Mildred Schwab from Commissioner Strachan's office. September 7, 1983. Prostitution 1981-1982. Portland Archives and Records Center.

prostitution. Options, operated by Juvenile Court, provides career training, counseling, group activities, and education to juvenile female prostitutes.¹⁷⁹

The Council for Prostitution Alternatives had widespread support from the community. Portland City Council received letters of support from the Portland City Club, Eliot Neighborhood Development Association, the King Neighborhood Association, Temple Baptist Church, the Portland Women's Crisis Line, the William Temple House, and Representative Margaret Carter of the Oregon House.

One major obstacle for many women was the shortage of drug and alcohol treatment programs. "The way drug and alcohol programs were funded [in the 1980s] created a huge barrier in dealing with prostitution, recalls Ed Blackburn" There were some programs that used methadone to treat heroin addiction, but nothing for cocaine or crack. The number one thing needed was detox and treatment for drug addiction." Multnomah County was inexperienced in drug detox and all of their funding went to alcohol treatment. Central City Concern advocated for increased funding for drug detox and was able to get some of the beds in Hooper dedicated to drug detox and treatment. Drug treatment alone though wasn't enough. "Any drug treatment that treats women will have women who were involved in prostitution," explains Blackburn. For those programs to be effective, however, they need to join with mental health providers to treat Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and provide trauma counseling. Women leaving prostitution also need supportive housing, health care, cognitive behavioral therapy, and a source of

¹⁷⁹ Memo to Mayor Frank Ivancie, Commissioner Charles Jordan, Commissioner Mike Lindberg, Commissioner Mildred Schwab from Commissioner Margaret D Strachan "Options to Prostitution," September 7, 1983. Police Memos. 1983. Portland Archives and Records Center.

legal income, things that would hopefully be available through the organizations funded by the Council for Prostitution Alternatives. “Peer support is incredibly important. They are leaving relationships that are dysfunctional as we see them but did provide emotional life,” explains Blackburn. “They need someone who was there, non judgmental, like an AA sponsor.”¹⁸⁰

Community members worked to actively engage sex workers and provide them support. “There were really some brave people around me who wanted to save their neighborhood. What was different there is that they wanted to help the girls,” Reverend Wirt recalls. “People used to go down the street and just give the girls food. People got to know the girls by name. We wondered when someone disappeared.” During the 1980s, Wirt was minister of the Mallory Avenue Christian Church on Northeast Alberta Street, just two blocks from the Walnut Park Theater. The church organized activities with church members and women on the waiting list for the Rose, a transitional housing space operated by the Council for Prostitution Alternatives (CPA). Designed to provide “normal socializing” the events, included baking cookies, making Christmas cards and putting together mass mailing for the church. There was “no agenda other than whatever task we were doing.” One of the reasons that was possible is that many of the prostitutes were local. Whether they were born and raised in Northeast Portland or moved in from another part of the region, once they were in Northeast they often lived and worked in the same area. Prostitution in Portland, Wirt explained, “used to be more mom and pop, just like grocery stores. I won’t say it was more innocent then, because it wasn’t, but it is

¹⁸⁰ Ed Blackburn (Executive Director, Central City Concern), interviewed by the author, March 2011.

more mechanized now.”¹⁸¹ Ed Blackburn agreed: “Street prostitution was more locally based back then.”¹⁸²

Frustrated by what they saw as a lack of involvement from City Hall and the police, neighborhood residents took it upon themselves to fight prostitution. Reverend Wirt, tells the story of being stopped at a light when “I watched somebody behind me stop and a young girl got in [to the car]. I wrote down his license number and showed it to him [in the rear view mirror].” Wirt then used the license number to track down the man’s address where she sent a postcard asking him to refrain from picking up prostitutes in Northeast Portland. “That’s why some of us would do those crazy things like write down license plates; we didn’t know how to make it stop.”¹⁸³ Wirt may have been acting on her own but similar techniques were used by the Portland Police and the local print media. In 1983 the Portland Police distributed Xeroxed sheets of paper with lists of prostitution arrests made each week in North and Northeast Portland. The information included the name and age of the person arrested the location of the arrest and the crime for which the person was arrested. The sheet had an image of a woman exiting a car at the top.¹⁸⁴ In 1987, the Portland Skanner published lists of names of people arrested for crimes related to prostitution. At one point Mayor Bud Clark announced his proposal to

¹⁸¹ Cathy Myers Wirt (Christian Church Regional Minister), interviewed by the author, April 2011.

¹⁸² Ed Blackburn (Executive Director, Central City Concern), interviewed by the author, March 2011.

¹⁸³ Cathy Myers Wirt (Christian Church Regional Minister), interviewed by the author, April 2011.

¹⁸⁴ Prostitution Arrests. August 31-September 7, 1983. Prostitution 1981-1982. Portland Archives and Records Center.

read the names of people arrested for prostitution at City Council meetings but the plan was never realized.¹⁸⁵

Neighborhood residents took advantage of the existing neighborhood association structure, organizing neighborhood watch groups and petitioning the police to increase local patrols. They also worked to engage local business owners in the fight against prostitution. In 1984 the East Precinct Citizen Advisory Board held meetings to involve businesses on Union Avenue. Gingerbread Book House, Architects Forum, and the management of Sunshine Plaza all participated in meetings “plan to focus on developing “pride in the Union Avenue Corridor” this would be done through neighborhood association, police business and city government, special interest groups and religious leaders.”¹⁸⁶

Neighborhood associations had a new ally in Neighborhoods Against Crime. Ed Blackburn was hired in 1986 to work as part of the city wide Neighborhoods Against Crime program, which was active in the fight against the Walnut Park Theater and other adult businesses. When he started in inner Northeast and North Portland the existing crime prevention programs could be described as “basically McGruff the Crime Dog. Put your name on your bicycle and teach kids basic safety.”¹⁸⁷ Neighborhoods Against Crime

¹⁸⁵ Johns list. 1987. Prostitution 1989-91. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹⁸⁶ Letter to Proprietors of Union Square, Peggy Russ-Williams - Gingerbread Book House, Howard Glazer AIA - the Architects Forum, Capt. Penny Harrington - East Precinct, Capt. Jim Davis - North Precinct Mary Lennox - Chairman of Crime Prevention of Eliot, Management of Sunshine Pizza from OE Ollie Smith, Jr., Chairman of East Precinct Citizens Advisory Board “November 28, 1984 meeting,” December 2, 1984. Eliot Neighborhood Association. Portland Archive and Records Center.

¹⁸⁷ Ed Blackburn (Executive Director, Central City Concern), interviewed by the author, March 2011.

was unique in that it was a government funded anti-crime program that was not part of a law enforcement agency. NAC was part of the Office of Neighborhood Association. In a May 1987 memo to Commissioner Dick Bogle, NAC program manager Ed Blackburn explained, “Traditional programs often start with the following question: ‘How can I keep criminals on the street, at the park, in the neighborhood, out of my house?’ While we try to answer the question we ask another: ‘How can citizens organize together, to get back their streets, their parks, their neighborhoods?’”¹⁸⁸ NAC worked with Overlook block Captain Evelyn Early to organize a series of community meetings and outreach efforts. They involved local businesses in mediation and signed written agreements with businesses including the Plaid Pantry, Boomtown USA, and local motels. In May 1985, Sherry Sylvester, Program Manager, Neighborhood Crime Prevention program, was concerned that citizens “do not have enough information about the City’s strategies regarding prostitution. Misinformation and a lack of direction on this issue could result in a number of neighborhood groups making plans that go in a variety of direction and have little chance for success.” Sylvester met with Neighborhood Association to fill them in.¹⁸⁹

A half-mile from Union Avenue, Interstate Avenue runs north south through North Portland. Before the Interstate Five was opened in 1964, Interstate Avenue was the main thoroughfare connecting central Portland with Vancouver, WA. Motels build in the two decades after World War II line the street. While both Union and Interstate Avenues

¹⁸⁸ Memo to Commissioner Dick Bogle from Ed Blackburn, Director Neighborhoods Against Crime. October 20, 1987. A Discussion of Neighborhood Crime Prevention Program 1987. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹⁸⁹ Neighborhood Association 1985. Portland Records and Archives Center.

were home to thriving prostitution markets, there were differences in the prostitution markets and the way neighborhoods and police addressed the problems. The activity on Interstate, explains Blackburn, was part of a “holistic crime organization.”¹⁹⁰ Pimps would drop women off and go into the motels. Neighborhood kids would go in and out of the hotels, bringing in stolen property and leaving with drugs. Motels across the city were being drawn into the fight against prostitution and pornography by neighborhood Associations, police, and Neighborhoods Against Crime When the King’s Row Motel 3700 Northeast Eighty-Second Avenue began advertising the availability of adult movies in its rooms, it attracted the attention of Reverend Donald Poundstone of the First Orthodox Presbyterian Church. Poundstone became involved in the fight to regulate adult uses several years earlier when an adult bookstore opened next to his church. In June 1982, he wrote to Mayor Ivancie urging the city to regulate the Kings Row Motel which he called “a hotbed of prostitution” and “a porno theater with beds.”¹⁹¹ Mayor Ivancie responded “the movies are considered to be free speech protected by the Oregon and US Constitutions” and there was nothing the city could do to prevent motels from airing them.¹⁹² Prostitution, however, was another matter. Neighborhood groups and city police worked to involve motel owners in their anti-prostitution campaigns.

¹⁹⁰ Ed Blackburn (Executive Director, Central City Concern), interviewed by the author, March 2011.

¹⁹¹ Letter to Mayor Ivancie from Rev. Donald Poundstone. June 3, 1982. MYC Juvenile Justice Subcommittee Background Data. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹⁹² Letter to Reverend Donald Poundstone from Mayor Frank Ivancie June, 1982. MYC Juvenile Justice Subcommittee Background Data 1981. Portland Archives and Records Center.

An article in the Portland Observer on July 4, 1984 “Neighborhood residents fight to have the San Rafael Fantasy Motel change its orientation from prostitution to a family business.” The San Rafael, located in North Portland, was used by prostitutes since its construction the 1960s. The police worked with motel owners, encouraging them to adopt new policies to fight crime. In 1995, ten Interstate Avenue motels agreed to rules, including mandatory ID for guests.¹⁹³

b. Spatial Strategies

Some of the strategies used to fight the effects of prostitution in city neighborhoods focused on the control of urban space rather than individual actions. In May 1983, billboards began to appear in some close in Northeast neighborhoods warning potential customers not to hire prostitutes. The program was initiated by Mildred Schwab, Commissioner of Public Safety. Although frustrated over the prostitution markets operating openly in the area, neighborhood residents did not think the billboards were the right strategy. The billboards were not well received and neighborhood residents lobbied the City Council to have them removed. In a June 29, 1983 letter to Schwab, Margaret Strachan, Commissioner of Public Utilities, wrote “I have recently visited several Neighborhood Associations and business groups in Northeast Portland who have expressed negative feeling regarding the prostitution warning signs in the area (particularly those on Union Avenue). The general sentiment was that the signs projected

¹⁹³ Erin Hoover, “New Hope for Interstate Avenue,” *Oregonian*, November 8, 1995.

a negative image of the neighborhood.”¹⁹⁴ Living in a neighborhood overrun with crime and prostitution was one thing, having the city loudly and publicly proclaim it was another. In a memo to Schwab, Commissioner Charles Jordan, Commissioner of Public Affairs explained that the intentions behind the billboard campaign were good but there was no way to measure their effectiveness in reducing prostitution. What they could establish was “the message that comes across to the citizens and business people with whom we associate . . . The signs tell them that vice runs rampant on our streets.” Jordan argued the point had been made and the billboards should be taken down, “before thousands of Rose Festival visitors come to town and get the wrong idea about our city.”¹⁹⁵ His concerns that the billboards were more effective in scaring off tourists than johns were not unfounded. In a letter to Commissioner Schwab dated June 10, 1983, the writer warns the commissioner of her plans to boycott the Rose Festival so as not to expose her children to the billboards.¹⁹⁶ The billboards came down after three months.

An ordinance passed in 1987 targeted individual buildings “used for certain illegal conduct involving controlled substances, gambling and prostitution to be specified crime property,” The buildings could then be closed for up to one year.¹⁹⁷ Local residents were no doubt relieved to see the closure of drug houses, but for neighborhoods

¹⁹⁴ Memo from Margaret Strachan, Commissioner of Public Utilities to Mildred Schwab, Commissioner of Public Safety. “Prostitution Billboards” June, 1983. Prostitution 1981-1982. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹⁹⁵ Memo from Commissioner Charles Jordan to Commissioner Schwab. June, 1983. MYC Juvenile Justice Subcommittee Background Data 1981. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹⁹⁶ Letter to Commissioner Schwab. June 1983. MYC Juvenile Justice Subcommittee Background Data 1981. Portland Archives and Records Center.

¹⁹⁷ Ordinance 159640. May 7, 1987. Portland Archives and Records Center.

already burdened by large amounts of empty houses, the addition of more empty houses was not a sign of progress. Like the anti-prostitution billboards, the empty houses marked King, Eliot, and Boise as economically depressed and crime ridden.

Most of the focus was on ways to reduce or eliminate prostitution. On August 31, 1984, however, the Portland City Club released a report calling for a radically different approach – the legalization of prostitution in specific areas. The report, which was not unanimously supported by all members of the organization, was the result of a ten month study of street prostitution. “The six-member committee’s majority concluded that existing city policy to fight prostitution is a failure and the money being spent on it, more than \$700,000 per year, is a waste. The committee found that the result of enforcement activities is that female sellers merely rotate among several areas of the city after spending less than a day in the downtown detention center.”¹⁹⁸

Under their proposal, prostitution would be banned from all areas of the city with residential or commercial zoning, including areas with schools, churches, or any other incompatible uses. Prostitution has always existed, they argued and while no one approves of it, the current system was wasteful and ineffective. When prostitutes were legally allowed to work freely they would be safer. Pimps would be less necessary. No longer criminalized themselves prostitutes would be able to report assaults or other crimes to the police. The health of prostitutes and by extension the public would be easier to regulate. No longer burdened with enforcement and incarceration the city would save

¹⁹⁸ *The Skanner*, August 22, 1984.

substantial amounts of money. Those funds, or portions of them, could be used to fund programs for prostitutes looking to leave the business.¹⁹⁹

Under the City Club's recommendation, citizens would be able to use zoning to control prostitution and its visible effects on residential and commercial neighborhoods. "In arguing for legalization, the majority predicted the benefits would include lower enforcement costs, possible revenue from taxation, reduced likelihood of corruption, possible reduction in the role of pimps, enhanced legal rights for participants subjected to abuse, and an end to the stigma of a permanent record for prostitutes."²⁰⁰

The Portland Business Journal came out in favor of the City Club's report. In a March 1984 editorial it called the proposal a "bold view." The new approach was a "valuable service" to the community. "Simply calling for more vigorous enforcement of existing laws, or even more equal enforcement, is not likely to be more than a temporary palliative. The City Club's report does not view prostitution as a benign or morally neutral practice. It is inherently degrading, a sad blot on any society. But it is also ubiquitous as it has been for centuries. So it seems sensible to try to regulate it, just as we do with other distasteful activities."²⁰¹ Others were less willing or able to support the report.

The Portland City Council discussed the City Club Report at an October 1984 meeting. They agreed with the report authors that prostitution must be removed from

¹⁹⁹ City Club of Portland Bulletin. Adult Prostitution in the City of Portland. 1984. www.pdxcityclub.org/system/files/reports/Prostitution_1984.pdf

²⁰⁰ *The Skanner*, August 22, 1984.

²⁰¹ "City Club group takes bold prostitution view," *Portland Business Journal*, August 27, 1984.

residential neighborhoods, that enforcement of any laws regarding prostitution needed to be more equitably enforced, that there should be alternatives for prostitutes interested in leaving prostitution and that prostitution is the “most degrading” to sellers, whether they are male or female. While the City Club recommendations provided possible solutions to some of their concerns it also raised concerns. What would the effect of legalizations be on Portland’s image and business climate? What about the political ramifications of supporting legalization?

After the Council, meeting the City Club formed a task force to promote community control of adult prostitution. In October 1984, they began meeting with neighborhood groups, law enforcement, social service providers, local and state government, and urban planners. Task force members also spoke at college, community, religious, and professional groups. In an open letter to the community on March 19, 1985, City Club President Harry Demorest explained “We are encouraging continuation of the dialogue begun last August with the publication of the report, to explore ways in which we can best serve Portland in addressing the persistent problem of prostitution on its streets.” They also wrote a law review article and submitted the proposal to the office of legislative Counsel in Salem for modification to conform to Oregon law and the specific recommendations of the Club’s Report.²⁰²

²⁰² Letter from Harry Demost, City Club President to All Concerned Citizens. Prostitution. March 15, 1985. Portland Archives and Records Center

The idea was not unprecedented. Cities across the country experimented with unofficial red light districts during the early twentieth century.²⁰³ Portland police enforced an unofficial red light district in the North End (the area now known as Old Town and the Pearl) between 1890 and 1907. Official and unofficial red light districts exist in other countries. In Portland, as recently as 1976, Planning Director Don Mazziotti had looked into and ultimately dismissed the idea of creating a zone where adult entertainment would be legal, modeled after Boston's Combat zone.

The City Club report caused an outpouring of criticism and never had a realistic chance of being implemented. Reverend Wirt and the neighborhood activists she worked with thought legalization would legitimize prostitution and undo the work they'd done around victim's rights. Others agreed with the City Council and worried about the impact of prostitution on the city's image. In an August 1984 letter to the editor published in Willamette Week, Beaverton resident and City Club member Henry Kane asked "Up to now Portland had been known as the City of Roses. Does Portland wish to be known as the City of Whores?" The City Club was trying to reduce the impact of prostitution on certain neighborhoods but ultimately whatever area was chosen under their proposal would bear the burden of the city's entire prostitution market. Even if it was limited to a non residential neighborhoods, the business owners and workers in that neighborhood would be impacted. Henry Kane recommended "if the proposal becomes law, the City Club should send its membership list to the Portland City Council with the

²⁰³ Shumsky, N. 1986. Tactic acceptance: Respectable Americans and segregated prostitution, 1870-1910. *Journal of Social History* 19 (4): 665-679.

recommendation that “combat zones” be located where most City Club members live – upper class neighborhoods.”²⁰⁴²⁰⁵

Throughout the 1980s, city leaders, police, neighborhood groups, social service providers, and sex worker advocates tried a number of strategies to combat the effects of prostitution on city neighborhoods and sex workers. Some of the strategies were designed to punish or humiliate johns by publicizing their names, confiscating their property, or giving them large fines. Others were aimed at the prostitutes themselves, either to punish them with fines and jail time or to help them by providing greater protection from johns and pimps or by providing the tools they needed to leave prostitution. The third type of strategy was directed not at the people who participated in sex markets, either as sellers or customers, but at the physical spaces where they commercial sex trade took place. Whether the intent behind the strategy was to clear a particular neighborhood of prostitution or to designate a space specifically for a sex market to concentrate, these

²⁰⁴ Letter to the Editor of *Willamette Week* from Henry Kane. *Willamette Week*. September 10, 1984.

²⁰⁵ During the spring of 1985, the City Club was not the only taskforce reaching out to Portlanders about prostitution. The Portland Police formed their own taskforce to work with neighborhood groups, business owners, and concerned citizens interested in developing a plan to combat street prostitution during the upcoming summer months. The taskforce was concerned that the publicity over the City Club Report would draw more prostitution to the city. “Recent publicized reports and surveys that entertain the notion of legalized prostitution in Portland have spread the message throughout prostitution circles that Portland is a ‘pushover.’” The taskforce unanimously opposed legalization or decriminalization of prostitution. They argue that supporters of legalization were naïve and to “invite pimping, additional narcotics activity, venereal disease, and organized crime to our city is absurd.” The task force recommended the Mayor, City Council, and Chief of Police use the news media to make a public statement against the legalization or decriminalization of prostitution in Portland. They also recommended several techniques for discouraging customers from hiring prostitutes including sending letters to the registered owner of vehicles occupied by males making contact with known prostitutes in high vice areas, publishing the names of men arrested for hiring a prostitute in local newspapers, and asking prosecutors to recommend large fines, community service for men convicted of prostitution procurement and related charges. Finally, the taskforce recommended that all police enforcement efforts must be consistent, continuous, and conducted on a citywide basis to avoid relocation of prostitutes from one (precinct) to another.²⁰⁵

strategies were focused on changing the connection between physical spaces and prostitution. In the 1990s, the most dramatic spatial strategy was implemented, leading to a fight that pitted individual rights against community wants and neighborhood residents against City Hall.

Table 5: Prostitution Ordinances passed by Portland City Council, 1983-2008

Ordinance	Date	Description
154832	7/13/1983	Mandatory Sentences for “various acts of sexual conduct for a fee” Notwithstanding that the maximum possible penalty, as noted in Section 14.08.020 for each conviction of the following listed provisions of this Case is a fine of not more than five hundred (500) dollars, or imprisonment for a period not exceeding six (6) months, or both, each and every violation of the following sections shall be punished, at a minimum three hundred (300) dollars for the first such violation, not less than seven (7) days imprisonment and a give hundred (500) dollar fine for the second such violation, or not less than thirty (30) days imprisonment and a give hundred (500) dollar fine for the third, and each subsequent, violation that occur(s) within
156276	7/11/1984	Transfer appropriations within the General Fund and the Bureau of Human Resources in the amount of \$96,000 to fund a coordinator for a Council on Prostitution Alternatives and a service fund to meet the needs of persons who want to leave prostitution*
156367	8/2/1984	Amend Title 14, Public Peace, Safety and Morals, of the City Code of Portland by enacting a new provision, as part of Chapter 14.24, prohibiting prostitution procurement activities: amend Section 14.24.050, Loitering to solicit prostitution, for clarification purposes; amend Section 14.08.025, Mandatory minimum penalties for violation of certain provisions of this Code
159640	5/7/1987	Create a new Chapter, 14.80, which declares structures used for certain illegal conduct involving controlled substances, gambling and prostitution to be specified crime property and allow for their closure for a period of up to one (1) year, define terms, allow for the imposition of civil penalties against the owners thereof, set up a procedure for the implementation of these regulations, set out the respective burdens of proof (640)
169247	8/30/1995	Add new Chapter 14.150 to Title 14 of the City Code that allows for the use of 90-day and one year exclusions in designated prostitution-free zones in the City, establishes procedures and lists initial prostitution-free zones (Ordinance; add Chapter 14.150)**
176442	5/2/2002	Allow the towing and impoundment of vehicles used in the commission of prostitution or drug related crimes and declaring a nuisance (Ordinance; amend City Code Chapter 16.30.220)

Note:* Ordinance 152676 authorized the creation of and initially funded the Council for Prostitution Alternatives. Between 7/11/1984 and 8/9/1995, thirty-nine additional ordinances were passed funding the organization and related organizations through the Council for Prostitution Alternatives.

