

just asking What do you think about the new parade route for Portland Pride 2004? Is it a necessary change to improve traffic flow, or will you feel ghettoized because we won't be marching through the middle of the city?

There has been much discussion among the board of Pride Northwest and within the community about this year's parade route. There are many variables that must be considered in order to determine a route that is approved by both Pride Northwest and city officials, including the number of police officers the city will lend us, disruption to traffic flow, public safety and construction projects.

A major reason for changes to this year's route stems from feedback from the GLBT community about previous years' parades. We received many comments that the parade was too long and lagged badly in places, leaving little time to enjoy the festival. These interruptions in parade flow occurred because the parade crossed MAX tracks. (The trains will not stop running for any parade.) This year, the parade will not cross MAX tracks.

I understand that some people are unhappy that we are not parading past Pioneer Courthouse Square, but please try to understand the challenges the board has faced. We will march through the Pearl District and Old Town, cross Burnside twice and go down Stark Street, Broadway and Naito Parkway—all very visible locations.

I encourage all community members to become part of the process to produce Pride. The more minds and bodies lent to it, the better the chance of a fun, inclusive event for all. Pride does not belong just to me or to Pride Northwest; it belongs to all of us, so let's own it.

TOBIN BRITTON
Pride Northwest President
and Parade Chairwoman

Queer we go again, whoring our community to corporate entities so we can show our pride as a marketing demographic—and now taking away the only thing Pride had left to offer us: visibility. It's the 35th anniversary of Stonewall, and to celebrate Portland Pride has decided to closet the parade by rerouting us away from downtown (as well as reducing stage presence, increasing admission and, as far as I know, continuing to function on exclusive corporate contracts, rendering local businesses invisible).

This year is a critical time for us to step up and make some noise. It is time to resurrect the marches, demand our civil rights, go beyond the compromise of false tolerance and reclaim our pride.

As a trans/gender warrior I especially encourage trans folk, once again, to take our place in the front lines of struggle. Who threw the first brick at Stonewall? Honey, you know who...now what about you?

We're here. We're queerer. Let not get too used to it.

LLEWYN MAIRE
Transsexual Menace International

My first parade to walk in was last year, and it was fun to go through town. Half the time we were so busy waving and posing for pictures I couldn't tell where we were! I am looking forward to driving in this year's parade and don't see a problem with the new route. If the traffic issues are taken care of, then it will be a better event for all concerned and draw some business to a different part of town. You just don't know if it will be good or bad until we do it!

ALICE LYNN
Portland

What is Pride about when we are squished into the already "queer" area of town? Isn't it about showing how proud we are not just to ourselves but also to the rest of the city? I for one am disappointed with the choice to move the parade route. Hopefully more will turn out for the Dyke March to show the support of this political rally—through town.

BREN TRASK
Portland

I think it's lousy to give up the Broadway portion of the route, but I would never allow myself to be or feel ghettoized—it just seems to me that marching through the city center and by Pioneer Square sends a positive, inclusive message.

BRIAN WILSON
Portland

Having volunteered for Pride Northwest through its various incarnations for nearly 10 years (1987 to 1996, minus 1994), I can't begin to express how disappointed I am that the parade route has changed. This isn't the first year that the city (or Tri-Met) has complained about the traffic flow, nor will it be the last. We probably would never get the concessions given to Grand Floral or Starlight, but as the third-largest parade in the City of Roses we certainly shouldn't be giving up visibility in the heart of the city.

Will the city hood the meters (making the streets no-parking) in the Pearl, where the streets are much narrower than those on the old routes? Will the board advertise this change enough that out-of-towners (or even people who just show up) will know that Pioneer Square is no longer the community gathering place for watching the parade?

There will be a number of disappointed people at Pioneer Square this year.

DEB COUNTS
Portland

next issue Are you concerned that the Defense of Marriage Coalition might collect enough signatures to qualify its anti-gay constitutional amendment for the November ballot? How can we convince rural Oregonians to decline to sign? (Please see related item on Page 8.) Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)

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