

82nd: The Avenue of Roses

Stretching almost five miles from north to south, and encompassing major streets like Division, Powell, Stark, and Woodstock, 82nd Avenue is home to a breadth of diversity. Culturally, 82nd Avenue may be the richest area in the Portland region. According to the 82nd Avenue of Roses Business Association, forty percent of the population is comprised of minorities and immigrants. Business owners like Brett Moore of Montavilla Sewing Centers (8326 SE Stark St) see a wide range of cultures and personalities in their shops, from orthodox Russians to members of the Hispanic community.

These small pockets of community are part of the charm of the 82nd Avenue of Roses.

“There is community (on 82nd Avenue), you just have to find it,” according to Wingstop owner Alan Shaffer, whose restaurant provides fresh, made to order wings and sides that have a homemade taste to them.

The distinctive mixture of micro-communities gives 82nd Avenue a unique feel unlike anywhere else in Portland. A combination of big box stores blended with many smaller local businesses creates a diversity of businesses and services that is helping to turn 82nd Avenue into the center of Portland. As the city continues to expand and push east, 82nd is in prime position to continue to enrich and grow the entire Portland region. Comfortably nestled between I-84 and I-205, and with many major arterial streets, 82nd Avenue is becoming more of a destination than ever before.

The areas prior reputation as a strip of car dealerships coupled with issues of homelessness and illicit activities is both overblown and unfair, and the area has overcome many obstacles to grow substantially, say both Stein Haus owner Jeremy Lewis and Sargent’s Motorsport owner Gary Sargent Sr.

“These problems are not unique to 82nd Avenue, they are a part of every neighborhood,” states Sargent Sr.

Nevertheless, there is still work to be done in the neighborhood. As Sargent Sr. poignantly notes, “Just because (these issues) are citywide doesn’t mean they’re okay.”

And while the area has many services available and tons of great food (Cartlandia at 8145 SE 82nd Ave immediately comes to mind), there are still gaps that need to be filled in, states Lewis.

“The area is sprawled out, but there are tons of businesses that can draw people here, and I’m excited about the future.”

Fubonn Shopping Center (2850 SE 82nd Ave) property manager Michael Liu agrees.

“82nd Avenue is able to bring together and share all these different cultures through different food dishes,” declares Liu. “Venture Portland’s Around the World in 82 Dishes showcases the distinct foods and unique flavors of our incredibly diverse area.”

One of the largest Asian malls in Oregon, the Fubonn Shopping Center is just one of the many unique draws of the area. As 82nd Avenue continues to grow into the future, more unique services and recreational activities in the area will help 82nd Avenue become more of a day destination while also helping residents to spend more time in their local neighborhoods. The growing connection between businesses, organizations, and residents of this peculiar enclave will only add to the individuality of 82nd Avenue, and with it, all of Portland.