**Ordinance 169247 authorized the creation of the first Prostitution Free Zones. Between 8/20/1995 and 4/11/2007, ten additional ordinances were passed concerning the Prostitution Free Zones. The additional ordinances were a combination of renewals of the original ordinance and changes to the original ordinance, including the addition of new zones.

c. Prostitution Free Zones

In 1995, the City of Portland tried a new approach to anti-prostitution policy when it instated an exclusionary zoning initiative designed to combat prostitution in three areas of the city. The Prostitution-Free Zones (PFZ) addressed the issue of prostitution in terms of geography. When the PFZs were designated, soliciting for and procurement of prostitution had long been illegal in Oregon. The PFZs designated spaces where additional criminal penalties were imposed on people who committed certain crimes. “The ordinances,” explained the *Oregonian*, “do not focus on the person, but on a geographic area . . . Their purpose is not retribution or deterrence, which are the typical goals of punishment. Instead the ordinances try to fix neighborhood crime problems.”²⁰⁶ The new plan went against recommendations of the City Club, moving even further from the legalization of prostitution. It also went against recommendations of the Police Bureau Task Force for enforcement efforts that were “consistent, continuous, and conducted on a citywide basis.” Instead, the new Ordinance designated areas of the city for special attention and increased enforcement measures. Advocates of the new ordinance saw it as a way to lessen the effects of prostitution on areas that were disproportionately burdened by street prostitution markets. Opponents, however, worried that the Ordinance gave too much power to the police and jeopardized individual rights.

Prostitution Free Zones were modeled after the Drug Free Zones Portland created in 1992, but in many ways they built on anti-prostitution policies used in Portland during the 1980s. Like Ordinance 156367, that allowed the police to arrest people for

²⁰⁶ *The Oregonian*, March 27, 1997.

“prostitution procurement activity,” the PFZs expanded the ability of police to make arrests. The PFZ were also similar to anti-prostitution billboards and community policing efforts in that they targeted crimes in specific neighborhoods. The PFZs, however, were the first time spatial boundaries were explicitly written into the city’s anti-prostitution policy.

When the Portland City Council passed Ordinance 169247 in August 1995, it designated three Prostitution Free Zones. The number of zones and the exact location of the zones were not entirely consistent over the thirteen years the Ordinance was in place. Anticipating the displacement of prostitution markets, the City Council required that the Ordinance be renewed every one to three years. Adjustments could then be made, either moving PFZ boundaries to include new prostitution markets or decommissioning zones where prostitution markets had been closed.²⁰⁷

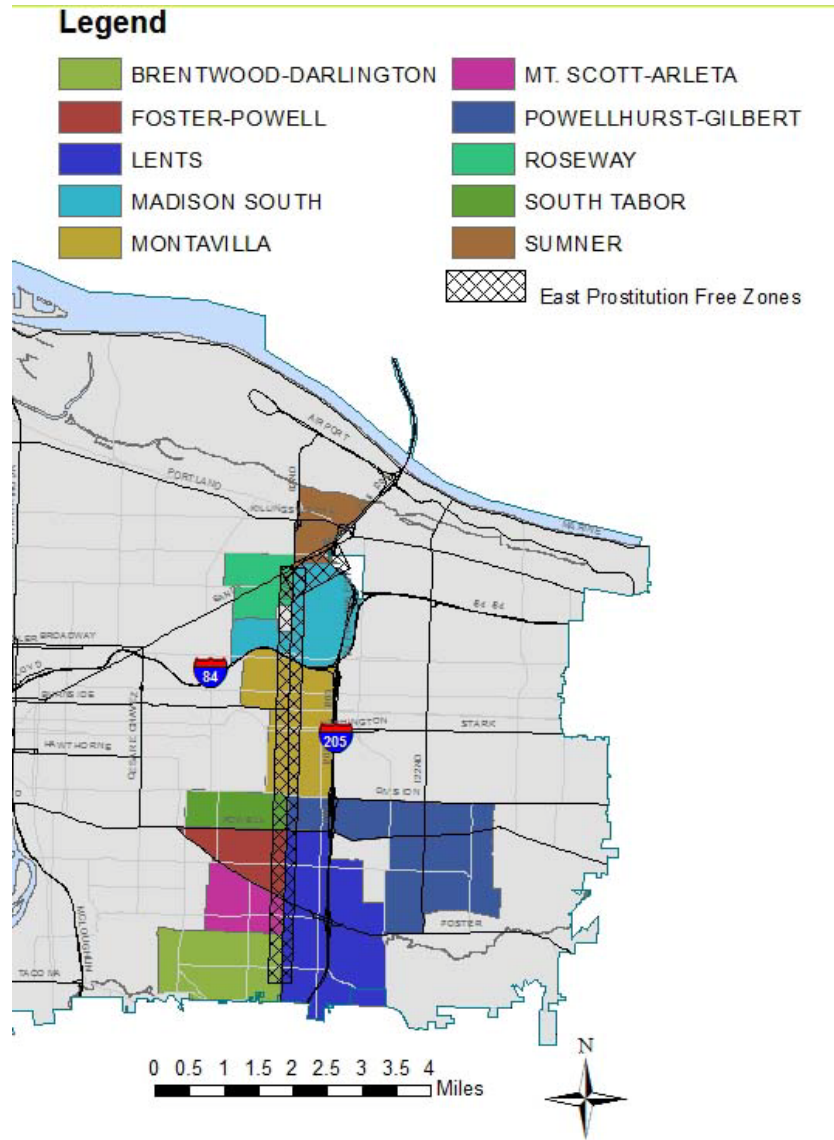
While PFZs in inner Northeast and Northwest Portland were subject to changing boundaries, and even early elimination, the East Prostitution Free Zone, which ran along Eighty Second Avenue from Southeast Crystal Springs Boulevard to Northeast Skidmore Street and up Northeast Sandy Boulevard to Northeast Ninety Second Avenue, was included the entire time and its boundaries were unchanged. The Eighty Second Avenue PFZ passed through ten neighborhoods: Brentwood-Darlington, Foster-Powell, Lents, Madison South, Montavilla, Mt. Scott-Arleta, Powellhurst-Gilbert, Roseway, South Taber, and Sumner. Montavilla residents were the most vocal in supporting the PFZ. Bordered by Southeast Division, Interstate 84, Interstate 205, and Northeast Sixty Eighth

²⁰⁷ Memo to Vera Katz from Debbie Galardi, April 10, 1996 Re: Mayor’s Issue Forum Prostitution Free Zones. 1434 Prostitution Free Zone. Portland Archives and Records Center.

Avenue the Montavilla neighborhood occupies 1,400 square acres of land in Northeast and Southeast Portland. The neighborhood is mostly residential, with modest single family homes lining wide streets. The area includes several commercial corridors, the most prominent being Eighty Second Avenue which runs north and south through the neighborhood's core. Distinct amongst Portland's commercial corridors for both its length and character, Eighty Second Avenue is home to a mix of big box stores, large grocery stores, discount furniture and clothing stores, and ethnic restaurants and markets. Several taquerias sit amid Chinese, Vietnamese, and Thai eateries and grocery stores, reflecting a more diverse population than exists in other parts of the city. Businesses catering to the area's immigrant population also include medical clinics, social service agencies, and immigration lawyers. There are also a number of car dealers, auto parts stores and service stations.

By the early 1990s, Eighty Second Avenue was also home to an increasingly visible street prostitution market. Neighbors increasingly complained of women openly soliciting on the street, of men approaching women and girls looking for sex and sexual exchanges happening in parked cars and in alleys in residential areas. Eighty Second Avenue is also home to a number of businesses linked to the sex industry, including motels, strip clubs, lingerie modeling studios, and hot tub rentals.

Figure 14: East Portland Prostitution Free Zone



Source: Ordinance 159640. Portland Records and Archives Center.

The prostitution market on Northeast and Southeast Eighty Second Avenue has been shaped by a number of factors, including public policy, economic factors, and the actions of neighborhood residents. Policies that addressed the effects of prostitution in one specific location but did not focus on the city as a whole, pushed prostitution from

other neighborhoods east to Eighty Second Avenue. During the 1980s, when the city's most visible street prostitution market was on Union and Interstate Avenues in North and Northeast Portland, law enforcement efforts focused on those neighborhoods. By the 1990s, two things were changing those areas; one was a decade of concentrated anti-prostitution policy and policing. The other, and perhaps more significant, change in King, Eliot, and Boise was gentrification. There was a renewed interest in the close in neighborhoods with their affordable housing stock and close proximity to downtown. As white middle-class families began to buy houses and open businesses in inner North and Northeast Portland, the city started updating neglected infrastructure, installing new bus stops and public art. Long absent, traditional lenders brought an influx of capital to the neighborhood. As in many American cities, poverty in Portland was moving from the core to the periphery. Until the early 1980s, Eighty Second Avenue was the periphery. Before the large scale annexation of unincorporated areas of Multnomah County between 1983 and 1998, the eastern boundary of Portland ran along Eighty Second and Ninety Second Avenues. Lents and Montavilla were annexed early in the twentieth century, but Powellhurst-Hilbert were not annexed until the 1990s.²⁰⁸

The physical design of the street system and urban planning and design codes helped to shape a physical location particularly suited for a prostitution market created a space for the market. The failure of city officials to invest in the area in ways that would combat prostitution allowed it to thrive.

²⁰⁸ East Portland Historical Overview and Historic Preservation Study, March 2009. Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

A 2009 report by the Eighty Second Avenue Prostitution Advisory Council outlines aspects of Eighty Second Avenue which make it particularly suited for a street prostitution market place. The report provides insight into the way a variety of seemingly unrelated factors came together to create a physical location particularly suited for a sex market. 1) *Near major thoroughfares: Less than one mile away from Interstate 205, connects directly to Portland International Airport.* In this way, Eighty Second Avenue is similar to Overlook, King, Boise, and Eliot, which are all easily accessible from Interstate 5. Interstate 405, which increases accessibility to those neighborhoods from the West side of the Willamette River, was completed in the mid 1970s, when the prostitution market was shifting from downtown to inner Northeast. Those neighborhoods are also easily accessible from the Portland Airport via Columbia Avenue. Major transportation hubs are significant because they allow easier access for a geographically diverse customer base. 2) *Near transportation hubs: MAX Station located on Eighty Second Avenue.* The MAX allows easier access for customers and prostitutes. 3) *Presence of adult entertainment establishments: Eighty Second Avenue has nine located within City of Portland.* Also often cited as a contributing factor, the connection between legal adult entertainment and prostitution is not always straightforward or easily identifiable. While strip clubs, lingerie modeling studios, hot tub rentals, and prostitution are all part of the larger sex industry, their legal status and social acceptability vary. The ways in which they are connected also vary. The relationship between motels and hot tub rentals and prostitution is perhaps the most straightforward. They are specifically linked to prostitution because prostitutes bring their clients there to engage in sex for money. Strip clubs and lingerie modeling

studios can be connected with prostitution in two ways. The first is when dancers and models moonlight as prostitutes. The second is Cameron's theory of laddering when "entrants to paid sex markets begin with low intimacy/value added products to those of higher intimacy/higher value added."²⁰⁹ For example, customers may start out with a legal and more acceptable entry into the sex industry visiting a strip club and then move on to hiring a prostitute. Once the customer has already participated in the more acceptable practice it is easier for him to move to another level which may have been previously considered unacceptable. The physical proximity of legal adult entertainment to prostitution markets reinforces this connection and makes the move easier for the customer, both physically and mentally. Prostitutes know men leaving strip clubs are potential customers and will work near the clubs. 4) *Places where sexual transactions can occur: motels, dimly lit parking lots, alleys, abandoned buildings.* Dimly lit streets are a problem due to the prevalence of unpaved streets in the area. The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) is responsible for installing and maintaining street lighting but will not do so on unimproved streets. More than two thirds of the unpaved streets in Portland are in East Portland. Of the ten neighborhoods the East PFZ ran through, four are on the list of the city's top neighborhoods for unpaved streets (Lents 2.9 miles; Montavilla 3.3 miles; Brentwood-Darlington 4.4 miles; and Powellhurst-Gilbert 4.5 miles).²¹⁰ Unlike other areas of the city, businesses along Eighty Second Avenue are more likely to be set back from the street, surrounded by large parking lots that are

²⁰⁹ Cameron, S. 2004. Space, risk and opportunity: The evolution of paid sex markets. *Urban Studies* 41 (9): p1643.

²¹⁰ Pitkin, J. "Dirt Roads, Dead Ends," *Willamette Week*, May 11, 2011.

largely empty when the businesses are not open. 5) *Places where prostituted individuals can take a break: coffee shops and bars.* 6) *Multiple avenues of escape from police: many side streets directly connect to Eighty Second Avenue.* 7) *Sidewalks that meet uninterrupted with the street: long stretches without landscaping to buffer area between street and sidewalk, no on-street parking to create buffer between traffic and pedestrians.* 8) *Roads that allow drivers to slow down or stop: plenty of intersections with traffic lights.* 9) *Reasons for loitering: Tri-Met bus stops every two blocks. Speed limit of 25-35 miles per hour: gives time for johns to “shop.”* Prostitutes are able to wait at bus stops while potential customers drive by, slowly enough to get a good look at the women. Once the customer has decided which woman he would like to hire, it is easy to turn off the street, double back and pull alongside the sidewalk, where there is no buffer between his car and the prostitute, and pick her up.

The nine elements identified by the Council for Prostitution Alternatives represent policy and planning decisions made by the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT), the Port of Portland, TriMet, PBOT, the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS), the Oregon Supreme Court, and a number of small business owners. None of the hundreds of decisions made by these organizations that came together to create these the physical preconditions for a prostitution market had anything to do with prostitution. The decisions were about transportation access, land use and free speech. In addition to those seemingly unrelated decisions, there were also other less obvious decisions which led to investment in other neighborhoods at the expense of neighborhoods along Eighty Second Avenue. For example, the only neighborhood along

Eighty Second Avenue where the Portland Development Commission operates its Storefront Improvement program in is Lents, and that started only in 1998. The disparity between the neighborhoods increases as investments are made in one area and not in another. It is also important to note that Eighty Second Avenue is a state highway. Unlike most Portland streets, it is under the jurisdiction of ODOT, not PDOT and therefore even further removed from holistic planning efforts. Furthermore, streetscape improvements such as street trees and pedestrian crossing made to state highways, including Eighty Second Avenue, must be funded with state dollars.

During the years the East PFZ was in force it was a constant source of debate. Supporters wanted to see the zones extended geographically to cover larger areas. As soon as the zones were created, people began calling City Hall to ask that their neighborhood be included in a PFZ. Peter Webster wanted to see the West Burnside, Northeast Couch and Northwest Everett Streets included and Joan Vanderkooy wanted to see the Overlook neighborhood included in a zone. Margaret Comfort supported the ordinance but complained of the spillover effects of the drug free zone into her neighborhood. When Old Town was designated as a drug free zone many of the customers, she complained, migrated to the motels on Interstate Avenue. These are the same hotels that worked with the city during the early 1980s to fight prostitution.²¹¹ In

²¹¹ Memo to Bari Jones from LABELISE. "Citizen Calls Re: Prostitution Free Zone" August 28, 1995. 1434 Prostitution Free Zone. Portland Archives and Records Center.

2006, the Portland Business Alliance wrote to Commissioner Sten to voice their support for Prostitution Free Zones.²¹²

The PFZs drew fierce criticism, however, from human rights activists and advocates for sex workers who argued the ordinance violated due process, equal rights protection, and freedom of travel. The PFZs focused on a person's status rather than his or her actions. David Fidanque, Executive Director of the Oregon chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) criticized PFZs for giving police officers the power of "prosecutor, judge and jury." He called the PFZ an "end run around the criminal justice process."²¹³ By restricting the rights of some citizens the City of Portland entered into the debate over the proper use of public spaces. The problem is that those deemed as "inappropriate users," the homeless, drug dealers, loitering youth, political activist and prostitutes are part of the public. The ordinance takes away the "public" status and instead defines people in terms of their actions, thus it "imposes and reifies the prostitute identity on women and men who have once engaged in street prostitution, assuming that street work is a permanent and full-time occupation and arresting women and men for their mere presence in public spaces."²¹⁴ Prostitution is not an action that may or may not be repeated. Instead, prostitute defines the identity of the offender. Furthermore, by banning the prostitute in order to protect a neighborhood the ordinance fails to address

²¹² Letter from the Portland Business Alliance to Commissioner Sten. "Prostitution Free Zones." 1434 Prostitution Free Zone. March 21, 2006. Portland Archives and Records Center.

²¹³ Portland Mercury, September 18, 2008.

²¹⁴ Sanchez, L. 2004. "The global E-Rotic subject, the ban, and the Prostitution-Free Zone: Sex work and the theory of differential exclusion." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 22: 861-883.

the very real possibility that the prostitutes are a part of the community, propagating the “cruel and inaccurate construction of street workers as outside of family, home, and community.”²¹⁵

The PFZ ordinance was in effect for fifteen years before Mayor Tom Potter let the zones expire in 2007. His decision was a response to criticisms that the zones were both ineffective disproportionately impacted racial and ethnic minorities. Ultimately, the most important criticism that led to the end of the PFZs were not directed at the PFZ at all but at their sister ordinance, Drug Free Zones. In a 2007 report by Campbell DeLong Resources, Inc. that found enforcement in the city’s three Drug Free Zones focused disproportionately on the poor and minorities. “In Portland’s Drug Free Zones, African Americans who are arrested for excludable crimes are more likely to be excluded than are either whites or Hispanics.”²¹⁶ Although the report did not explicitly recommend eliminating the zones, its findings were enough for Mayor Tom Potter, who allowed both the Drug Free and Prostitution Free Zone ordinances to expire. The Campbell DeLong report only analyzed Drug Free Zones and did not look at PFZs, leading PFZ supporters to criticize the mayor’s decision as hasty and too broad. The Oregonian agreed, “It was a big mistake. The zones died because they were yoked to drug free zones. The evidence showed a disproportionate number of African Americans were being excluded from the

²¹⁵ Sanchez, L. 2004. "The global E-Rotic subject, the ban, and the Prostitution-Free Zone: Sex work and the theory of differential exclusion." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 22: 861-883.

²¹⁶ Campbell, DeLong Resources, Inc. 2007. An Analysis of Data Relating to Drug Free Zones, City of Portland. http://www.cdri.com/library/CDRI_DFZ_Report_Sept_2007.pdf

drug free zones. The fact that both kinds of zones were eliminated was really a case of guilt by association.”²¹⁷

The Prostitution Free Zone ordinance was lifted in September 2007, and for a brief period prostitution in the area actually seemed to decrease. In November 2007, there were fewer than ten prostitution arrests in the area formerly covered by the East PFZ. By the following summer, however, prostitution was back in full force. Neighborhood residents and business owners found themselves confronted with prostitution and its side effects with increasingly regularity. “I’ve lived in this neighborhood for ten years,” Brian Wong told KPTV in 2008, “and it wasn’t until this year that I had someone try to get into my car. It wasn’t until this year that I had johns being serviced in front of my house.”²¹⁸

Montavilla residents organized to fight prostitution through two community organizations. Established in 1968, the Montavilla Community Association is active in a number of neighborhood initiatives aimed at community character and livability. A second group, Montavilla in Action, was formed specifically in response to growing concerns about drug activity and prostitution. Montavilla in Action provided a voice for frustrated neighborhood residents. One of their strategies for drawing attention to the impact of prostitution on the neighborhood was to collect the “many disheartening stories on how the blatant increase in crime has affected [neighborhood residents] and their families’ safety and livability.”²¹⁹

²¹⁷ Mary Kitch, “The Dilemma Near Eighty Second Avenue,” *The Oregonian*, October 17, 2008.

²¹⁸ “Group Wants Prostitution Free Zone Back.” September 30, 2008. KPTV.

²¹⁹ About Us. Montavilla in Action. http://issuu.com/montavillainaction/docs/montavilla8pg_handout. December 15, 2011.

