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***DOWNTOWN PORTLAND REOPENING WEEKEND
ANCHORED BY PIONEER COURTHOUSE SQUARE***

In the biggest Polka Dot Downtown performance to-date, Portlanders are invited to a free sing-along with Pink Martini on Saturday, July 24

PORTLAND, Ore. – (July 8, 2021) – The City of Portland, Pioneer Courthouse Square, and community partners announced that Friday, July 23 through Sunday, July 25 will mark a weekend reopening celebration in Portland’s central city. In a summer filled with the reopening of Portland hotels, restaurants, bars, and retail shops, Pioneer Courthouse Square will host a public sing-along with Pink Martini in *Portland’s Living Room*. Thomas Lauderdale, China Forbes, and their full Pink Martini ensemble will lead Portlanders in a range of well-known songs meant to commence the post-pandemic era and usher the city into the rest of 2021, starting in the place designed to gather and unite Portland residents and visitors. The sing-along will be free to the public and will begin at 3:00 pm on Saturday, July 24 at Pioneer Courthouse Square. To view the rest of the weekend’s line-up, visit the *Here for Portland* website for real-time updates: <https://hereforportland.com/welcomeback>.

“The Welcome Back to the Heart of Portland weekend instills hope and resolve in seeing our City come back stronger, together,” said Ted Wheeler, Mayor of Portland. “Thank you to the Square and Pink Martini for welcoming all Portland residents and visitors to connect with each other in the heart of our beautiful City.”

Pink Martini’s sing-along at the Square will be the biggest Polka Dot Downtown performance to date. Currently, there are nearly 100 colorful vinyl dots originating in Pioneer Courthouse Square and spreading vibrancy throughout downtown.

“It’s always a joy to bring a multi-generational crowd together in the heart of our city so that we can sing as a community,” said Thomas Lauderdale, founder of Pink Martini, and Pioneer Courthouse Square board member. “In this age of stresses and distractions, a sing-along allows us to slow things down, gather people together, and using Pink Martini as the house band, get everyone to sing at the top of their lungs! And hopefully for a moment all our worries and problems will vanish.”



The announcement follows the rollout, last month, of extended [Polka Dot Downtown](#) programming through Summer 2021. The art installation and performance series has created outdoor pop-up performances throughout Portland's downtown core, attracting people in the community to come and enjoy the center of the city and all it has to offer.

“Pioneer Courthouse Square is excited to welcome everyone back to downtown. After a year of socially distant programming the Square is happy to unite our community through our long-standing tradition of sing-alongs,” said Jennifer Polver, Executive Director, Pioneer Courthouse Square. “It feels good to be inviting people back into the Square at this scale to connect and heal as a community.”

Beyond the Square

The community is encouraged to make a day – or weekend - of it downtown. Portland residents and visitors can enjoy a late lunch at a food cart in the Square or a nearby restaurant prior to the sing-along; or stay downtown afterwards for dinner. People can pop into a favorite retailer downtown, take a walk along the waterfront, or stop by one of the museums downtown. Additionally, while downtown during the three-day event, Portlanders can take in performances before and after the sing-along curated by the City of Portland’s PDX Recovery + Events Action Table. To view the rest of

the weekend's line-up and locations, visit the *Here for Portland* website for real-time updates: <https://hereforportland.com/welcomeback>.

The sing-along with Pink Martini is made possible through a collaboration between Pioneer Courthouse Square, the City of Portland, and the Portland Action Tables with support from Downtown Development Group, Melvin Mark Companies and TMT Development.

About Polka Dot Downtown

Polka Dot Downtown is a performance art installation created by local artist Bill Will in collaboration with the Square. Will is an acclaimed Oregon artist who has been creating public projects, museum installations, and studio work for the last 46 years. Polka Dot Downtown was originally designed to uniquely respond to the challenges presented by COVID-19. Since its launch in July 2020, 217 polka dots have been installed at 41 iconic downtown properties, setting the stage for more than 332 performances by 614 artists, musicians, singers, and dancers to date. Each colorful 12-foot vinyl dot, adorning the red brick surface of the Square and sidewalks throughout downtown, acts as a simple stage. For more information this summer's dot performances visit polkadotdowntown.org.

The program has fundraised and paid more than \$150,000 to-date to the performers participating in the Polka Dot Downtown series. Donations can be made online to the Artist Fund to support additional performances

About Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc.

Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc. is a non-profit organization whose mission is to manage Downtown's central public gathering space, known adoringly as Portland's Living Room, to create a vibrant and healthy downtown environment. Typically hosting more than 300 programmed events each year, through a diverse range of public and private partnerships, Pioneer Courthouse Square, Inc. operates within a budget of \$2.2M composed of cash and in-kind donations.

Pioneer Courthouse Square, opened on April 6th, 1984 as a communal gathering place for a then-struggling downtown Portland. It has grown into a central hub for community, commerce, and culture and has been frequently lauded by groups like the Project for Public Spaces and the American Planning Association as one of the premier public spaces in the world.

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