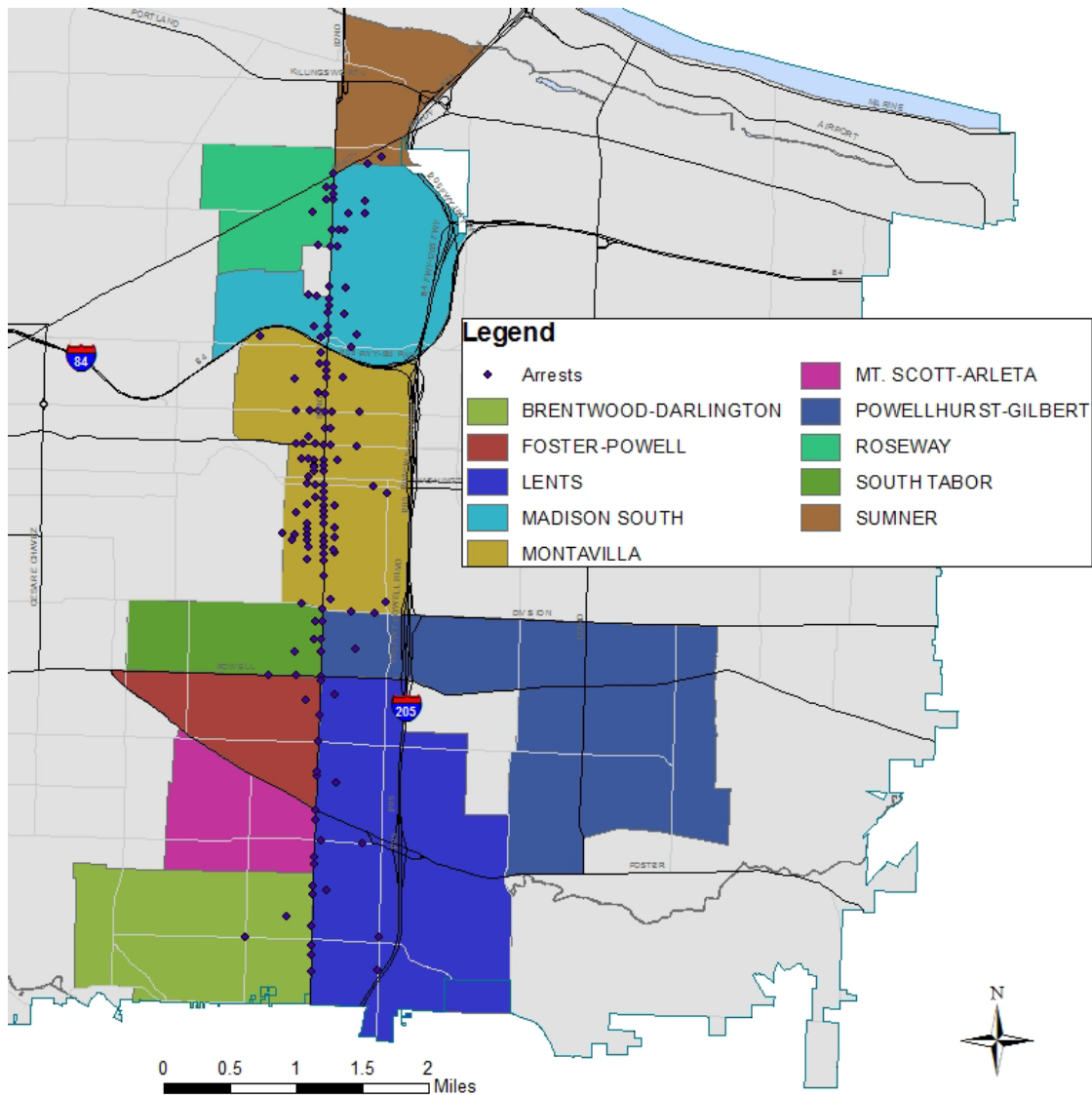
Although the East Prostitution Free Zone contained parts of ten neighborhoods, Montavilla was the most active when it came to lobbying to get the zones reinstated. In the year after the PFZ was lifted, there were 303 arrests for prostitution in the ten neighborhoods where the PFZ was located. More than half, 195 were in Montavilla.

Table 6: Prostitution Arrests, by Neighborhood, October 1, 2007-September 30, 2008

Neighborhood	Arrests
Brentwood-Darlington	7
Foster-Powell	3
Lents	25
Madison South	34
Montavilla	195
Mt. Scott- Arleta	2
Powellhurst-Gilbert	12
Roseway	11
South Taber	10
Sumner	4

Source: City of Portland, Police Bureau

Figure 15: Prostitution Arrests, October 1, 2007-September 30, 2008



Source: City of Portland, Police Bureau

Both the presence of prostitution and the official designation of an area as a site of prostitution have implications for community residents. The presence of a prostitution market in the neighborhood negatively affects neighborhood residents and workers who

do not participate in prostitution. The association of the physical space with sexual commerce is so strong that it is transferred onto people who do not and have not participated in the sex industry. Women and girls who live in the Montavilla neighborhood report harassment from men seeking sexual commerce. Some women have also reported being stopped by the police who suspect them of prostitution. The consequences of this transference are multiplied when prostitution markets are located in areas associated with particular ethnic or racial groups.

As part of their campaign to have PFZs reinstated, Montavilla in Action recorded the experiences of neighborhood residents with prostitution and chronicled them on their website. Women reported being mistaken for prostitutes and harassed by men looking for sex. “One young mother we met recently – who doesn’t have the luxury of a car and must walk along Eighty Second Avenue to get her groceries and when doing so with her three young children, men in cars are propositioning her in front of her kids – just because she is walking along Eighty Second Avenue.” Girls as young as eleven also reported being harassed by men looking for sex. “A mother we met said her two young daughters, whom we also met – ages eleven and fourteen are now being harassed by men/johns.” Being mistaken for sex market participants was a problem that affected men as well as women. “A father was driving around 7 pm on a week night – saw a woman crossing at a stop sign on Southeast Eighty Second Avenue – we waited for her to cross, she took that as a sign and proceed over to his car and tried to get in, with his young children in the back seat.” Business owners reported the prostitution market was an impediment to growth. “An employee of a relatively new neighborhood restaurant reports that the restaurant

owner would like to have sidewalk seating on the east side of their property. However, the owner is reluctant to do this because of the small multifamily complex not far away that is now a magnet for prostitution and drug related activity, foot traffic.” Even neighborhood dogs were negatively impacted by prostitution. “A female neighborhood homeowner reports that her dogs regularly pick up and play with discarded condoms which litter one neighborhood “hot spot” a city park. Other residents have reported that their young children have picked up and played with the discarded ‘items.’ This aspect of the problem demonstrated a different facet of the problem that prostitution creates – a public health threat.”²²⁰

One year after the PFZ zone ordinance sunsetted, area residents were still fighting to have them reinstated. People living in the former PFZ reached out to City Hall and initially it seemed that there would be cooperation between the City Council and neighborhood residents. In September 2008, Mayor Tom Potter held a press conference to detail his new anti-prostitution plan and invited members of Montavilla in Action to stand with him. As Potter explained the outline of his plan to combat prostitution, which included putting prostitutes and johns on probation after their second arrest and \$500,000 in city funds for treatment options, two members of MIA, took the microphone and explained to the press why Potter’s plan was insufficient to address the neighborhood crime problem. “Sullivan regaled the crowd with horror stories of coming across

²²⁰ Priority reasons as to why the Prostitution Free Zone should be reinstated (under emergency status). Montavilla in Action. http://issuu.com/montavillainaction/docs/montavilla8pg_handout. December 15, 2011.

prostitutes and johns having sex while taking a Sunday morning stroll through a neighborhood park.”²²¹

On September 16, 2008 three hundred people met at Vestal Elementary School on Northeast Eighty Second Avenue to talk about prostitution. The event was sponsored by Save Northeast Eighty Second Avenue. On Saturday September 30, 2008 Montavilla in Action sponsored the “March to Take Back Our Streets/Reclaim Eighty Second Avenue.” The march marked the one year anniversary of the end of the PFZ. “But in contrast to the police, the City Council’s response has been lacksadical.”²²²

The Oregonian had been hesitant about the PFZs when they were created, but once they were removed, the paper came out in support of their reinstatement. “It didn’t rid the city of the world’s oldest profession. It didn’t address, or pretend to address the root causes of the problem. It did, however, alleviate the distress, blight, and violence that goes with the crime.” The issue also received extensive coverage from other news sources, including Willamette Week, KGW, KPTV, Fox News, KATU, the Portland Mercury, and the Bee. There was a lot of support among the media to have the zones reinstated, in addition to the Oregonian’s stance that “The approach gave police and quick and invaluable way to disperse hot spots of criminal activity and make life bearable for the people who have to live next door to it.”²²³ Ultimately, though, the zones were not

²²¹ Sarah Mirk, “Red Light: Eighty Second Avenue Neighbors and City Scheme to Stop Prostitution,” *Portland Mercury*, September 15, 2008.

²²² Mary Kitch, “The Dilemma Near Eighty Second Avenue,” *The Oregonian*, October 17, 2008.

²²³ “Look again at Prostitution Free Zones: The Portland City Council can’t end this crime, but it can give police a way to counteract it,” *The Oregonian*, August 22, 2008.

reinstated and the community groups lost momentum. Although it is still up, Montavilla in Action stopped updating their website in 2009.

d. Conclusion

In many ways the construction of sexualized urban space along Eighty Second Avenue follows patterns identified in other cities. The space is a deliberate geography of sexual commerce defined and reproduced through the actions of sex workers, customers, activists, and local government. As Sanders argues, “the geographical space that women rely on to make money is not a haphazard or neutral locale in the urban landscape.”²²⁴ Along Eighty Second Avenue, specific planning and policy decisions created a physical landscape that was well suited to a sex market. When prostitutes and their customers began using the space it became a sex market. In addition to actions by prostitutes, police and policy makers, anti-prostitution protesters play a role in the way street prostitution markets are structured and experienced. The actions of protestors can create elevated levels of danger for sex workers. Larsen identifies a significant class bias in anti-prostitution campaigns in Canada. Many prostitutes report being harassed verbally and sometimes physically by protestors both when they are working and when they are not.²²⁵ It is hardly surprising that there is a distinct class bias in anti-prostitution protests, including those in East Portland, as prostitution is often a crime of economic necessity. Violence against prostitutes by anti-prostitution protestors has not been widely reported (if at all) in Portland but some argue that the activists have increased the risk to female

²²⁴ Sanders, T. 2004. The risks of street prostitution: Punters, police and protesters. *Urban Studies* 41 (9): p1703.

²²⁵ Larsen, E. 1992. The politics of prostitution control: interest group politics in four Canadian cities, *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research*, 16: 169–189.

prostitutes in another ways. When the PFZ was in effect, prostitutes reported having to leave the area with customers, sometimes traveling to isolated areas where they were unable to access help if a customer became violent.

The factors that shaped the prostitution market on Eighty Second Avenue were mostly municipal level policy. This included both the land use and transportation policies which created the preconditions for a prostitution market and the Prostitution Free Zone which specifically addressed the prostitution market. The area was also influenced by actions on the state and neighborhood level.

The prostitution free zone was the type of anti-prostitution policy that in other American cities was strongly tied to gentrification and public investment. Anti-prostitution efforts have been closely linked to gentrification in a number of American and western European cities. Policy makers seek to demonstrate their ability to assert moral order by reclaiming red light districts from sex workers. In his study of anti-prostitution policies in London and Paris, Hubbard found that “female sex workers are currently being identified as a threat to national values in an era when nebulous anxieties about difference and diversity are prompting the state to instigate ‘public order’ legislation which serves to criminalize specific groups (rather than particular offences).”²²⁶ Perhaps the most well known example is the efforts to remove prostitution and adult entertainment from Times Square in Manhattan as part of larger gentrification efforts. Much of Montavilla in Action’s rhetoric centered around the effect of prostitution on families. Young mothers, young girls, and fathers with young children in tow are cast

²²⁶ Hubbard, P. 2004. Cleansing the metropolis: Sex work and the politics of zero tolerance. *Urban Studies* 41(9): 1678-1702.

as prostitution's victims while prostitutes themselves are largely absent from the narrative. This can also be seen in the way the battle over the PFZ has been portrayed by the media. Stories about the Take Back Eighty Second march featured a smiling young blond mother with a stroller. The policies Hubbard examines are similar to the PFZ. In each case an area is being "cleansed" of prostitutes. There is also a similarity in the way morality and family values are used to drive policy and policing decisions. In the case of Portland, however, the PFZ had widespread support in the neighborhoods it ran through. Community groups, specifically Montavilla in Action were at the forefront of the so far unsuccessful movement to have the PFZ reinstated after it was removed by the mayor.

In some ways, the Montavilla experience follows established patterns of gentrification. The prostitution market in Montavilla developed when the neighborhood was economically depressed. The movement to have the Prostitution Free Zones reinstated was led by newcomers who came to what was by then a gentrifying area. The 1990 Census shows Montavilla experienced the greatest increase in median household income in the 1980s, compared with the rest of southeast Portland.²²⁷ Increasingly, young middle-class families were finding homes in Montavilla and bringing with them the desire and drive for a more family friendly neighborhood. It is not clear, however, that gentrification was the driving force behind the anti-prostitution movement in Montavilla. The neighborhood was also the center of prostitution in the area. During the twelve months after the East PFZ was lifted, there were 195 prostitution arrests in Montavilla, more than the other nine neighborhoods combined.

²²⁷ Montavilla Community Plan. City of Portland Bureau of Planning. March 1996.

In Portland’s case, however, the placement of the Prostitution Free Zone along Eighty Second Avenue was determined not because the area was ripe for reinvestment but because arrest records indicated the need for targeted anti-prostitution efforts. The other way Montavilla’s experience was different is that the anti-prostitution efforts were not accompanied by other forms of investment. Montavilla continues to have unpaved streets and a shortage of pedestrian crossings, and other streetscape amenities. Neighborhood business owners complain that they don’t receive the same investments as do other businesses in other neighborhoods. When the PFZ ordinance was allowed to sunset, neighborhood residents saw it as one more example of the city’s lack of interest in them rather than a piece of a larger redevelopment effort.

Table 7: Influences on the East Portland Sex Market

Factor	National Trend	Municipal Policy	Neighborhood Policy	State Level Policy	Technological Change
Gentrification & redevelopment	X	X			
Transportation infrastructure		X		X	
Non-transportation infrastructure/lack of investment		X			
Neighborhood land use patterns	X	X			
Prostitution Free Zone		X	X		

Part of the reason that targeting prostitution along Eighty Second Avenue is so difficult is that the conditions that made the area a good place for a sex market were created by a number of different agencies and reflect decisions made about issues are

completely unrelated to prostitution. The conditions that might cause someone to work as a prostitute, including economic need, abuse, and addiction have been extensively researched and are well documented. The conditions that create an area where a prostitution market will flourish, however, are not as straightforward. Looking at Eighty Second Avenue we can identify the reasons that space works well as a sex market, but it is more difficult to see where interventions could have been made to shape the neighborhood differently.

Prostitution Free Zones are part of a longer history of anti-prostitution policy in Portland. During the past twenty-five years policies have included ordinances aimed at protecting prostitutes, protecting neighborhoods from the effects of sex markets, punishing prostitutes, and punishing prostitutes' patrons and pimps. In the absence of a coordinated vision, piecemeal policies are adopted and then abandoned. The PFZ are the younger cousins of the anti-prostitution billboards and earlier attempts to criminalize prostitution procurement behavior. In 2002, Portland City Council adopted Ordinance 176442 which "allow[s] the towing and impoundment of vehicles used in the commission of prostitution or drug related crimes," and is very similar to the drug house ordinance. Mayor Potter's plan to combat prostitution after the sunset of the PFZs, included a budget for treatment options. This was just thirteen years after the city stopped funding the Council for Prostitution Alternatives.

Chapter 7: Burnside Triangle 1998-2010

On March 14, 2003, the Portland City Council voted unanimously to accept a series of recommendations designed to improve the physical and economic conditions in the Burnside Triangle, while officially recognizing the area's sexual minority past and present. The recommendations were made by the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group (BTAG), a citizen advisory group organized by the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, during the West End Planning process. The recommendations and their acceptance by the Council should have cemented the Burnside Triangle's position as the city's most visible and well established sexual minority neighborhood. Nearly ten years later, however, the sexual minority presence in the neighborhood is weaker than at any point during the past hundred years. Development pressures have reshaped the area, transforming it from one of the more run down corners of the city into a trendy mixed use district. At the same time, the city's sexual minority community has increased in size and diversity. The community's evolving needs have led many to look outside of the Burnside Triangle to find an area where all those needs can be met.

a. Evolution of the Burnside Triangle

Mapping the history of the gay community in Portland presents many of the same challenges as mapping adult entertainment businesses prior to 1970. Faced with social, financial, and legal discrimination, and at times violence, many gays and lesbians worked to keep their identities secret. Gathering places were often in private homes. Books featuring gay and lesbian relationships were illegal, lumped into the same category as pornography. An economic development analysis of gay friendly and gay owned

businesses in Portland explains, “while community members can be identified as far back as the early 1900s in Portland’s history, few accurate records were kept, thereby preventing the detailed tracking of community activities and commercial node relationships.”²²⁸ However, through police reports, oral histories, and newspaper articles many businesses that welcomed a gay and lesbian clientele can be identified.

Loosely bounded by Southwest Alder Street, Southwest Fourteenth Avenue, West Burnside Street, and Southwest Broadway the neighborhood known as the Burnside Triangle maintained a strong sexual minority identity throughout much of the twentieth century. The relationship between the fifteen city blocks that make up the neighborhood and the sexual minority community was built on a combination of circumstance and direct, if unofficial, city policy. The relationship was for many years maintained through the actions of business owners, police, community members, and activists.

When the 1912 same sex scandal rocked Portland, the first floor restroom of the Imperial Hotel at the corner of Southwest Broadway and Southwest Washington Street (now the Hotel Vintage Plaza) was publicly identified as a gay cruising spot. One block north, the Hotel Oregon on the corner of Southwest Broadway and Stark Street was home to lesbian physician and activist Marie Equi during the 1920s. Already a controversial figure, Equi presented a paper to the Multnomah County Medical Society in 1911 about her treatment of a male patient who had gonorrhea of the throat.²²⁹

²²⁸ Bertelsen, A., Brostoff, J., Ramirez, L., Shibley, A., and Tipton, E. Strengthening small business clusters serving minority communities. 2001. Portland State University – Urban and Regional Planning Workshop. Portland Records and Archives Center.

²²⁹ Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. June 1, 1999. Portland Archives and Records Center.

During World War II, the Buick Café at 1239 Southwest Washington Street had a reputation as a popular meeting spot for the city's growing lesbian population. Drawn to wartime jobs, and in many cases free for the first time to explore their sexual identity, many gays and lesbians moved to urban centers, particularly port cities, in large numbers during and after the war. The Music Hall, which opened in 1937, at 413 Southwest Tenth Avenue, was one of Portland's most popular gay and lesbian nightclubs. The Hall featured both male and female impersonators. A City Police Report from 1949 notes that "these women are reported to attempt their pick-up at the Music Hall and in case of failure before the Hall closes they then retire to the Buick and look for other prospects."²³⁰

During the 1950s, gays and lesbians in Portland found themselves increasingly under attack as anti-gay sentiment intensified. Reflecting a national trend, local media conflated homosexuality with pedophilia and several highly publicized scandals involving homosexuals drew statewide attention. During the 1952 mayoral election, her opponent accused Dorothy McCulloch Lee of not doing enough to protect children from homosexuals. Lee earned the nickname No Sin Lee four years earlier when she was elected on promises to rid Portland of vice. In response to the allegations, she formed a committee comprised of police officers, judges, social workers, parents, and teachers to develop a plan to combat "sex deviants" at the local level. Lee's plan included sending

²³⁰ Boag, P. 2004. Does Portland need a homophile society? Gay culture and activism in the Rose City between World War II and Stonewall. *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 105 (1): p13.

undercover police officers into bars in an attempt to gain information and entrap bar patrons.²³¹

Little came of the undercover operations, and new businesses catering to gay and lesbian clientele continued to open. In 1957, the Tel & Tel opened at 820 Southwest Oak Street (later known as Derek's, the Annex and the Family Zoo). The site had a long history, dating back to World War II when as the Linton Trolley waiting room it was a drop off site for GIs. The Piccadilly Room at the Benson Hotel was a popular spot for gay professionals during the 1960s. Riptide opened in 1965, at 949 Southwest Stark Street, making it one of the first gay bars on Southwest Stark Street. Rich's Cigar Store, which is still operating at 724 Southwest Alder Street, was one of only two stores in the city which would sell The Mattachine Review, the newsletter of the Mattachine Society, the first major organization to work for gay rights in the United States during the 1950s.²³²

During the 1950s, Portland's gay bars maintained an uneasy truce with the city. Several times City Council tried to have the bars' liquor licenses revoked. They came under serious threat though in 1964, when Mayor Terry Schrunk and the City Council voted to revoke the liquor licenses of six gay bars, including the Model Inn, Mama Bernie's, the Milwaukie Tavern, the Harbor Club, Derek's Tavern, and the Old Glory Restaurant. The bar owners protested, suing the city on the grounds that their clientele

²³¹ Boag, P. 2004. Does Portland need a homophile society? Gay culture and activism in the Rose City between World War II and Stonewall. *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 105 (1): p18.

²³² Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. June 1, 1999. Portland Archives and Records Center.

were being unfairly targeted and all of the liquor licenses were quickly reinstated by the Oregon Liquor Control Commission.²³³

The Burnside Triangle was not the only space in the city where gays and lesbians socialized. A number of popular bars, nightclubs, and meeting spots were located outside of the Burnside Triangle early in the twentieth century. In 1907, the Louvre Restaurant opened in the Hotel Belvedere at the corner of Southwest Fourth and Alder. The Gent's Dining Room was named as a popular meeting spot during the 1912 Vice Scandal and the restaurant closed shortly thereafter. Lownsdale Square near City Hall was also known as a popular cruising spot for gay men. During the 1950s and 1960s, despite intensified media attention and policies of police entrapment of gay men in popular cruising spots including parks and public restrooms, gays and lesbians in Portland faced lower levels of harassment than their counterparts in other cities. While the police actively worked to keep homosexual activity out of public spaces, when it came to gay bars, the primary goal of the police was containment rather than eradication. The police operated under a "hands off" policy believing it was "better to have deviants concentrated in a few places, where they could be watched." When Commissioner Stanley Earl tried to have the Harbor Club, a gay bar where female impersonators performed, shut down in the late 1950s, the police dissuaded him, arguing it was better to allow the bar to stay open so that its clientele wouldn't "scatter to various places, which would compound the problem."²³⁴

The location the police identified as most appropriate for the concentration of gay bars

²³³ Boag, P. 2004. Does Portland need a homophile society? Gay culture and activism in the Rose City between World War II and Stonewall. *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 105 (1): 6-39.

²³⁴ Boag, P. 2004. Does Portland need a homophile society? Gay culture and activism in the Rose City between World War II and Stonewall. *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 105 (1): 6-39.

was the Burnside Triangle. Already home to a number of gay friendly bars and restaurants, the Burnside Triangle was a small area, economically depressed, and removed from the city's middle-class residential neighborhoods. The police enforced the unofficial policy of containment through harassment. "By restricting liquor licenses, raiding establishments, enforcing public hygiene standards, and performing building inspections, the city and state continued to limit and close establishments serving the gay and lesbian community throughout the later part of the 1950s and into the early 1960s."²³⁵ The containment policy would influence the economic and social conditions of the Burnside Triangle throughout much of the twentieth century.²³⁶

The 1969 Stonewall Riots in New York City marked the beginning of the modern gay rights movement in the United States. The following decade saw an increase in visible gay communities in cities and towns across the country. Although Portland was never home to the type of active homophile movement active in other cities during the 1950s and 1960s, activism in the 1970s was connected, at least geographically, to the gay entertainment district. In 1971, Oregon repealed a law that criminalized sodomy. In December 1974, the Portland City Council adopted a measure that ensured sexual orientation could not affect hiring policies in municipal agencies. The Portland Town Council, a gay business association and civil rights advocacy group, formed in the 1970s. Headquartered in the Burnside Triangle, the group worked to bring civil rights

²³⁵ Bertelsen, A., Brostoff, J., Ramirez, L., Shibley, A., and Tipton, E. Strengthening small business clusters serving minority communities. 2001. Portland State University – Urban and Regional Planning Workshop. Portland Records and Archives Center.

²³⁶ Boag, P. 2004. Does Portland need a homophile society? Gay culture and activism in the Rose City between World War II and Stonewall. *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 105 (1): 6-39.

protections to the gay and lesbian community. They organized Portland's first Gay Pride Parade in 1975. Two years later, Portland Mayor Neil Goldschmidt made a proclamation that June 25, 1977, would be Gay Pride Day.²³⁷

The energy of the movement was felt in new businesses opening to gay clientele during the 1960s and 1970s, many of them located within the Burnside Triangle. Silverado opened in the late 1960s at 1217 Southwest Stark Street. The longest operating gay bar in the city, it has operated under a number of names including The Pied Piper, Stark Street Station, and Flossies. Still in operation today, Silverado moved outside of the Triangle to Southwest Third Avenue in 2007, when developers bought the Stark Street building. Julie's Supper Club operated at 1012 Southwest Stark Street during the 1970s. The location was later the home of CC Slaughter's until the club moved to Old Town in the late 1990s. Zorba the Greek at Southwest Sixth Avenue and Pine Street, where the US Bank tower now stands, was another popular gay club during the 1970's. Lenny Swerdlow, a leading member of the Portland Town Council opened an underage club frequented by sexual minority youth. The Washington Hotel tavern, known as the Timber Topper (1970-1974), The Axe Handle (1974) and The Alley was another popular gay bar in the area.²³⁸ The Continental Baths opened in 1978 at 531 SE Park Avenue.²³⁹

²³⁷ Boag, P. 2004. Does Portland need a homophile society? Gay culture and activism in the Rose City between World War II and Stonewall. *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 105 (1): 6-39.

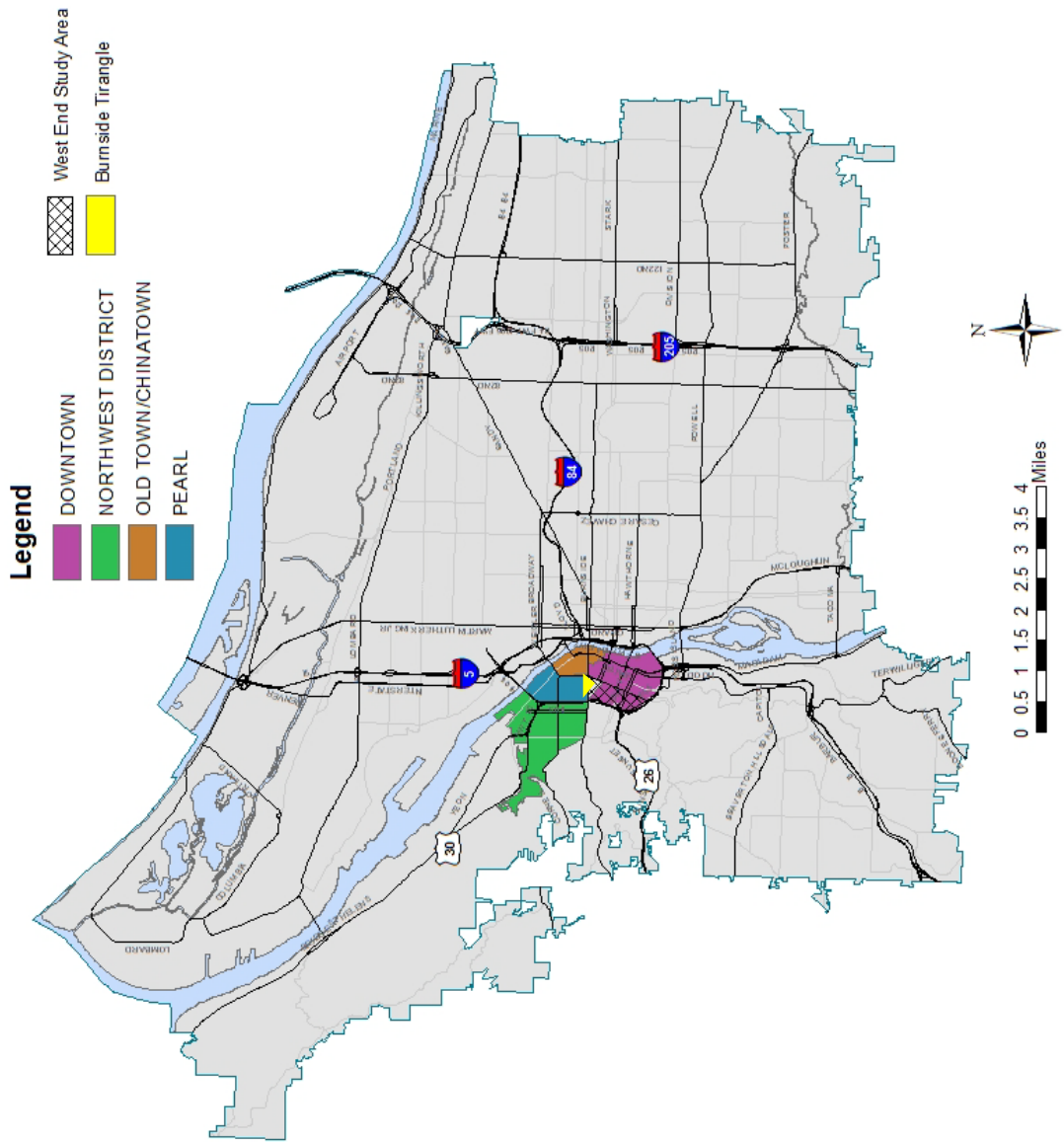
²³⁸ The hotel at 1135 Southwest Washington was built by architect Lionel Deane in 1911. Dean was one of the sixty eight men arrested in the 1912 Vice Scandal.

²³⁹ Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. June 1, 1999. Portland Archives and Records Center.

The Burnside Triangle's sexual minority identity intensified during the 1970s and 1980s as new bars and restaurants opened to serve a growing community. At the same time, political action, economic development, and social service groups were opening offices in the neighborhood. By the late 1990s, the Burnside Triangle was the most visible entertainment district in the city catering to gay men and lesbians. When a group from Portland State University analyzed economic development opportunities in the Burnside Triangle in 2002 they found: "Over the course of the decade the buildings that housed many of the early community meeting places were either demolished or converted to other uses. The Burnside Triangle now provides the dominant downtown business cluster serving the gay and lesbian community, while the members of the community remain regionally dispersed and largely uncounted."²⁴⁰

²⁴⁰ Bertelsen, A., Brostoff, J., Ramirez, L., Shibley, A., and Tipton, E. Strengthening small business clusters serving minority communities. 2001. Portland State University – Urban and Regional Planning Workshop. Portland Records and Archives Center.

Figure 16: Burnside Triangle and surrounding neighborhoods



Source: City of Portland, Bureau of Transportation

b. The Burnside Triangle Advisory Group & the West End Planning Process

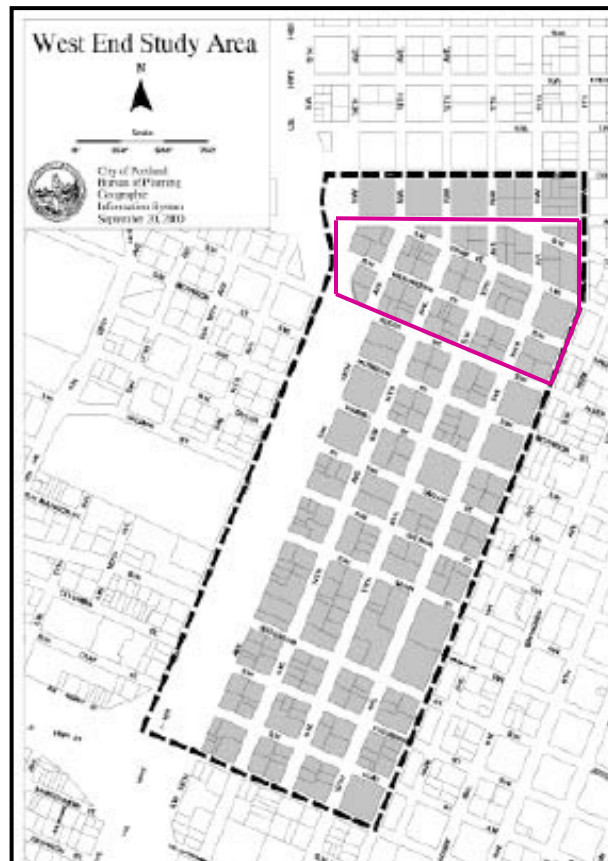
Like many sexualized spaces, the Burnside Triangle developed as a gay district in part because it was a less economically desirable area of the city. The Burnside Triangle is on the northern edge of Portland's downtown just south of West Burnside which divides Southwest from Northwest Portland. Throughout the 1960s and 1970s, the area to the north of the Burnside Triangle was turning from a bustling hub of shipping and commerce into an area of rundown warehouses and vacant lots. During the 1990s, however, a wave of gentrification spurred by private and public investment transformed that area into an upscale mixed use community, renamed the Pearl District. The old warehouses were retrofitted to house art galleries, restaurants, and bars and high rise apartment and condominium towers sprouted from vacant lots. The new neighborhood attracted workers who wanted to be near their downtown offices and gave office workers a place to go for lunch or dinner. At night and on weekends the area attracted theater goers and diners. Just west of The Pearl, the northwest Alphabet District had also experienced a rebirth. Once a neighborhood of working-class immigrants, the Alphabet District's desirability and property values had fallen as its population declined. During the 1970s, the area was swept up in a wave of gentrification that transformed many close in neighborhoods.

At the same time there was considerable reinvestment in the Downtown Business District, to the southeast of the Burnside Triangle. In the area near City Hall, new sky scrapers and public plazas were replacing old rooming houses. In 1973, the Portland Plaza, a luxury condominium high rise was built several blocks south of Portland's City

Hall. Two years later, the Edith Green Wendall Wyatt federal building opened nearby. The County Justice Center opened next door eight years later and the following year, the Portland Building opened just two blocks away. The award winning Keller Fountain opened in 1978. Redevelopment was also happening to the north of Downtown. In 1973 the Wells Fargo Center opened at 1300 Southwest Fifth Avenue. In 1983, the US Bankcorp Tower opened at 111 Southwest Fifth Avenue. The new developments changed the tone of Downtown. Restaurants, retail shops, and bars opened to serve the men and women who worked and lived in the new buildings. With the gentrification of the Alphabet District, in nearby Northwest Portland, development and reinvestment Downtown and the creation of the Pearl District, much of Portland's West Side was improving in both property values and desirability. The city then turned its attention to the newly named West End, the section of downtown that includes the Burnside Triangle. Initiated by a group of local businessmen, property owners, and community members, the West End planning process was designed to address the one part of West Portland that had not benefited from the reinvestment and gentrification of the 1970s and 1980s. The West End is the fifty-six city blocks between the South Park Blocks and Interstate 405. The area is bounded to the north by Northwest Couch Street and to the south by Southwest Market Street. Fifteen of the fifty-six blocks are considered the Burnside Triangle.²⁴¹

²⁴¹ Portland: Downtown's West End: Amendments to the central city plan, zoning code, and zoning map. 2002. Portland Bureau of Planning.
<http://www.portlandonline.com/planning/index.cfm?a=58792&c=34248>

Figure 17: West End Study Area



Source: Portland: Downtown's West End: Amendments to the central city plan, zoning code, and zoning map. 2002. Portland Bureau of Planning.

The West End Plan was designed to build on the work of the 1972 Downtown Plan, and the 1988 Central City Plan. Both identified the West End as primarily a residential area with some mixed use development but neither focused specifically on the area or outlined steps to meet identified goals. Neither of the earlier plans specifically identified the Burnside Triangle as a distinct neighborhood. Even though the gay entertainment district was a presence in the neighborhood when the 1972 plan was

written and was well established when the 1988 plan was written, there is no mention of entertainment district in either plan.²⁴²

The Portland Streetcar opened in 2001. It runs through north-south along Tenth and Eleventh Avenues through much of the West End, part of the Pearl District and the entire Burnside Triangle. Both the city and developers were eager to capitalize on the investment.

When the Portland Planning Bureau began the process of developing a new plan for the West End, the City's Office of Neighborhood Involvement's (ONI) Metropolitan Human Rights Center (MHRC), facilitated a meeting for members of the sexual minority community in the Burnside Triangle. Brian Hoop worked on the project and remembers it as a turning point for ONI.

“David Lane is a gay man and I had worked in HIV/AIDS prevention work before and had done gay men's outreach work before and so I think we were both very culturally competent and very supportive of the effort and so I remember David came to me and was like Brian would you help facilitate the community group. It was totally outside the realm of what we would traditionally do but we were like ok we'll do what we can.”²⁴³

There are multiple advantages for the city in including the sexual minority community in the planning process. ONI's mission is to support and facilitate

²⁴² 1972 Downtown Plan. Portland Bureau of Planning. <http://www.portlandonline.com/bps/index.cfm?a=149406&c=44077>; 1988 Central City Plan. Portland Bureau of Planning. <http://www.portlandonline.com/bps/index.cfm?a=153706&c=44077>

²⁴³ Brian Hoop (Office of Neighborhood Involvement, City of Portland) interviewed by the author, April 2011.

neighborhood involvement in planning processes. In addition to moving toward a more inclusive and representative process, the inclusion of neighborhood groups can limit the resistance to new plans. There were also potential benefits to the city in maintaining the sexual minority entertainment character of the Burnside Triangle. Cities increasingly use sexual minority neighborhoods as tourist attractions. Not only are the areas welcoming to visitors who are themselves sexual minorities, but in a city like Portland without much racial or ethnic diversity, sexual minority districts can lend a sense of cosmopolitaness.

In March 2001, approximately seventy people met in the Fez Ballroom in downtown Portland at a meeting convened by Commissioner Dan Saltzman's and Commissioner Jim Fransconi's offices. On the agenda was the future of the Burnside Triangle in the context of the West End planning process. In addition to staff from Saltzman's and Fransconi's office, meeting participants included members of the sexual minority community, the Bureau of Planning, the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, and Mayor Vera Katz. "Over the past couple of years, there have been many different proposals suggested for the Burnside Triangle area," Katz told a reporter from the Oregonian who covered the event, "but we haven't heard much from the gay community about their interests and concerns."²⁴⁴

Three themes emerged at the meeting. First, community members felt strongly about documenting and preserving the area's historical significance. Second, both organizers and community members recognized the importance of including the sexual minority community in the planning process and decisions about the future of the

²⁴⁴ Courtney Thompson, "Shaping Burnside Triangle's Future," *The Oregonian*, April 30, 2001.

neighborhood. Third, two questions essential to the future of the Burnside Triangle: Did the sexual minority community in Portland want an officially recognized geographic identity and if so, should that area include the Burnside Triangle?

The meeting lead to the formation of the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group (BTAG), which was officially recognized by the Portland City Council in an unanimous vote in 2002. The BTAG worked with the city throughout the planning process, exploring various methods of preservation, including historic district designation and a sexual minority community center, performing community outreach and proposing recommendations for the area's social, physical and economic development.

The committee was designed to have eighteen members, represented by nine voting slots, with two people per slot. The ideal composition as outlined by the MHRC was as follows: two social service providers, two small business owners (GLBT-oriented leasing space), two small business owners (non GLBT oriented leasing space), six at large members – representing patrons of the area, GLBT community and other interested people, two Portland Area Business Association (PABA) members, two business/residential property owners and two residents (owner, renter). The purpose of the committee was twofold: “To inform the process of implementing the West End Plan with a valuable community perspective and to develop creative ways to effectively gather broad-based community input on the development of the Burnside Triangle.” Fliers were hung in the windows of local businesses and press releases were run in Just Out, the

Oregonian, and the Portland Tribune announcing the effort and inviting community members to participate.²⁴⁵

The BTAG was co-chaired by Melinda Marie Jettè, who in 2001 had moved back to her home town of Portland to finish her doctoral dissertation, and a graduate of the Master in Urban and Regional Planning program at Portland State University, Jacob Brostoff. Brostoff first became engaged in the area during a field methods course where students completed a study of the neighborhood. The inventory eventually became part of the West End Plan. Later during a planning workshop, Brostoff worked as part of a team that developed business strategies for minority owned businesses including gay owned businesses in the Burnside Triangle. Jettè had no prior relationship with the Triangle but had been active in the sexual minority communities in Portland and Vancouver, British Columbia.²⁴⁶

Although there was some concern over having one officially identified gay district in the city, all participants at the March 2001 meeting agreed that it was an important goal worth pursuing. The meeting energized community members in attendance who quickly organized to move forward with the community involvement process. A second meeting was scheduled for June 28 at the Metropolitan Community Church in Northwest Portland. Volunteers also designed a survey which was distributed through the MHRC booth at Gay Pride June 17-18, 2001.

²⁴⁵ Proposed Process for the formation of the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group (BTAG). Policy & Historical Records - Burnside Triangle Portland Archives and Records Center.

²⁴⁶ Melinda Marie Jettè (co-chair, Burnside Triangle Advisory Group) interviewed by the author, March 2011; Jacob Brostoff (co-chair of the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group), interviewed by the author, March, 2011.

The survey consisted of two multiple choice and two open ended questions with a space at the end for additional comments. Respondents who were interested in becoming more involved with the process by were invited to list their contact information. The survey was an important tool because it allowed the BTAG to reach out to the socially and geographically diverse sexual minority community. Of the 334 completed surveys collected at gay Pride, 333 respondents supported an “openly identified GLBT district in Portland.” From the surveys an image of what that district might look like began to emerge. Of the 333 in support, “sixty-eight percent stated they would like to see the Burnside Triangle area be more than just a night life area; sixty-seven percent would like to have a GLBT community center; sixty-three percent want better lighting, trees and sidewalk improvements; fifty-seven percent would like to see more diverse businesses in the area and more urban/public art and murals; fifty-six percent wanted updated appearance and infrastructure; fifty-three percent suggested having the street closed off in the evenings and adding diversity flags and appropriate signage; and fifty-two percent were interested in seeing the area remain affordable and mixed residential/commercial.”²⁴⁷

Many of the suggestions in the additional comments section are similar to what would be found in any mixed-use neighborhood plan. They are reflective of a neighborhood facing redevelopment, a major concern of community leaders who witnessed its effects in surrounding neighborhoods. Three of the top five themes among

²⁴⁷ Burnside Triangle Advisory Group (BTAG), Report to Portland City Council, March 19, 2003. Policy & Historical Records - Burnside Triangle. Portland Archives and Records.

the additional comments are not specific to the area's sexual minority community. Respondents supported: mixed/balanced business and residential make up; improve the area without sanitizing it; make it inclusive – family friendly. The last two were safety - creating a safe place for the GLBT community, and to consider linking the Burnside triangle to other GLBT friendly areas in Southeast or Northwest Portland. Of the 334 respondents, 126 (thirty-eight percent listed contact information and expressed interest in becoming more involved. Seventy-seven suggestions for next steps were given and the top five were: “Involve more patrons, residents and businesses; work with the city (Council, Bureau of Planning, etc); organize a campaign to gather patron contributors/paving bricks with donor names; create incentives to attract small, GLBT owned businesses and create a GLBT-run non-profit to oversee the area (CDC).”²⁴⁸

In December 2002, an updated version of the survey was distributed at businesses in and around the Burnside Triangle. In addition to the questions from the original survey, the second version asked respondents to provide demographic information. A total of 510 surveys were completed and returned to the ONI. While the survey did not track where respondents lived it did ask how often they visited the area. The responses paint a picture of a community drawn together by a geographic space, but not all that often and only for specific activities and events. Just eight percent of respondents reported living in the Burnside Triangle. An additional six percent reported that they visit the area daily. Nineteen percent reported visiting the area several times in a week,

²⁴⁸ Collected Responses to the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group Survey. March, 2003. Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. Portland Records and Archives Center.

nineteen percent reported visiting once a week, thirty-seven percent reported visiting the area a few times a month, and nineteen percent rarely visited the area. Eighty-eight percent of respondents listed Portland zip codes and ninety-four percent listed Oregon zip codes. Responders indicated ambivalence over the issue of publicly and officially identifying the area as a sexual minority cultural district.

Guided by survey responses, the BTAG developed detailed recommendations for the Burnside Triangle. In March 2003, they presented their recommendations to City Council. There were a total of sixteen recommendations divided into eight categories: social inclusion, neighborhood continuity, cultural and historical significance, community, public safety, diverse businesses, low-income housing, and transportation and streetscape improvement.²⁴⁹

Nine of the recommendations were specific to sexual minority community development:

- a. grants for sexual minority oriented cultural and artistic efforts;
- b. recognition of the Burnside Triangle as a sexual minority cultural, historical, and entertainment district;
- c. encouragement of tourism at sexual minority oriented businesses;
- d. development of a complete comprehensive historical study of the Burnside Triangle and placement of historical markers;
- e. a sexual minority community center located within the neighborhood;

²⁴⁹ Burnside Triangle Advisory Group (BTAG) Report to Portland City Council. March 19, 2003. City Recorder - Council Documents - 235-2003. Portland Archives and Records Center.

- f. a subcommittee of the Portland Police Bureau's Sexual Minorities Roundtable to focus on the Burnside Triangle;
- g. Burnside Triangle Business Association that is supportive of sexual minority businesses;
- h. programs for sexual minority youth experiencing homelessness;
- i. streetscape improvement programs including rainbow flags.

The recommendations were to be carried out by public and private agencies including the Regional Arts & Culture Council, the Portland Development Commission, the Oregon Historical Society, the Oregon Visitors Association, the Bureau of Housing and Community Development, Multnomah County, and the Portland Office of Transportation.²⁵⁰

c. Burnside Triangle, 2003-2010

The City Council accepted the recommendation with a vote of five to zero on March 14, 2003. In the nine years since the report was presented a handful of the non-sexual minority specific recommendations have been realized. Of the eleven sexual minority specific recommendations, several have been realized but the results are either located outside of the Burnside Triangle or they are within the Triangle but not sexual-minority specific. For example, one of the BTAG's recommendations was the creation of a sexual minority community center in the Burnside Triangle. A sexual minority community center did open in 2009, but in North Portland several miles away from the Burnside Triangle. The BTAG also recommended the installation of sexual minority

²⁵⁰ Burnside Triangle Advisory Group (BTAG), Report to Portland City Council, March 19, 2003. Policy & Historical Records - Burnside Triangle. Portland Archives and Records.

themed public art in the Burnside Triangle. Several pieces of public art have been installed in the Burnside Triangle but they are not sexual minority themed. The BTAG also recommended improvements to the streetscape on Stark Street and while improvements were made, they did not include regular display of rainbow flags. A program dedicated to helping sexual minority youth, including those experiencing homelessness, opened in 2010 but it is located in Northwest Portland, not in the Burnside Triangle as the BTAG recommended. Not only have many of the BTAG's recommendations not been realized, but in the past eight years the Burnside Triangle has begun to lose its reputation as the sexual minority entertainment district in Portland. Part of the reason for this shift can be traced to the arguments over where the Burnside Triangle should be given historic or cultural district designation.

a) Cultural District Designation

One of the BTAG's key recommendations was the official designation of the Burnside Triangle as a cultural or historic district. Historic or cultural district designation can bring awareness to the community's history and the possibility of tourism money. Support for the idea was mixed among responses to the BTAG survey. One argument for cultural designation compared the experience of sexual minorities to racial and ethnic minorities: "As with many communities (I am also Japanese), having a place that you can identify with, where you can feel you can let more of your guard down is an important part of the sense of community." Historic or cultural district designation could be granted through the Bureau of Planning or the National Parks Service's National Register of Historic Places. The BTAG did not specify a preference for one organization of the other.

Portland has fourteen historic districts which include a concentration of historic resources that are thematically related and have local, regional, or national significance. There are an additional six conservation districts, areas that contain a concentration of historic resources with a lower historic significance than historic districts. Historic and conservation districts are officially designated by the Historic Preservation department of the Portland Bureau of Planning. There is one officially designated cultural district in the city, the area surrounding the South Park Blocks, although the term is loosely used to refer to a number of areas, including the Alberta Arts District.²⁵¹

An area designated as a historic or cultural district could be identified one of two ways, either through plaques or other interpretive signage on buildings or street signs, or through the display of flags. The first, placards or signs on buildings, would commemorate the area's past. The second, flags (possibly with a rainbow or pink triangle pattern), would hang from street lights and speak to the area's current role as a sexual minority neighborhood. This is an important distinction, because while there is broad agreement as to the Burnside Triangle's past significance, its future suitability as a sexual minority cultural district was highly controversial within the sexual minority community. Supporters argued that "signage/lighting like Boystown/Halstead in Chicago," or "flags

²⁵¹ Collected Responses to the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group Survey. March, 2003. Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. Portland Records and Archives Center.

(like in S[an] F[rancisco]’s Castro or neighborhood placards (like in Vancouver, BC’s Davie Village) would certainly help to give the neighborhood an identity.”²⁵²

There were multiple arguments against the official designation of the area, or any area, as a sexual minority cultural district. One was safety: “I’m concerned that identifying the triangle as a GLBT identified district could lead to discriminatory activity. GLBT should not be segregated to one small area of the city.” Ghettoization was a big concern: “GLBT folks should feel welcome here and feel free to congregate in this area, but we should not officially sanction any kind of segregation and ghettoization. It might be benevolent in this case, at this time, but look at the bigger picture.” Others questioned the idea of a district, arguing for inclusion: “I was a bartender at Scandals for a few years, so I know the area well. My personal opinion is that if we make it a “GLBT identified district,” it defeats what we are actually fighting for, which is a more inclusive society – we separate ourselves.” Another survey respondent agreed, arguing that a specific district would be a backward step, encouraging segregation and fear: “Less emphasis on bars, sex and drugs – is that what it means to be gay? I moved here five years ago and worked at what is now the Clyde Hotel in the heart of the Burnside Triangle. I received a pretty heavy and dank dose of the Triangle back then and it was enough to keep me away permanently. I’ve lived in NY, Dallas and Chicago, all of whom have gay neighborhoods/districts. I rarely spent time in those neighborhoods either. Why? Because the neighborhoods were ruled by fear of the outside world and in the shadow of this fear

²⁵² Collected Responses to the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group Survey. March, 2003. Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. Portland Records and Archives Center.

lived all the addiction, shallowness, and self hatred that I see very prevalent in the Triangle. I love that in Portland gay people live everywhere (even Beaverton!) and do not succumb to this fear factor.”²⁵³

Among those who supported the idea of a designated cultural district there was debate over the suitability of the Burnside Triangle. Many respondents argued that the bars, bathhouses, and nightclubs in the Burnside Triangle were only a small piece of gay life and one of the less attractive aspects at that: “I have really mixed feelings about this area – after all a nickname like “Vaseline Alley” comes to an area for a reason. If I was going to elevate an area to special status to show people what it means to be GLBT, I would want it to focus less on drinking and sex and more on ALL the aspects of what it means to be gay – a place where more of the GLBT community would want to live, eat, think, play, work, and be. It is just hard to think on the “Triangle” and not use the word “seedy” to describe it. As a very out gay man, this isn’t necessarily the place I want people to associate with me when they think “oh, so that’s what it means to be gay.”²⁵⁴

Tracy Blakeslee, who is gay and the owner of Fantasy Video, one of whose stores was at the time located just outside of the Burnside Triangle, expressed doubts over the suitability of the area in a 2001 Oregonian article: “When you look at what you’re actually memorializing, you’ve got a bunch of bars. For those of us who extend the gay

²⁵³ Collected Responses to the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group Survey. March, 2003. Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. Portland Records and Archives Center.

²⁵⁴ Collected Responses to the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group Survey. March, 2003. Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. Portland Records and Archives Center.

world beyond the bar stool, I'm not sure Stark Street really represents the gay community."²⁵⁵ One respondent argued that the city should invest in the area while the sexual minority community divested and moved on: "There's nothing about gay life in the Triangle worth commemorating. Clean it up, plant street trees, add sidewalk extensions, public art, etc. but leave the "Gay thing" out of it."²⁵⁶

Jettè and the other members of the BTAG supported both placards and flags. The BTAG took a historic walking tour of the Burnside Triangle and surrounding area, originally developed by the Gay & Lesbian Archives of the Pacific Northwest, expanded it and began leading tours. Between seventy-five and one hundred people participated in the tours during the summer of 2002. While the area's historical significance was gaining recognition, there was little in place to ensure it wouldn't be forgotten in the future. Jettè was concerned about the effects of failing to commemorate the area's history on the future: "one of the ways to erase a community is not to have markers," she explained.²⁵⁷ How to fund, script, and place the placards, however, posed a problem.

Portland does not have a system in place to create, display, and maintain historical placards. In many cities this job is done by the city or county historical society, of which Portland has neither. The Oregon Historical Society operates on limited funds and has the responsibility of maintaining the history of the entire state, and the placards are not

²⁵⁵ Courtney Thompson, "Shaping Burnside Triangle's Future," *The Oregonian*, April 30, 2001.

²⁵⁶ Collected Responses to the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group Survey. March, 2003. Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. Portland Records and Archives Center.

²⁵⁷ Melinda Marie Jettè (co-chair, Burnside Triangle Advisory Group) interviewed by the author, March 2011.

within their scope or their budget. The Auld Lang Society, the Portland Development Commission (PDC), and the Skidmore Fountain Society have all provided plaques or other interpretive signs but each was for a specific project with a limited scope and budget. Nicholas Starin, Director of the Historic Preservation Department of the Portland Bureau of Planning explains the system and its effects: “There is no system or single way it happens. One of the effects of this ad hoc system is a varying quality of the physical aspect and a varying quality of the information.”²⁵⁸ Recognizing PDC as a possible partner, the BTAG “poked around to see if there was any interest in funding but there wasn’t.”²⁵⁹

The Portland City Council had laid the groundwork for a historic district eight years earlier when it passed an ordinance sponsored by Commissioner Charlie Hales to “authorize a State Historic Preservation Office grant application requesting \$35,000 to augment the funding of the Update of the 1984 Historic Resources in the Central City Plan Sub-Districts of Downtown, North of Burnside, Northwest Triangle, and North Macadam.”²⁶⁰ The project was completed and twelve buildings in the Burnside Triangle are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A total of fifty are

²⁵⁸ Nicholas Starin (Planner II, Historic Preservation, Portland Planning Bureau), interviewed by the author May, 2011.

²⁵⁹ Jacob Brostoff (co-chair of the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group), interviewed by the author, March, 2011.

²⁶⁰ Council Ordinance No. 173203. March 31, 1999. City Auditor, City Recorder. Portland Archives and Records Center.

listed on the Portland Historic Resource Inventory.²⁶¹ The historical significance of the individual building is generally unrelated to its sexual minority history. The neighborhood is not listed on as a historic district on the National Register, nor is it a Portland Historic or Conservation District.

For historical or cultural district designation to happen a politician would have to sponsor the project and push it through City Council and the BTAG lacked the type of political support needed for that to happen. Although Commissioner Dan Saltzman sponsored all of the proposals related to the BTAG, he did not independently champion the project. It was a “combination of factors” remembers Jettè. “Planning is a very difficult process and very politicized.” For the project to be successful it needed a champion and “there wasn’t someone at the city wide level who would push it through.” Brostoff recalls there were “a combination of people who were supportive and people who were bemused, didn’t know what to do with it. We didn’t meet anyone who was openly hostile” but there was a sense that the district wasn’t needed. Jettè remembers the lack of momentum but argues that the inertia wasn’t all coming from the city. At the time, she recalls, “the queer community was going another way.”²⁶²

b) Housing & Redevelopment

As neighborhoods to the north and south of the Burnside Triangle gentrified, the affordable housing in the neighborhood took on increased significance. Survey

²⁶¹ Oregon Historic Sites Database. http://heritagedata.prd.state.or.us/historic/index.cfm?do=v.dsp_main December 14, 2011; Portland Historic Resources Database, <http://www.portlandonline.com/bps/index.cfm?c=39750&a=346583>. December 14, 2011.

²⁶² Melinda Marie Jettè (co-chair of the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group), interviewed by the author, March, 2011.

respondents voiced their concern that gentrification would destroy one of the few remaining pockets of affordable housing on the West side: “The most important thing is to ensure low-income residents of the area are not displaced by gentrification.” Some offered specific guidelines: “Do not displace any resident more than three blocks from his/her current home. Try not to make more people homeless throughout this process. Do not raise housing rents.” Others argued that the large homeless population was a detriment to the neighborhood: “too many homeless cling to the streets of the Burnside Triangle, especially on Stark.”²⁶³ A tension clearly existed between the desire to clean up the neighborhood and increase profitability for small business owners and the fear that the neighborhood would be cleaned up too much so that rents were raised and businesses and tenants displaced.

During the West End planning process, a petition circulated throughout the West End included both the need for a safe space for sexual minorities and the need for affordable housing: “I support a 24-hour, publicly identified cultural district that provides a safe, supportive and diverse environment for Portland’s sexual minority community to live, work and shop. . . Throughout the West End, Portland must continue to build affordable housing, nurture and strengthen its small businesses and encourage its minority communities to thrive. Changing the zoning to benefit landowners is an irresponsible act that will harm the existing residents, business owners and patrons of the West End. Vote to keep the West End an affordable residential district, with locally

²⁶³ Collected Responses to the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group Survey. March, 2003. Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. Portland Records and Archives Center.

owned small businesses that serve a diverse clientele. Vote to keep existing zoning, to preserve affordable housing, to recognize the importance of the Burnside Triangle to Portland's sexual minorities, and to ensure a supply of affordable small commercial spaces in the West End." More than 280 copies of the letter were signed and submitted to City Hall.

The push to maintain the area's affordable housing stock was not necessarily a benefit to the sexual minority community. The demographic information provided by survey respondents indicated that a very small percentage of GLBT community members actually lived in the Burnside Triangle. The housing in the Burnside Triangle may have been affordable, but it was also severely limited in type and scope. Geographically, the Burnside Triangle is a small area. During the late 1990s, most of the buildings in the neighborhood were two or three stories high with commercial space on the first floor and apartments or office space above. The apartments were small, including several single room occupancy (SRO) buildings: the Alder apartments at 523 Southwest Thirteenth Avenue, 132 units, the Fairfield at 1117 Stark Street with eighty units, The Joyce Hotel at 322 Southwest Eleventh with sixty-five units and the Stewart at 127 Southwest Broadway with sixty units.²⁶⁴

The absence of a strong residential base is one of the things that set the Burnside Triangle apart from more established sexual minority neighborhoods in other cities. The BTAG found that just eight percent of survey respondents reported living in the neighborhood. At the time, there were few condominiums in the neighborhood and no

²⁶⁴ 2008 Central City Housing Inventory, Portland Development Commission Housing Department. http://www.pdc.us/pdf/housing_services/pubs/central-city-inventory-2008.pdf

houses, meaning those who did live in the neighborhood were renters who lacked the influence enjoyed by property owners. Before the Indigo Tower, a 273 unit high-rise at 1227 SW Washington Street, opened in 2010, most of the residential space in the Burnside Triangle was comprised of SRO hotels, some with thirty day residency limits. The lack of a residential base had several implications. Not only did it weaken the connection between the community and the physical space of the neighborhood, but it also limited the influence of the community on the physical space of the neighborhood. The sexual minority oriented businesses were mostly bars, restaurants, or bathhouses open in the evening and at night. Mornings the neighborhood was characterized more by the SRO dwellers and homeless. “One of the differences between the Burnside Triangle and the Castro is there isn’t a lot of permanent residence,” explains Brostoff. “Without a strong residential community to organize with there was a lack of ownership and sponsorship internally.”²⁶⁵

Additionally, many of the gay owned businesses in the Burnside Triangle rented or leased space. The owners of Club Portland owned the building where it was located, but other gay owned businesses, including Scandals, rented space on a month to month lease. The sexual minority community and the property owners were not the same group and did not necessarily share common goals. Although the MHRC and the BTAG worked to include property owners in the planning process, they were largely unsuccessful.

²⁶⁵ Jacob Brostoff (co-chair of the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group), interviewed by the author March, 2011.

Brostoff remembers: “I do not know that people in the neighborhood and people who owned the property wanted [cultural district designation] to happen.”²⁶⁶

In the years since the West End Plan was adopted, the West End, including the Burnside Triangle, has seen the type of redevelopment and gentrification experienced by other parts of the city during the 1990s. In the area to the south of the Burnside Triangle, developers have taken advantage of existing amenities, including the Portland Art Museum and the South Park Blocks to attract tenants to chic new apartment and condo towers. The new buildings have increased the amount of housing in the area but much of the affordable housing identified as a goal during the planning process has been lost. Between 2005 and 2008, the number of rental units in Downtown Portland decreased from 7,785 to 4,940 while the number of owner occupied housing units increased from 901 to 2,002.²⁶⁷ Housing downtown had grown less affordable. In the Central City as a whole the percentage of rental housing affordable to a family earning zero to fifty percent of the median family income decreased by more than twenty-two percent. In 2008, there were 640 units of housing downtown that were affordable to families making zero to thirty percent MFI and another 1,282 for families earning thirty-one to fifty percent.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁶ Jacob Brostoff (co-chair of the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group), interviewed by the author March, 2011.

²⁶⁷ “Downtown” is defined as the area between the Willamette River and Interstate 405 bordered by W Burnside Street to the north, SW Market Street between I-405 and SW Fourth Avenue and I-405 to the South.

²⁶⁸ 2008 Central City Housing Inventory, Portland Development Commission Housing Department. http://www.pdc.us/pdf/housing_services/pubs/central-city-inventory-2008.pdf

“Central City” refers to the Central City Plan Area as defined by the City of Portland (33.510) as updated Nov 9, 2007 (Ord. No. 18137). “Downtown” refers to the area between the Willamette River and I405,

A key player in the redevelopment that shaped Portland's West Side is the Portland based development firm Gerding Edlen. Gerding Edlen's first Pearl District project was the redevelopment of an old warehouse into the new headquarters of Wieden and Kennedy, an advertising firm whose clients include Nike and Coca Cola. Three years later in 2002, Gerding Edlen opened the Brewery Blocks, a five block area at the former site of the Blitz Weinhard Brewery. The Brewery Blocks are at the south end of the Pearl and the northern three blocks of the West End. The southern border of the Brewery Blocks is part of the northern border of the Burnside Triangle. The development bills itself as "a transition between the Central Business District and the River District" that is home to "urban retails, creative Class A office space and residential housing."²⁶⁹

When they were first opened in 2002, the Brewery Blocks might have provided a link between downtown Portland and the Pearl District but travelers riding the new streetcar line that runs north on Tenth and south on Eleventh Avenues, still passed through the Burnside Triangle, past the homeless and near homeless men sitting on the street outside the Joyce Hotel on the corner of Southwest Twelfth and Stark Street. Gerding Edlen recognized the area's potential and they also saw the barrier the Burnside Triangle created. "When we started working in the neighborhoods, the walk from the Galleria to the Armory," a route that takes you directly through the Burnside Triangle,

bounded by W Burnside to the north and to the south by the Ross Island Bridge, not including the University District

²⁶⁹ Family/Brewery History. www.breweryblocks.com. December 14, 2011.

“could be scary at night. The young toughs were scary, drugs were scary, chronic alcoholism could be scary.”²⁷⁰

One of the firm’s objectives was to cross to the south of Burnside Street. Burnside, explained Mark Edlen, is “a huge barrier in the city” and Gerding Edlen felt the Brewery Blocks could be catalytic in connecting the Pearl District to Downtown. They first moved west along Burnside and built the Civic. The building, which opened in 2007, is a high rise apartment and condominium tower with ground floor commercial spaces, next the stadium where the Portland’s major league soccer team, the Timbers play and five blocks west of the Burnside Triangle. They then turned their attention to the Burnside Triangle.

One major obstacle in their vision for the area was Club Portland, a gay bathhouse operating at Southwest Twelfth and West Burnside since 1971. For starters, the building’s windows were boarded up, creating a visually unappealing presence on an important corner. Furthermore, the management of Whole Foods across the street complained of a steady flow of drugs from the bathhouse to the grocery store’s bathroom. While the grocery store addressed the problem by locking the restroom at all times and requiring customers to use a code printed on receipts to gain access, Gerding Edlen took a different approach. In 2007, they bought the bathhouse and set about finding a buyer who would redevelop the property in accordance with their vision for the area. That buyer came in the form of Northwest restaurant, bar and hotel chain, McMenamins. McMenamins was already a presence in the neighborhood. They own and operate the

²⁷⁰ Mark Edlen (Chief Executive Officer, Gerding Edlen), interviewed by the author, March, 2011.

Crystal Ballroom, a music venue at Fourteenth Avenue and West Burnside, Ringlers Pub, and Ringlers Annex at Thirteenth Avenue and West Burnside, all of which are within the Burnside Triangle. McMenamins redeveloped the bathhouse, which is adjacent to Ringlers Annex and reopened it as a boutique hotel called the Crystal in 2011.

While McMenamins was redeveloping the bathhouse, Gerding Edlen turned their attention to a surface parking lot on Southwest Thirteenth Avenue between Southwest Stark and Washington Streets, in the western corner of the Burnside Triangle. The land was owned by the Goodman family, who at the time owned seventy-five percent of parking garages and surface lots in the central city. The Goodman's are known for holding onto their lots and refusing redevelopment offers, but Mark Edlen was able to use his friendship with Greg Goodman to his advantage and convince them to develop. With the land secure, Gerding Edlen partnered with Zimmerman Gunsal Frasca Architects to design and build the Indigo, a twenty two story condominium and apartment tower with Zimmerman as the anchor tenant. Leases start at \$1195.00 per month for a 541 square foot studio.²⁷¹

The Burnside Triangle is within the bounds of the Waterfront Urban Renewal District, but the Indigo is the only project within the Burnside Triangle. During the time the BTAG was active, PDC made several investments in the area, including a streetscape improvement project and a storefront improvement project in the area which gives matching funds to pre approved façade improvement and up to thirty hours of architectural consulting. PDC was an important player in the gentrification of

²⁷¹ Mark Edlen (Chief Executive Officer, Gerding Edlen), interviewed by the author, March, 2011.

surrounding neighborhoods, including the Brewery Blocks. The city also modified zoning in the Burnside Triangle to encourage redevelopment of surface parking lots, like the one the Indigo was built on.²⁷²

Many of the new businesses capitalize on the area's sexual geography, including McMenamins. Part of McMenamins' success comes from their model of converting historic buildings into new businesses then using the building's history as part of their theme and marketing. On their website, McMenamins boasts, The Crystal Hotel will "commemorate, through original artwork and historic photographs, the property's evolution from pioneer residence to a tire shop along the city's original Auto Row to a live jazz club to – most recently and significantly – part of Portland's gay triangle."²⁷³ The sexualized history of the hotel is clearly part of the draw both for the hotel chain and guests. Other business owners, including Mark Edlen, see the area's sexual minority identity not as a focal point but more as an added bonus. The gay entertainment was not a primary driver in their decision to develop the Indigo in the Burnside Triangle, but "it added to it."²⁷⁴ Edlen sees the sexual minority community as a leader in the type of cultural development Gerding Edlen hopes to achieve. Edlen explains, "Gay, lesbian, bisexual where they go others follow." The need is particularly striking in Portland where "ethnic diversity is woefully short. Diversity in terms of GLBT is a big deal in attracting young people." Edlen is not alone in this view. David Fones, a Scandals employee, told

²⁷² Joe Fitzgibbon, "PSU Student brings invisible history to light," the Oregonian, September 27, 2002.

²⁷³ History of the Crystal Hotel. <http://www.mcmenamins.com/CrystalHotel>. December 14, 2011.

²⁷⁴ Mark Edlen (Chief Executive Officer, Gerding Edlen), interviewed by the author, March, 2011.

an Oregonian reporter in 2007, “We didn’t bring a lot of money into this neighborhood, but we made it fashionable. So now people are bringing the money in.”²⁷⁵

The Ace Hotel is one of the most visible redevelopment projects on Stark Street. Located on Stark between Tenth and Eleventh Avenues, the Hotel covers most of the blocks. It opened in 2005 in the old Clyde Hotel building, one of the buildings in the area listed on the National Register of Historic Places. A Stumptown coffee opened in the building and an adjacent dry cleaner was redeveloped as an event space.

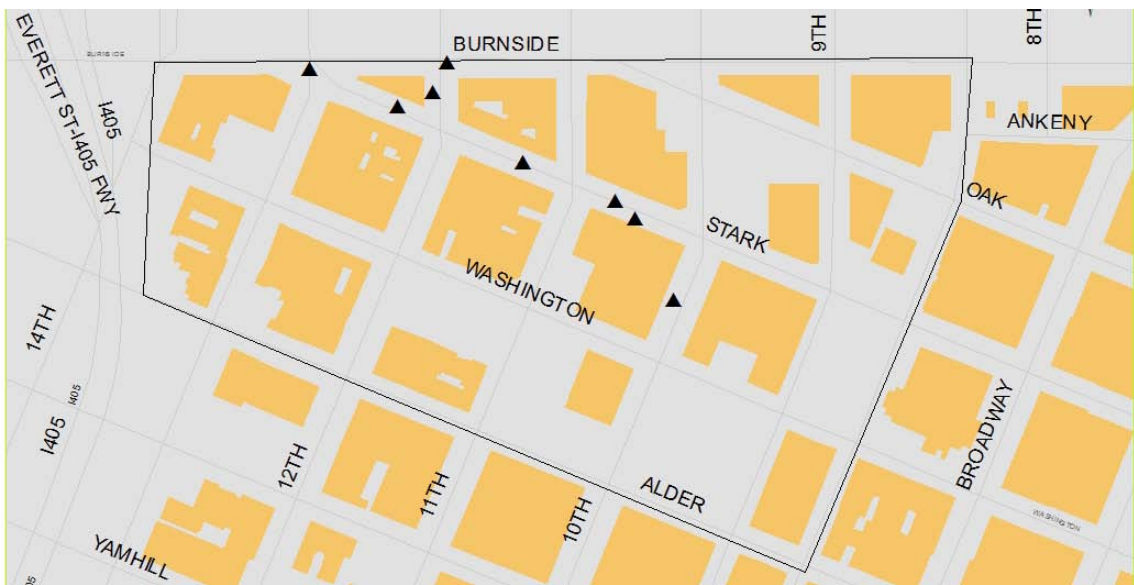
When Edlen talks about his vision for the Burnside Triangle it in some ways sounds remarkably similar to the suggestions made by community members in the 2001 BTAG surveys. A mix of new businesses, improvements in safety for pedestrians and cyclists are all pieces of the vision articulated by the community. In other ways, however, it is a world away. The \$1195.00/month rents at the Indigo are nowhere near the affordable housing the community tried to save. Many of the gay-oriented businesses that once lined Stark Street have closed or relocated to other parts of the city.²⁷⁶ Of the ten currently operating businesses listed on the 2002 historic walking tour created by the BTAG, half had closed or moved outside the Burnside Triangle by 2011. They were replaced by businesses that were not gay-oriented. A number of gay-oriented businesses

²⁷⁵ Steven Beaven, “Transformation at the Triangle”, The Oregonian October 25, 2007.

²⁷⁶ For the purposes of this study businesses are considered “gay-oriented” if they a) self identify as gay bars in advertisements. For example, the landing page of Scandals’ website says “Scandals exists as one of Portland’s most established gay bars since 1979.” (<http://scandalspdx.com/>). Businesses were also included if they participated actively in sexual minority culture. The Roxy Diner, for example, hosts drag shows and is owned by the partner of a well known gay activist and drag performer. The Roxy is also listed as gay-oriented in Gay Travel Guides (<http://portland.gaycities.com/restaurants/>). Businesses are also considered gay-oriented if they were identified in the Gay & Lesbian Archives Historic Walking Tour as gay.

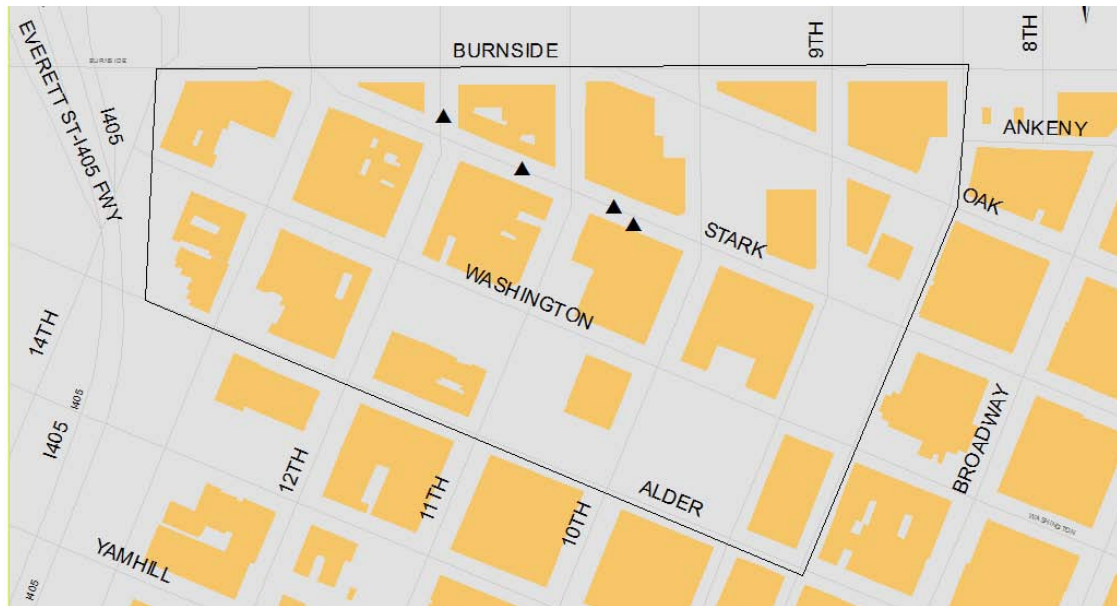
remain in the neighborhood, including Scandals nightclub, Red Cap Garage and Boxxes, and the Roxy Diner, but many new, non-gay specific businesses have opened in the area. Although a lower percentage of businesses in the neighborhood advertise as specifically gay, this is not necessarily an indication that the gay presence in the neighborhood has declined. While they might not be gay specific, none of the new businesses is hostile to sexual minority patrons. Sexual minority visitors and patrons could continue to be a strong presence in the neighborhood even if gay-oriented businesses continue to close or relocate.

Figure 18: Sexual Minority Businesses in the Burnside Triangle, 2002



Source: Burnside Triangle Walking Tour

Figure 19: Sexual Minority Business in the Burnside Triangle, 2010



Source: Portland LGBTQ Community Yellow Pages

d. Conclusion

The factors that influenced the rise and decline of the Burnside Triangle as the most recognized gay entertainment district in the city were mostly municipal level decisions with some influence by national trends and social movement change. Unofficial city policy encouraged gay bars to segregate in the area during the 1960s and 1970s. Lower levels of harassment experienced by gay bars and their patrons created a less militant gay rights movement. The lack of a strong residential base lessened the community's connection to and influence over the built environment. During the 1990s redevelopment and public investment in the area further lessened ties between the neighborhood and the community when some businesses were forced to relocate. At the same time national trends and social change influenced the expansion of the community, which was increasingly likely to include sexual minorities who identified as something other than

“gay male.” As the sexual minority community grew and its relationship with the larger community changed the importance of gay bars lessened.

Table 8: Influence on the Burnside Triangle

Factor	National Trend	Municipal Policy	Neighborhood Policy	State Level Policy	Social Change
Lower levels of discrimination against gay bars & their patrons		X			
Less militant gay rights movement					X
Planning 1970s & 1980s doesn't include sexual minority community		X			
Lack of residential base in Burnside Triangle		X			
Redevelopment & gentrification in surrounding areas/public investments	X	X			
Diversification of sexual minority community	X				X

Case studies of the development of gay spaces in other cities provide valuable information about the way space is sexualized. In many ways, the history of the Burnside Triangle fits into a pattern of gay space formation and development identified in other American cities. It is a sexualized space that developed in response to prejudice and exclusion, although perhaps to a lesser extent than in other cities; a place that has

contributed to the formation of group identity and political consciousness. The neighborhood developed in a depressed urban neighborhood. It is a site of neighborhood activism, and identity formation. More recently, the neighborhood then gentrified and the sexual minority presence began to lessen.

However, Portland and the Burnside Triangle in particular have a distinct political, social and historical context. The city's relatively tolerant culture protected both gay bars and their patrons from much of the police harassment that occurred in other cities during the 1950s and 1960s. The safer environment is perhaps one reason why a strong homophile movement did not develop in Portland during the 1950s. While the gay entertainment venues in the Burnside Triangle provided a space for community and individual identity formation they did not act as an incubator for political activism to the same degree as its peer neighborhoods.

The history of the Burnside Triangle is also distinct in that the sexual minority community was included in the West End planning process. As Frisch has demonstrated, planning processes are often heterosexist.²⁷⁷ It is not clear, however, that the inclusion of the sexual minority community altered the plan's outcome or its effect on the neighborhood. Instead of cementing the Burnside Triangle's connection to the sexual minority community, in the years since the Portland City Council officially adopted the BTAG's recommendations, the sexual minority presence in the neighborhood has decreased. There are several possible explanations for this. The first is a lack of strong

²⁷⁷ Frisch, M. 2002. Planning as a heterosexist project. *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 21 (3): 254-266.

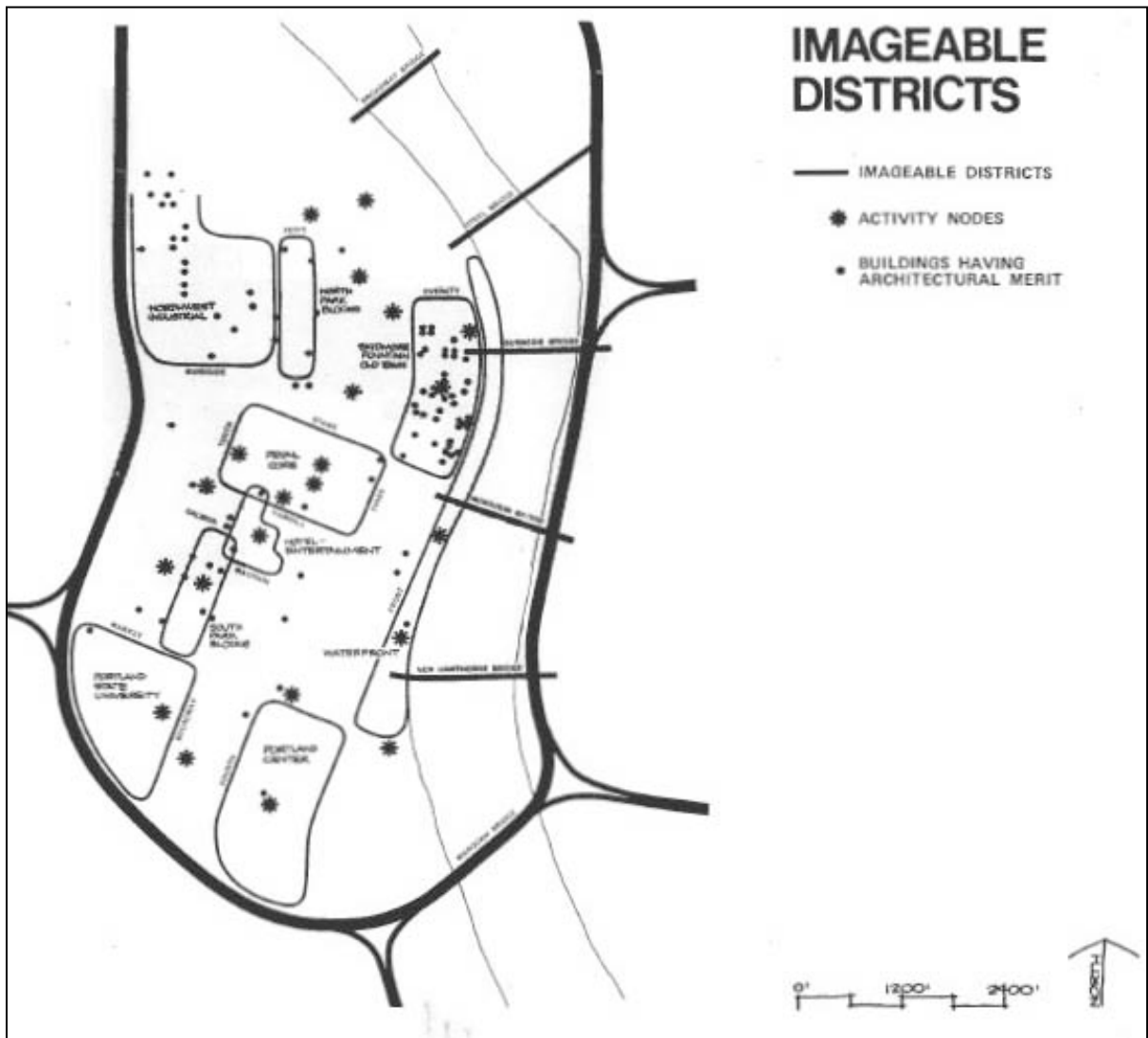
political support. The sexual minority community was included in the West End planning process, but their inclusion was facilitated by two members of the sexual minority community who worked at City Hall. There is no indication that the sexual minority community would have been included in the planning process if Brian Hoop and David Lane had not been in a position to facilitate it. Furthermore, although as a group City Council supported the BTAG's recommendation, including historic or cultural district designation, no single member of the Council stepped forward to give the type of support needed to push the designation through. After the recommendations were adopted by Council no further action was taken. Portland does not have a strong history of sexual minority political activism and with the exception of the BTAG there was a lack of momentum on the part of the sexual minority community.

It is possible, however, that even if the Council had been more supportive, or if there was strong support, that by the time the BTAG recommendations were being considered, it would have been too late. When West End planning process was begun, gentrification and redevelopment had already altered many of the areas surrounding the Burnside Triangle. The Triangle was sandwiched between gentrified areas including the Northwest Alphabet District, the Pearl District, the University District, and the Cultural District. The streetcar runs directly through the Burnside Triangle, increasing its importance to surrounding areas. Not only was the area unsightly but it was an increasingly attractive location of new development.

If the sexual minority community had been active in the planning process during the 1970s and 1980s, then perhaps the Burnside Triangle would today not be losing its

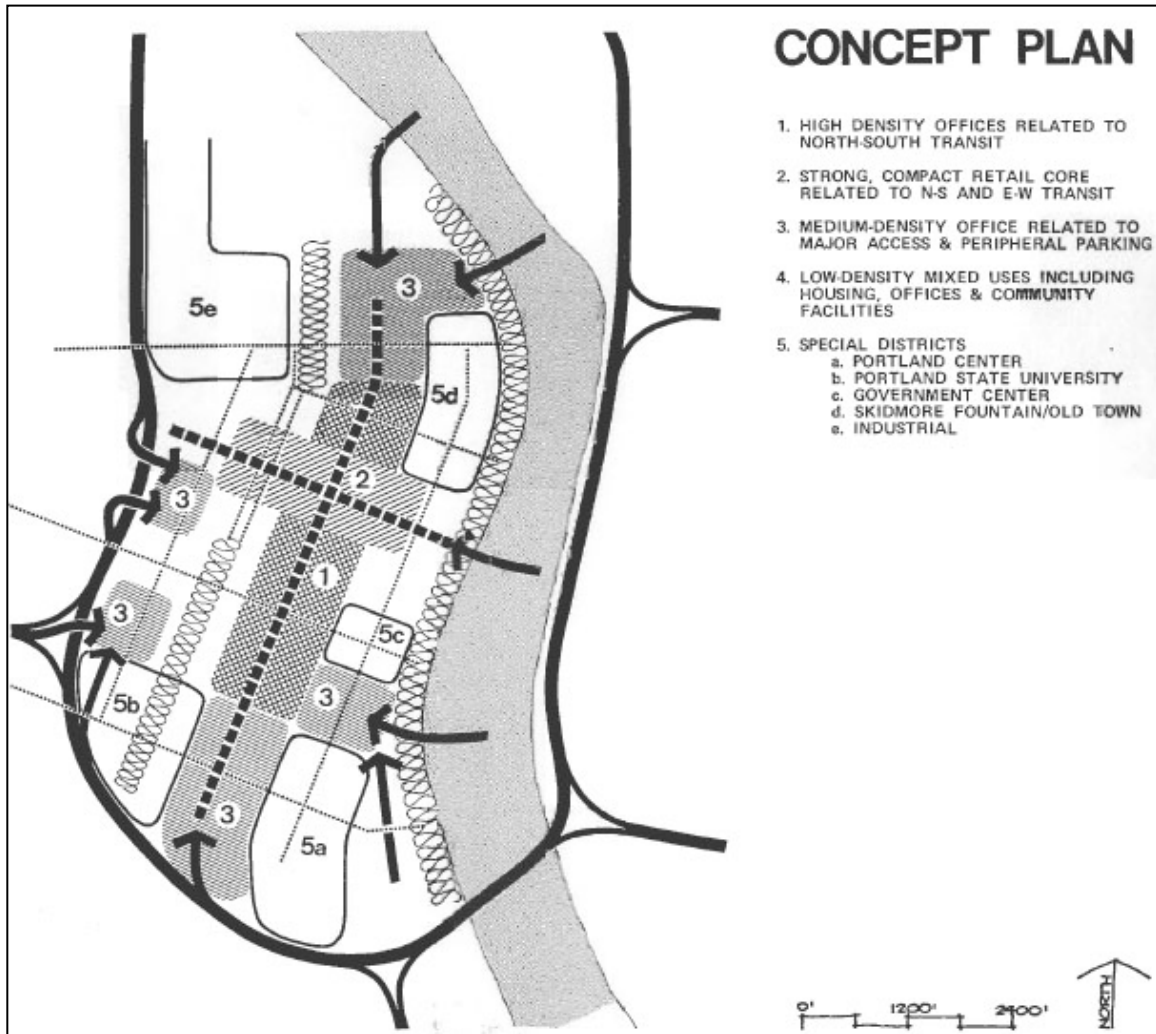
sexual minority identity. The 1972 Downtown Plan targeted the Burnside Triangle for low density mixed-use development including offices and industrial spillover from the area north of Burnside. Not only does the 1972 plan not recognize the Burnside Triangle as a district, let alone an entertainment district, but it contains no mention of the sexual minority community.

Figure 20: Imageable Districts, 1972 Downtown Plan



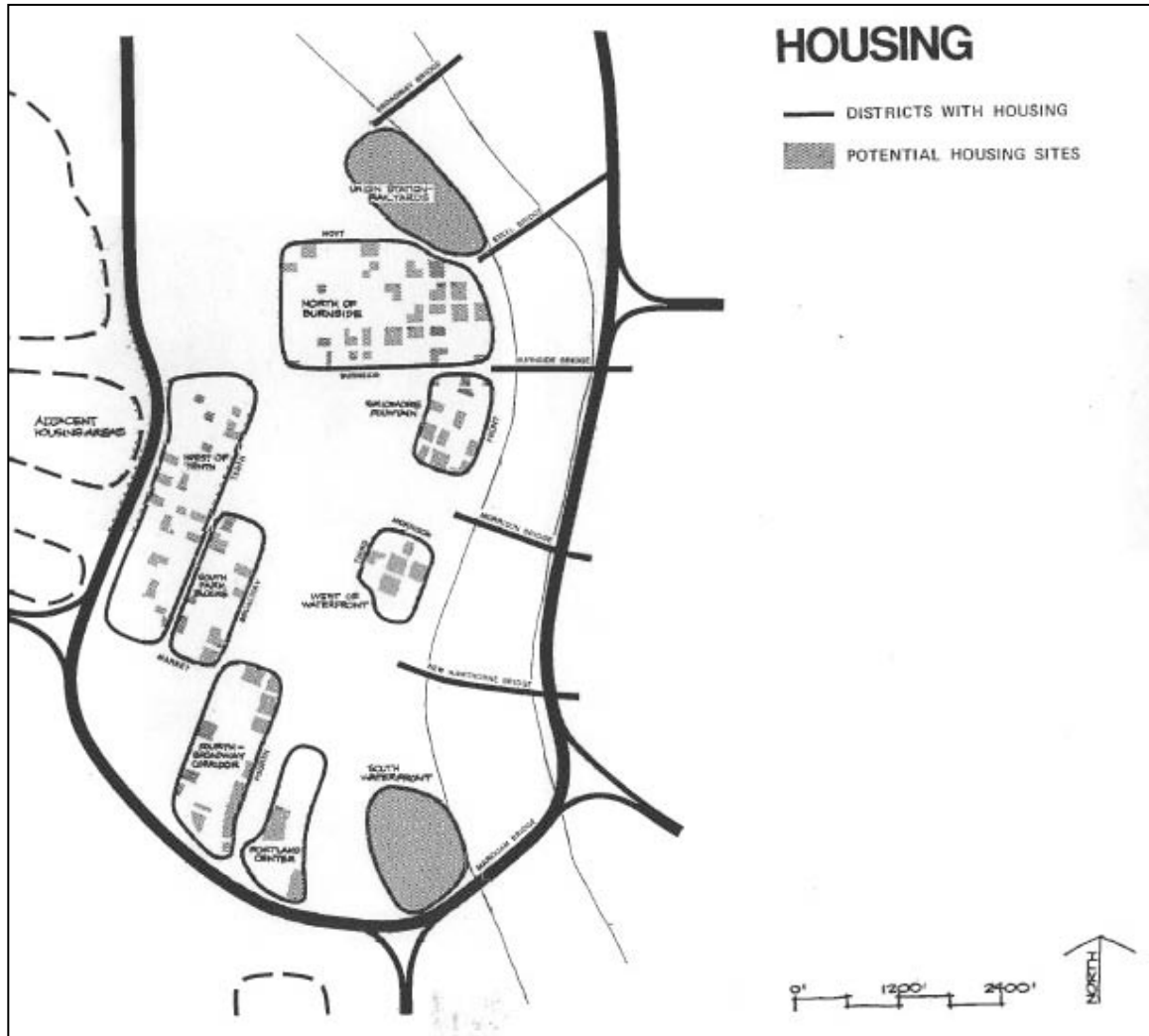
Source: 1972 Downtown Plan. Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

Figure 21: Concept Plan, 1972 Downtown Plan



Source: 1972 Downtown Plan. Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

Figure 22: Housing, 1972 Downtown Plan



Source: 1972 Downtown Plan. Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability.

In the 1988 downtown plan the Burnside Triangle is included in the Downtown subarea, which covers the entire area bordered by the Willamette River to the East, Interstate 405 to the West and south and West Burnside Street to the North. It is not identified as a distinct district. Even within the Downtown subarea, the Burnside Triangle

is not addressed. It appears there were no housing, economic development or urban design plans for the area.

There are two possible implications to the lack of inclusion in either plan. The first is that there the gay community was not a strong enough political force at that time to influence the planning process. It is not unusual for minority communities to be excluded or overlooked in planning processes. Portland has never been home to a large sexual minority activist community. The 1972 Downtown Plan was released just three years after the Stonewall Riots which ushered in the beginning of the modern gay rights movement. In 1971 and 1972, gay men and lesbians in Oregon were working to successfully repeal the Oregon sodomy laws. In the mid 1980s when the Central City Plan was being written, it is likely that gay men were focusing their political will and activism on issues related to HIV/AIDS and attempts to repeal basic rights for gay and lesbians. During the 1980s and 1990s, a number of anti-gay ballot measures were introduced by the conservative group the Oregon Citizens Alliance. Fighting those battles no doubt seemed more pressing than urban planning processes.

The second possibility is that the city's goal was to quietly disperse the sexual minority presence in the neighborhood. The concentration of gay bars in the area was the result of unofficial city policy. If the drive to concentrate the bars was no longer there, or planners and policy makers recognized the area's potential for a use they thought more valuable, it is likely they designated the area for the use they considered more valuable without consideration to the future of the gay bars clustered in the Burnside Triangle.

Although it was not supported by the entire community, an officially recognized geographic identity was a common goal. The suitability of the Burnside Triangle as the location of that geographic identity was, however, more controversial. Cultural district designation and the assumptions that went with it that the Burnside Triangle was in fact *the* sexual minority district in Portland, made little sense to community members who did not feel represented in the area. The significance of the Burnside Triangle's history was not questioned and there was broad based support within the community for historic markers, flags, or other physical reminders of the area's past. Its ability to serve as a center for the larger sexual minority community in the future, however, was not clear.

A key shortcoming was the area's strong association with gay men, which would have been great for a gay male district but was somewhat problematic for a more inclusive sexual minority district. It was more difficult for lesbians, bisexuals, and others whose identity was not "gay male" to see themselves in the Burnside Triangle. This feeling was clear in responses to the BTAG survey. Respondents to the Burnside Triangle was "most important to gay men, less important to bisexuals, people in the suburbs, etc." The area, "isn't the best spot for a queer district. Not only is it male-oriented, and bar-oriented, largely it doesn't serve the diverse needs of ALL people identifying as LGBTQ. It is not bad, but I do not think it is the right place or time either."²⁷⁸ One survey respondent wrote "I do not necessarily feel connected to the Burnside Triangle because I'm a woman. It is all about the boys." Another hoped to see "more representation of the

²⁷⁸ Melinda Marie Jettè (co-chair of the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group), interviewed by the author, March, 2011.

lesbian community – not just a gay men gathering place.”²⁷⁹ Indeed, while the Burnside Triangle was the most visible sexual minority entertainment district in the city at that time, it certainly wasn’t the only area in Portland with a sexual minority identity. A lesbian community developed around Hawthorne Boulevard in Southeast Portland.

Another issue was the type of businesses in the Burnside Triangle. The bars and bathhouses, that primarily served gay men, did not suit the needs of families or those tired of or uninterested in the bar scene. “The area revolves around sex with the strip joints and bath houses. Why not embrace culture and promote the fact that gay people like coffee shops, cafes, etc. and introduce that into the area – hopefully pushing out the strip joints and disgusting bath house. If this is an area that speaks to the community as a representative of what gay people find important, why not include legitimate business and endorse something other than nudity and alcohol . . . there IS a market for it. (P.S. I’m not a lesbian; I’m a 33 year old gay guy).” Community members wanted to see a wider variety of businesses and business types. One suggestion was to “have upscale restaurants, stores, coffee shops, bookstores, antique stores that appeal to all walks of life; yet are primarily owned and operated by gays and lesbians. Make it a cheery, clean, safe place that invites artists, business men and women, and tourists.” A fairly standard list of desired business types was repeated in multiple responses: “Need more businesses that would draw me there, i.e. coffee shops, bookstores, etc. Portland needs the Triangle. We can make it into something wonderful for the diverse community of our town!” It wasn’t

²⁷⁹ Collected Responses to the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group Survey. March, 2003. Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. Portland Records and Archives Center.

just the type of businesses but also the hours when they were open: “I would love to see this area become a vibrant place for everyone in the gay community. I want to see business prosper, and grow because of our support, and then more cafes and shops move into the district. This would create daytime activity, and be a fun place to meet friends for lunch, or after work cocktails. More variety of things to do, particularly daytime; more vibrant street scene with variety of businesses.”²⁸⁰

Many respondents to the BTAG survey also indicated they were looking for a more family friendly environment. “I am a bisexual single mother of a young child and would love for my partner and I to go to community events with my son.” As more community members became parents they needed spaces that were safe, convenient, and entertaining for children. “Make it more of a kid friendly place. My partner and I have a toddler that we cannot bring to the Burnside Triangle as it is now.” The Burnside Triangle is bounded by busy city streets and the only public park or plaza in the neighborhood is O’Bryant Square, a hard surface plaza used most often by the homeless and social service providers who serve the homeless. The absence of a community center, which might have met some of the families’ needs, was also an issue. “A community center would help our community reverse the trend toward large city isolationism that, I believe, does not have to follow with growth. We need a place besides bars and once or twice a year events to come together. Community builds strength, provides support, and

²⁸⁰ Collected Responses to the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group Survey. March, 2003. Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. Portland Records and Archives Center.

helps us become a force in shaping the larger community of Portland and area.”²⁸¹

Although Brostoff at one time campaigned for a community center to be built in the Burnside Triangle, at the present location of the West End Bike Shop on the Northwest corner and Southeast Stark Street and Eleventh Avenue, “the more I heard other people’s stories and concerns the less I pushed for it.”²⁸² In the years since the BTAG was active, a sexual minority community center, the Q Center, has opened. Although the BTAG campaigned for the center to open in the Burnside Triangle, acting as an anchor and expanding what the neighborhood had to offer families, in the end, the Q Center opened in North Portland on Mississippi Avenue. Like much of the city, the five blocks of North Mississippi Avenue between North Fremont and North Skidmore were experiencing reinvestment during the 1990s. Long neglected by the city and mainstream lending institutions, Mississippi and the surrounding residential neighborhoods of Boise, King, and Eliot became fashionable in the early 2000s. The neighborhoods are well served by transit, including the nearby MAX Yellow Line, are convenient to downtown, and housing prices are more affordable than in other close in neighborhoods, which experienced the same type of gentrification in the 1970s. The City helped fund the Q Center, providing \$5,000 of federal Community Block Grant money. A 2003 survey sponsored by the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer & Questioning Community

²⁸¹ Collected Responses to the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group Survey. March, 2003. Comprehensive Planning and District Planning - Planning Project Records - West End Burnside Triangle Advisory Group - GLBT Historic Sites. Portland Records and Archives Center.

²⁸² Jacob Brostoff (co-chair of the Burnside Triangle Advisory Group), interviewed by the author March, 2011.

Center Fund, a non-profit, found that the majority of respondents favored an eastside location of the new community center.²⁸³

The central challenge, of course, in finding a location for the sexual minority community center, lay in creating a space to meet the complex needs and wants of an entire community. A community comprised of people of different ages, family structures, economic statuses and tastes, and then to provide them with enough parking to make the space accessible. Ultimately, the community felt Mississippi Avenue was a better location than the Burnside Triangle. One advantage of Mississippi Avenue was the availability of a variety of housing types. A residential base for the sexual minority community would be much more probable on Mississippi Avenue than in the Burnside Triangle.

If the Burnside Triangle had been officially connected with the sexual minority community during the 1972 and 1988 Downtown plans, the community might have been able to gain a more permanent hold in the neighborhood, through property ownership and expanded representation in neighborhood associations. In that case, it is likely that the neighborhood would today still be experiencing gentrification. With a stronger legal and economic connection to the neighborhood, however, more members of the sexual minority community would likely be beneficiaries of the economic benefits of gentrification.

It is not entirely clear whether these benefits, and the designation and strengthened ties that would have led to them, would be shared with members of the

²⁸³ Steven Beaven, "Transformation at the Triangle", the Oregonian October 25, 2007.

sexual minority community other than gay men. During the 1970s and 1980s the sexual minority community with the greatest claim on the Burnside Triangle was gay men. During the West End planning process, surveys distributed by the BTAG found that many people who identified as sexual minorities but were not gay men did not feel at home in the Triangle. When the long hoped for sexual minority community center opened it was not in the Burnside Triangle, or in the established lesbian district in Southeast Portland, but in North Portland. Locating the Q Center on North Mississippi Avenue was a statement that the community was becoming more inclusive and looking to redefine its spatial connection to the city. People who identify as bisexual or transgender, and a new generation of gay men and lesbians who were not as connected to established districts were looking for an area that was not just “for the boys.”

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Case studies of sexualized spaces have been conducted in many urban areas and while distinct trends have been identified, each city's experience reflects its own distinct economic, social, and political culture. Furthermore, studies of sexualized spaces in urban policy and planning literature tend to focus on policies written specifically to address the sexualization of space, usually zoning codes. For example, Hubbard's study of gentrification and sexualized spaces in London and Paris examines specific actions taken by the government to desexualize an already sexualized space.²⁸⁴ Likewise, Papayanis's study of adult entertainment in New York examines city officials' use of zoning to remove adult entertainment and related uses from a specific neighborhood.²⁸⁵ The study of sexualized spaces in Portland adds to the existing literature in that it explores not only policies designed to address sexualized spaces once the sexualization process has already occurred, but also the influence of urban planning and policy decisions that shaped spaces either before or during the sexualization process. Portland's sexual geography has been influenced by a series of public policy, urban planning, and land use decisions that in concept have little if anything to do with adult entertainment, prostitution, or other activities that mark a space as sexualized. By exploring the way these policies and planning decisions, which include economic development initiatives and transportation planning decisions, have shaped sexualized space in unanticipated ways, we will gain a

²⁸⁴ Hubbard, P. 2004. Cleansing the metropolis: Sex work and the politics of zero tolerance. *Urban Studies* 41(9): 1678-1702.

²⁸⁵ Papayanis, M. A. 2000. Sex and the revanchist city: zoning out pornography in New York. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 18 (3): 341-353.

better understanding of the connection between urban policy, land use planning, and sexualized spaces. This analysis can help policy makers and planners to better understand the way spaces become sexualized and thus make them better equipped to address sexualization when it occur.

The sexual geography of Portland, Oregon has evolved, during the past forty-five years, in response to a number of factors including changing market forces, trends in the entertainment industry, new technologies, evolving social movements, and changing sexual norms. These factors affected individual sexualized spaces and the sexual geography of the city as whole. Sexual geographies are also shaped by public policy and urban planning decisions. Sexualized spaces often develop in economically depressed areas. An area's status as economically depressed changes due to economic conditions, regional growth patterns, local tax structure which impacts where businesses locate, and planning decisions that influence where new residential and commercial development locate.

The three case studies represent different sexual practices and identities with distinct histories. In the early 1970s, Portlanders began to see new types of business open around the city – ones that specialized in adult entertainment. Angry residents wrote to the Mayor and City Council, imploring them to step in and close the businesses. Or, if they could not be banned entirely, to segregate them in Old Town. City Hall turned to the City Attorney and Planning Bureau who spent nearly two decades trying to find a solution that would please angry city residents and still be legal under the state constitution. While city residents and city leaders focused their attention of Old Town,

just blocks away the Burnside Triangle was struggling to maintain its role as Portland's most visible gay entertainment district. For decades the small corner of the city had been the social and political center of the region's gay community, but faced with redevelopment pressures and the changing needs of a community that now defined itself as queer or GLBTQ rather than gay, the future of the Triangle seemed unsure.

As the Burnside Triangle was struggling to maintain its connection with sexual expression, Montavilla was fighting to shed its association. By the 1990s, the mostly residential and solidly middle class neighborhood on the east side of Mt. Tabor found itself in the center of Portland's most visible street prostitution market. The city stepped in and made the area a Prostitution Free Zone where people arrested for prostitution related crimes faced additional penalties and were barred from entering the neighborhood. When faced with constitutional challenges, however, the city allowed the zone to sunset and prostitution swiftly returned to the neighborhood. Neighborhood residents mobilized in an unsuccessful attempt to have the zones reinstated and were left feeling ignored and unprotected by the city.

In 1970, pornography, homosexuality, and prostitution were all illegal in the United States, including Oregon. Over time, the legal status and social acceptability of all three have been questioned extensively. In Oregon, laws against adult pornography and sodomy have been repealed. Legalization of prostitution has also been considered but ultimately rejected. As beliefs surrounding these practices shift so too does the geography of the city. Portland's sexual geography in 2010 looks very different than its sexual geography in 1970. There are some things, however, that remain constant. The location

of Portland's street prostitution market, for example, has shifted considerably in the past sixty years. The proximity of the market to neighborhoods that are economically disadvantaged and have larger non-white populations has remained.

Evolving and interconnected social movements, including the gay rights movement altered the level of acceptance of homosexuality, while third wave feminism influenced the amount of pornography produced by and for women.

The way in which these factors work together in the context of one particular city, with a distinct culture and legal structure provides a fuller understanding of both the individual city and the ways in which physical landscapes shape and are shaped by social and political forces. Portland's strong history of planning practice and reputation for sexual openness make it a fascinating location for a study of the relationship between public policy and sexual geography. Since the 1970s, Portland has been nationally recognized as a leader in progressive planning practice. Portland and the surrounding region are known for a regional growth concept with a hierarchy of mixed use areas where growth is targeted. Land use and transit plans emphasize the importance of connecting land use and transportation planning and resources are directed toward transit, bicycle, and pedestrian improvements and away from highway construction. In the city, the neighborhood association structure and a culture of public involvement are designed to give residents greater levels of influence in community planning processes.

In each of the three case studies urban planning and policy decisions have played a role either in the way the sexual geography developed or in attempts to reshape the geography once it had been sexualized. Although planning, and in particular zoning, was

often seen as a tool to effect positive change in the way a space was sexualized, the relationship between urban planning, public policy, and sexualized space was most often unintentional. Some of the biggest impacts on the location of sex related businesses, prostitution markets, and sexual minority entertainment areas have been urban land use and policy decisions taken for other purposes.

Portland also has a reputation as a socially and sexually liberal city. In 2009, well known porn actor Ron Jeremy came to Portland to promote a new branch of Club Sesso, a swingers club with locations in San Francisco and Las Vegas. In 2011, Portland became the second major US city after San Francisco to cover the cost of sex-reassignment surgery for municipal workers in its health-care plan. The city is known for both the number of strip clubs in the city and the diversity in type of clubs. In addition to traditional strip clubs, patrons can visit a vegan strip club, a punk rock strip club, and a club that operates as an employee owned co-op. Portland is rumored to have more strip clubs per capita than any other city in the country. While there is some dispute as to which city holds this title, it is a rumor that Portlanders repeat frequently and sometimes proudly. In Portland strippers are more likely to be seen as empowered rather than exploited. When local dancer Viva Las Vegas published her memoir in 2009, Magic Gardens, she was invited to speak at the local independent mega-bookstore, Powell's. Danzine, an advocacy organization for sex workers that published a trade magazine for exotic dancers operated in Portland from 1995 to 2003. Dante's, a music venue located on the border of Downtown and Old Town has "Sex Industry Night" every Sunday, when

sex industry workers are charged a lower cover price to attend the club's weekly "Sinferno" cabaret.

Portland also has a reputation as sexual minority friendly city. It was ranked twelfth on the Advocate's 2012 list of "Gayest Cities in America" and second on the "Top Five Lesbian cities in the US" in 2009.²⁸⁶ Portland was also the first major US city to elect an openly gay mayor. Historically, gay bars and their patrons in Portland did not suffer discrimination to the same degree as other cities. This may be a reason why the gay rights movement in Portland was not militant. Gay rights movements in other cities did a better job highlighting past and current discrimination and publicizing those conditions to the larger community. When members of the sexual minority community in Portland advocated for the designation of the Burnside Triangle as a historic or cultural district, they came up against the idea that it wasn't really necessary. In the same way liberal Portlanders like to believe they live in a "post racial" society, they also like to believe that the city is so free of discrimination against sexual minorities that any special protections or policies are not necessary.

Portland prides itself on being distinct but to what extent does that distinctness extend to the city's sexual geography? Does Portland's sexual geography conform to established patterns to the extent that we can assume that national trends are the dominant element in shaping sexualized spaces? Or are there distinct elements in Portland's culture and

²⁸⁶ www.news.advocate.com

www.cardcarringlesbian.com

Oregon's legal system that led to a distinct experience? What is the interplay between the culture of planning practice and the sexualization of space?

a. How universal is Portland's experience?

In many ways, Portland's sexual geography follows established patterns. Like other American cities, including San Francisco, New York, Detroit and Boston, Portland looked at zoning as a tool to shape the location of adult entertainment. It was unsuccessful however due to state level policy. One of the most important factors in Portland's sexual geography, and something that sets it apart from most other American cities, is the Oregon State Constitution which is widely considered to have the most liberal free speech provision in the country.²⁸⁷ The Oregon Supreme Court has interpreted the constitution to the benefit of strip clubs and other forms of adult entertainment. Local policies, including the zoning codes which many cities use to restrict the location of adult businesses, are ineffective in Portland.

The Oregon Constitution is the reason strip clubs cannot be limited through zoning but alone it is not the reason for the adult entertainment industry in Portland. Businesses are only successful when there is a demand for what they are selling. In Portland multiple strip clubs cater to a niche market. This is evidence of interplay between the sexual geography of strip clubs and local culture. In other ways, the distribution and variety in clubs mirrors other elements of Portland's culture. Portland is a city of neighborhoods where many people value supporting local businesses. The

²⁸⁷ Oregon State Constitution

proliferation of strip clubs, many of which are relatively small compared to clubs in Washington County is evidence that localism extends to adult entertainment.

It is not surprising that of the three sexual geographies explored in the case studies, prostitution continues to be the most marginalized. In 1970, when this study begins, pornography, homosexual acts, and pornography were all illegal and those who participated in them could expect consequences ranging from harassment and discrimination to jail sentences. Over the past sixty-five years, however, the stigma associated with homosexuality and adult pornography has changed dramatically. In Oregon, both are legal. Views surrounding prostitution have also changed but not as dramatically. While a strong stigma continues to surround prostitution, which is still illegal, views about the people who participate have changed. Today it is more likely that the male customers of female prostitutes and the pimps who manage the prostitutes will be judged more harshly than the sex workers, who are often viewed as victims.

During the past 150 years, the geography of prostitution in Portland shifted from the Willamette River, east to North and inner Northeast Portland and then further east, along Sandy Boulevard, setting most recently on Eighty Second Avenue. Although police and neighborhood groups worked at different times to shape the geography of prostitution, the driving force behind the migration was gentrification and redevelopment. As neighborhoods were redeveloped, prostitution moved east to neighborhoods where gentrification had not yet occurred. In this way, Portland's street prostitution market is very similar to those in other American cities.

Of the three case studies, the prostitution market on Eighty Second Avenue is not only the strongest example of zoning being used successfully to alter a physical geography, at least for a limited time, it is also the best example of other land use and policy decisions shaping a sexualized space. The combination of transportation factors (near major thoroughfares, near transportation hubs, multiple avenues of escape from the street, sidewalks that meet uninterrupted with the street, roads that allow drivers to slow down or stop, reasons for loitering) and land use factors (presence of adult establishments, places where sexual transactions can occur, places where prostituted individuals can take a break) created the preconditions for an active prostitution market. Once the preconditions were in place, sex workers, their customers and pimps turned the area into a sex market.

The Burnside Triangle also conformed to existing patterns in that it developed in an economically depressed area near the city center and was influenced by prejudice and exclusion. The history of the Burnside Triangle conforms to four of the five steps of gay village formation identified by Colling and Ruting based on the experience of other cities. The one step the Burnside Triangle did not experience was step three: expansion. Unlike other gay villages, the Burnside Triangle did not gain a stronger footing in the community with a strong residential base. San Francisco's Castro District, Chicago's Boystown and Philadelphia's Washington Square all include strong residential bases. Those cities, however, are much larger than Portland and their gay entertainment districts serve larger metropolitan areas. Of the widely identified gay districts in the United States, most are either in large cities or small towns, including Provincetown, MA, Key West,

FL and Palm Springs, CA. If there had been a stronger ownership base in the neighborhood it is possible it would have retained a stronger sexual minority identity.

During the past forty years Portland had several opportunities to adopt radical policies in response to sexual geography. During the 1970s, Portland considered adopting a zoning code to concentrate adult entertainment in one area. During the 1980s, the City Club proposed a zone where prostitution was legal. During the 1970s and 1980s, plans were made for the area which includes the Burnside Triangle. Each time the more radical plan was rejected.

What is perhaps most striking about the interplay between the culture of planning practice and sexual geography in Portland is the belief that sexual geography can be influenced through planning practice. Portlanders have actively embraced the neighborhood association structure in attempts to shape sexualized space. Campaigns against adult entertainment and prostitution have been launched through neighborhood associations and related community groups. The Burnside Triangle Advisory Group attempted to use participation in the planning process to influence the city's geography. With the exception of the Prostitution Free Zone, none of these attempts have successfully altered Portland's sexual geography. Yet, there continues to be a belief that planning practice can deliberately alter sexualized space.

Although Portland has a reputation as a strip club friendly city, the opening of new strip clubs continues to be met with protest. In September 2011, the owners of Northwest Portland strip club Casa Diablo announced they planned to open a second location on Southeast McLoughlin. Local residents met the announcement with protests

and appeals to the Oregon Liquor Control Commission to reject the vegan strip club's application for a liquor license.²⁸⁸ The club was originally scheduled to open in December 2011 but as of February 2012 has still not opened. Despite neighborhood protest, the owners will most likely be successful in opening the new club.

b. How does Portland craft policy?

The policies created to address sexualized space in Portland during the past forty five years do not conform to one identified policy creation practice. The most organized and thoughtful policy creation process was also the least effective. Since 1987 when the Oregon Supreme Court ruled that nude dancing was free speech, it has been virtually impossible to limit the location of adult businesses in the state. Prior to that ruling, planners and City Council members in Portland did try to limit the location of adult entertainment. For fifteen years, they worked to find ways to limit the number and location of adult businesses. During the 1980s, Portland devoted considerable resources to limiting the location of adult bookstores and movie theaters through the use of zoning. City Council members, the Planning Bureau, the City Attorney, neighborhood associations, and the police all worked together in what might have been a good example of citizen participation and land use planning had it been more successful. Ultimately, those attempts had little if any direct impact on the location of adult entertainment in Portland. This is not to say, however, that urban planning and policy decisions did not play a role. The redevelopment of downtown during the 1970s, the concentration of aging housing stock in Old Town, and the location of non adult entertainment all influenced the

²⁸⁸ Sarah Mirk, "Neighbors plan protest of new vegan strip club." *Portland Mercury*, September 9, 2011.

relationship between Old Town and adult entertainment. Public policy in the form of state law and its interpretation by the courts was instrumental in governing where adult businesses could locate. Local interests were overruled by the State Supreme Court and thirty years later two of the theaters were still operating. The others were most likely lost in the transition to the VCR and later the internet. Adult entertainment in Portland is now more likely to feature live performers than it was in 1982. This is a result both of changing technology and state law. Neither is the result of local culture, planning practice or policy. There is no indication that they would not try again were there an option available to them. The policy that allow for the geographic spread of strip clubs Portland is so proud of, is in fact a state wide policy.

The policies written to address the prostitution demonstrate a lack of coordinated effort and follow through. The PFZ was not the first time the idea of creating a specific zone with a different sexual geography than the rest of the city was advocated. During the late 1970s city planners looked at the idea of using zoning to create a concentrated area of adult entertainment businesses. In the 1980s, City Club advocated for one area where prostitution would be legal. Both ideas faced criticism and neither was implemented. The Prostitution Free Zone was modeled after another exclusionary zone Portland was using at the time, the Drug Free Zone. Drug Free Zones has been in use for two years when Portland first instituted the Prostitution Free Zone. The use of exclusionary zoning to address prostitution might have been consistent with other types of exclusionary zones but it was also an interruption in a longer policy process designed to combat the effects of prostitution. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the City of Portland and Multnomah

County convened stakeholder groups to study prostitution and make recommendations about the best way to address the problem. The recommendations of the various task forces were designed to be applied to the entire City or County and to be used for a number of years. Instead, the city used the recommendations to form policy only briefly and then changed gears, transitioning to exclusionary zoning that targeted select areas of the city for a limited time period. Instead of being an area where an otherwise illegal activity was allowed, the Prostitution Free Zone was an area where extra penalties were added to an already illegal activity.

In the case of the prostitution market on Eighty-Second Avenue, the city was somewhat successful in altering the area's sexual geography, at least temporarily, through the use of zoning. During the period when the area was designated as a Prostitution Free Zone, arrests for prostitution decreased. When the zone was discontinued arrests increased. The designation of the area as a PFZ and news coverage of community activism after the zone was discontinued reinforced beliefs about the area's sexual geography in the minds of people who were not connected with the area or the sex market. While the PFZ provided temporary relief for local residents, it also increased the stigma felt by area residents and businesses that comes from being associated with a sex market.

The trend which will most affect the way Portland views prostitution is the shift from outdoor to indoor prostitution. Increasingly, prostitutes who are able are working out of their own homes or rooms rented for prostitution. The internet and cell phones make it easier for clients to find and contact sex workers. Working in a space where they

have more control makes it safer for sex workers. Not having to meet on the street makes the transaction more discreet for both parties. In much the same way video tapes, DVDs, and the internet shifted the consumption of pornography from commercial businesses on city streets to private homes, cell phones and the internet are shifting prostitution from city streets to hotels and apartments. Much anti-prostitution policy focuses on the effect of prostitution on urban neighborhoods. The Prostitution Free Zone, for example, did not extend to crimes that occurred entirely within private residences. It is likely that the more hidden prostitution is the less attention the police and policy makers will pay to the problem.

Recently, the focus on prostitution is on human trafficking rather than the effect of prostitution on individual city neighborhoods. During the 1970s and 1980s, prostitution was often connected to drugs but overall it was believed to operate on a smaller, more local scale. Today, it is much more common for prostitution to be controlled by a network operating up and down the West Coast. Multnomah County Deputy Sheriff Keith Bickford explains “There’s just a lot more money involved with that you do not have to go out and find, you know if you sell your drugs you have to go out and get more, you have to find more, same thing with guns. With people, like you said, it is renewable. The drug cartels down in Mexico are a great example. You call them drug cartels but they are going a lot more toward using people a lot more and selling them. I see that transition going and I see it happening very quickly too.”²⁸⁹

²⁸⁹ Keith Bickford (Multnomah County Deputy Sheriff), interviewed by the author, May 2011.

Of course this is not the first time Portland has faced prostitutes moving in from outside the city. During the Lewis and Clark Exposition the city experienced an influx of prostitutes. The human trafficking panic of today has parallels to the white slave trade concerns of at the turn of the century. The association between organized crime and prostitution is certainly not new, neither is the association between immigrant groups and prostitution. If anything, what we see today reinforces the idea that prostitution, like so many other businesses, is cyclical. As is the policy designed to combat it.

The method by which city officials addressed policy surrounding the designation of the Burnside Triangle as a cultural district fits Sharp's definition of non-responsiveness. City Council, both individually and as a collective, responded to the policy demands of activists by supporting the BTAG but they failed to take decisive action to make their support official.²⁹⁰

Urban planning also played a central role in attempts to confirm the sexual geography of the Burnside Triangle during the early 2000s. Specifically, members of the sexual minority community attempted to use participation in the West End planning process to gain official designation of the neighborhood as a sexual minority historical or cultural district. That attempt was unsuccessful and the connection between the Burnside Triangle and the sexual minority community has lessened in the past ten years. In other ways, urban planning and policy did shape the rise and fall of the Burnside Triangle as a gay entertainment district. Unofficial city policy during the 1950s and 1960s clustered gay

²⁹⁰ Sharp, E. 2002. Culture, Institutions and Urban Officials' Responses to Morality Issues. *Political Research Quarterly* 55 (4): 861-883.

bars in the area. During the 1970s and 1980s the lack of explicit participation of the sexual minority community in planning processes kept the relationship between the community and the physical space from solidifying. Redevelopment in surrounding areas and public investments in transportation then created redevelopment pressures which led to the dislocation of the bars which once gave the area its sexual minority identity.

Portland City Council failed to officially identify the area as a cultural district which is inconsistent with other city actions which identify historic districts, conservation districts and districts with particular economic development intentions.

The geography of the city's sexual minority entertainment district has changed in recent years. Influenced by gentrification and the changing needs of an increasingly diverse community, the gay bars which once lined Southwest Stark Street have now dispersed throughout the city. Gay bars are increasingly integrated into mainstream nightlife locations. Businesses that do not identify as sexual minority oriented are less likely to discriminate against sexual minority patrons than they were in the past. Some businesses offer special nights where the business caters to the sexual minority community. The Oaks Park Roller Skating Rink offers gay skate night and dance club Holocene offers Gaycation, one of the longest running "gay nights" in the city. Plan B, a club in Portland's Central East Side, also has gay night and other clubs, including Tube and Rotture and known as gay friendly. Public sexual minority entertainment is not as limited to bars as it once was. Touchstone, Blend and Jackman Joe are three of the Portland's lesbian coffee shops. There are also at least two lesbian bookstores, It's My Pleasure and In Other Words. Portland has both a Lesbian and Gay Men's Choir. Sexual

minority parents and their young children can participate in Rainbow Babies, a biweekly playgroup at the Q Center. In addition to the gay and lesbian bowling league which was formed in 1979, Portland is also home at least nine other sexual minority sports leagues.²⁹¹

Over the past forty-five years, Portland's sexual geography developed in ways familiar but not identical to other American cities. The diversity, both in terms of location and culture, of Portland's large adult entertainment industry reflects a strong sense of individual freedom and sexual liberation. The lack of support for a recognized gay entertainment district is a disappointment in a city that prides itself on equity. As the sexual minority community grows and expands there will be opportunities for Portland planners and city leaders to engage with the community in more substantive ways.

During the next forty-five years, Portland can expect to see its sexual geography shift in new and possibly unexpected ways. As prostitution markets shift indoors and take on characteristics of interstate commerce, the sexual minority community continues to grow and shape neighborhoods around the city and adult entertainment's role in mainstream entertainment continues to shift, policy makers and planners will be challenged to make decisions that equitably distribute the benefits and burdens sexualization on individual communities.

²⁹¹ Sports and Recreation: LGBT-Friendly. www.portlandtravel.com

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Appendix A: Table A.1 Interviews

Interview	Date	Position
Anonymous	4/28/2011	Eighty Second Avenue Business Owner
Keith Bickford	5/4/2011	Multnomah County Deputy Sheriff
Ed Blackburn	3/24/2011	Director, Central City Concern
Jacob Brostoff	3/30/2011	Co-chair, Burnside Triangle Advisory Group
Mark Edlen	3/24 2011	Gerding Edlen Developers
Fritz Hirsch	9/16/ 2011	Montavilla in Action
Brian Hoop	4/29/ 2011	Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement
Melinda Marie Jettè	3/18/ 2011	Co-chair, Burnside triangle Advisory Group
Lila Lee	5/6/ 2011	Council for Prostitution Alternatives
Don Mazziotti	4/13/ 2011	Chief of Planning
Gary Sergeant Sr.	4/26/ 2011	Eighty Second Avenue Business Owner
Nicholas Starin	4/13/ 2011	Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, Historic
Jeri Williams	5/12/ 2011	Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement
Cathy Myers Wirt	4/5/ 2011	Mallory Avenue Christian Church

Appendix B: Table B1. Adult Entertainment, Portland Oregon, 1970-2982

Business Name	Location	1970	1972	1974	1976	1978	1980	1982
Action Unlimited Club	8434 SE Eighty Second Avenue			x				
Adult Bookstore	533 SW 3 rd Avenue			x	x			
Adult Bookstore	4616 NE Sandy Boulevard	x	x	x				
Adult Bookstore	8100 N Fessenden Street			x				
Adult Bookstore	725 SW 3 rd Avenue	x	x					
Adult Bookstore	4827 SE Division Street	x	x					
Adult Center	3574 SE Hawthorne Boulevard							x
Adult Toy Shoppe	8202 N Denver Avenue							x
Aladdin Theater	3017 SE Milwaukie Avenue	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Angie's Bookstore	2915 NE Broadway							x
Aphrodite's Haven	17309 SE Division Street			x				
Aquarius Steam Sauna	825 NE 16 th Avenue				x	x		
Aries 1 Adult Books	3542 SE Division			x				
Armchair Family Bookstore	3205 SE Milwaukie Avenue							x
Atlantis Club	11051 SW Barbour Boulevard			x				
Atlantis Rising Books	7915 SE Stark Street			x	x			
AVR Adult Bookstore	426 SE Grand Avenue							
Barbour Blvd Sauna	9889 SW Barbour Boulevard			x		x		
Betty's Body Lotions	2662 NW Vaught Street							
Birds & Bees Adult Entertainment Center	12346 SE Division Street							
Blue Mouse Theater	626 SW 4 th Avenue	x	x	x	x			
Bob White Theater	6423 SE Foster Road	x	x	x	x	x	x	
Boogie Books #2	4609 SE Hawthorne Boulevard			x				
Boogie Books Arcade 25Cent	8307 SE 17 th Avenue			x				
Book Bin	213 SW Taylor Street							
Book-A-Rama	820 SW 3 rd Avenue			x				
Bozo's	11032 SE Powell Boulevard							
Broadway Massage Studio	1825 NE Broadway			x	x	x	x	
Broadway Massage Studio	2221 NE Broadway		x					
Bunny Club	11416 NE Halsey Street							
Bunny Club aka the Roman Spa	2744 NE Broadway			x				
Cal's Adult Books	5941 SE 92 nd Avenue							x
California Girls	4504 SE Milwaukie Avenue			x				
Caesar's Palace	18230 E Burnside Street							
Centurion Twenty One Massage & Health Studio	6007 SE Sandy Boulevard			x	x	x	x	
Cindy's	NW 4th and Burnside Street						x	x
Cindy's Adult Bookstore	8 NW 3 rd Avenue							

Clinton Street	2522 SE Clinton Street				x	x	x	
Colonial Plaza	926 SE 45 th Avenue				x	x	x	
Continental Health Studio	2510 NE Eighty Second Avenue			x				
Dave's Adult Book Store	826 SW 3 rd Avenue				x			
East of Eden Sauna	3574 SE Hawthorne Boulevard			x				
Encore Theater	2522 SE Clinton Street	x	x	x				
Eros Adult Book Store	837 SW 3 rd Avenue			x				
Eros Theaters	314 SW Taylor Street			x	x			
Film Follies Book Store	915 SW 3 rd Avenue			x	x	x	x	x
Fine Arts Theater	2021 SE Hawthorne Boulevard	x	x		x	x	x	
Flick Adult Bookstore	3520 NE Eighty Second Avenue						x	x
Flick Theater	24 NW Broadway			x	x			
Fred's Smoke Shop	911 SW Taylor Street	x	x	x	x			
Front Line Adult Center & Arcade	401 W Burnside Street			x				
Fun Center	900 SW 4 th Avenue				x			
Genie Girl	725 SW 3 rd Avenue							
Gigi's Sauna	3004 SE 50 th Avenue			x				
Ginger's Sexy Sauna	7400 SE Eighty Second Avenue				x	x		
Ginger's Sexy Sauna	2411 SE Belmont Street				x	x		
Ginger's Sexy Sauna	535 SE Grand Avenue					x		
Ginger's Sexy Sauna	1123 SE Market Street			x				
Ginger's Sexy Saunas	949 SW Oak Street				x			
Ginger's Sexy Sauna	7816 N Interstate Avenue			x				
Grecian Goddess	623 NE 23 rd Avenue		x					
Hardtime Bookstore & Arcade	926 SW 3 rd Avenue						x	x
Interstate Health Studio	5732 N Interstate Avenue				x	x	x	
Jefferson Theater	1129 SW Jefferson Street	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Joy Sauna	2110 NE 45 th Avenue		x					
Katie's Sauna (6103 SE Cora St?)	SE 61st and Foster Road					x		
King's Kastle	8735 SE Eighty Second Avenue			x				
Kozy Kitten	1987 NW Kearney Street			x				
Kwan Yin	5424 NE 30 th Avenue			x				
Little Susie's Adult Shop	826 SW 3 rd Avenue							x
Lombard Theater	842 Lombard Street	x	x	x				
Lori's Executive Club	5124 NE 42 nd Avenue		x	x				
Marcia Leon Lotion Studio	3574 SE Hawthorne Boulevard							
Mary's Books	401 W Burnside Street							
Mary's Club Topless Dine & Dance	129 SW Broadway						x	
Mini-Spa (The)	4741 SE Hawthorne Boulevard		x	x	x			
Mustang Ranch	1826 NE Broadway					x		
Mustang Ranch	745 SE Eighty Second			x				

	Avenue								
Mustang Ranch Spa & Arcade	1125 NE Sandy Boulevard								
New Paris Theater	6 SW 3 rd Avenue	x	x	x	x	x			
Old Chelsea	512 & 514 NW 5 th Avenue			x					
Old Chelsea #2	512 NW 5 th Avenue			x				x	
Old Chelsea #3	514 NW 5 th Avenue		x	x	x	x	x		
Old Chelsea Theater	516 NW 5 th Avenue								
Om at Theater	425 NW Glisan Street			x					
One Plus One Adult Bookstore	834 SW 3 rd Avenue								x
Oregon Theater	3530 SE Division Street	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Pamper House	110 NE Eighty Second Avenue		x	x	x	x			
Peek-A-Rama Arcade	834 SW 3 rd Avenue			x	x				
Penthouse Sauna	11906 NE Halsey Street			x					
PG&Y	1935 NE Hawthorne Boulevard								
Playboy Club	707 SE 122 nd Avenue			x					
Playmate Body Art Studio	3004 SE 50 th Avenue				x	x	x		
Playmate Club (The)	525 SW 12 th Avenue			x					
Playmates Body Art Studio massage	421 SW Glisan Street							x	
Pleasure Palace (massage & baths)	3534 NE Eighty Second Avenue			x	x	x	x		
Poor Richard's Adult Books	1233 SE Powell Boulevard								
Powell Blvd Lotion Studio	6305 SE Powell Boulevard				x				
Pretty Girls Sauna & Lotions	6311 SE Powell Boulevard			x	x				
Pussycat Theater	620 SW 11 th Avenue			x	x	x			
Relaxeena Spa	921 SW 6 th Avenue								
Relaxus	6030 SE Division Street			x					
San Franciscan Adult Bookstore	723 SW 3 rd Avenue								
Scorpio's Adult Bookstore & Arcade	209 SW Taylor Street			x		x			x
Sin City Adult Bookstore	838 SW 3 rd Avenue			x	x	x			x
Southgate Sauna	10412 SE Eighty Second Avenue			x					
Stag Shop	525 SW 12 th Avenue			x					
Star Steam & Spa	825 NW 16 th Avenue			x					
Star Theater and Adult Bookstore	9 NW 6 th Avenue	x	x	x		x	x	x	
Sultan's Harem	12507 SE Powell Boulevard			x					
Supergirls II	16404 SE Division Street			x					
Supergirls Unlimited	10105 NE Sandy Boulevard			x					
Tom Kat Theater	425 NW Glisan Street			x	x	x			
Tony's Smoke Shop	614 SW 2 nd Avenue	x	x	x	x	x			
USA Bookstore	628 E Burnside Street		x						x
Valley of the Dolls	7126 SE Eighty Second Avenue			x					

Velvet Touch	15555 SE McLaughlin Boulevard			x				
Walnut Park Theater	5029 NE Union Avenue	x	x	x	x	x	x	x