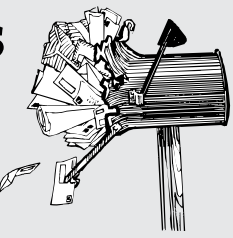


Letters to the Editor



The Southwest Portland Post
4207 SE Woodstock Blvd #509
Portland, OR 97206
Fax: (866) 727-5336
email: news@multnomahpost.com

BES should pay fair share of storm water improvements needed on Capitol Highway

We have been actively advocating for sidewalk and bicycle path improvements to Southwest Capitol Highway for almost 20 years. The SW Capitol Highway Plan was adopted by City Council on January 31, 1996, although planning began many years prior to that date.

The SW Capitol Highway Refinement Plan Citizens Advisory Committee recently updated the design for the segment between SW Multnomah Boulevard and Taylors Ferry Road.

The updated design meets current requirements of the Bureau of Environmental Services (BES) for on-site storm water management (17.38.040).

About half of the current cost estimate of \$19.1 million is due to the storm water requirements, yet as we understand it, the Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), not BES, will be responsible for most of that cost.

We need to find ways to reduce those

costs, through context-sensitive designs and cost sharing. Just building half of the project (one side of the full corridor) only saves 18 percent of project costs due to the need for on-site storm water management.

Building the full cross-section in phases will add 22 percent to the total project cost. We need to find ways to build needed infrastructure in a more cost-effective way.

We want to build sidewalk and bike path improvements in SW Portland, but because there is no existing sidewalk or storm water management systems, not even curbs on most of our arterial streets, it will be cost-prohibitive for PBOT to absorb these costs.

BES needs to make a significant contribution to storm water improvements in locations where PBOT is constructing sidewalk and bike path infrastructure. BES needs to be more flexible in its design requirements. There is precedent for using citywide sewer and storm water fees for local improvements. In December 1992, the City of Portland's Clean River Funding Task Force recommended, "All sewer users regardless of area characteristics, such as type of service received, should help pay for the CSO facilities."

Most of Southwest Portland did not ever have combined sewers, yet we have been paying for improvements to these facilities in other parts of Portland for almost 20 years.

Residents in SW Portland are also paying for Underground Injection Control (UIC) improvements, yet most of the UICs are located in outer East Portland. It is time for all sewer users to pay for needed storm water management infrastructure in SW Portland.

We appreciate that BES has been constructing many new watershed projects

in our neighborhood. These swales help improve water quality, and create some improved public right-of-way surfaces, but they do not allow people of all ages and abilities to walk to their desired destinations.

If BES were required to make all of its improvements in the right-of-way ADA compliant, it would significantly add to storm water improvement costs.

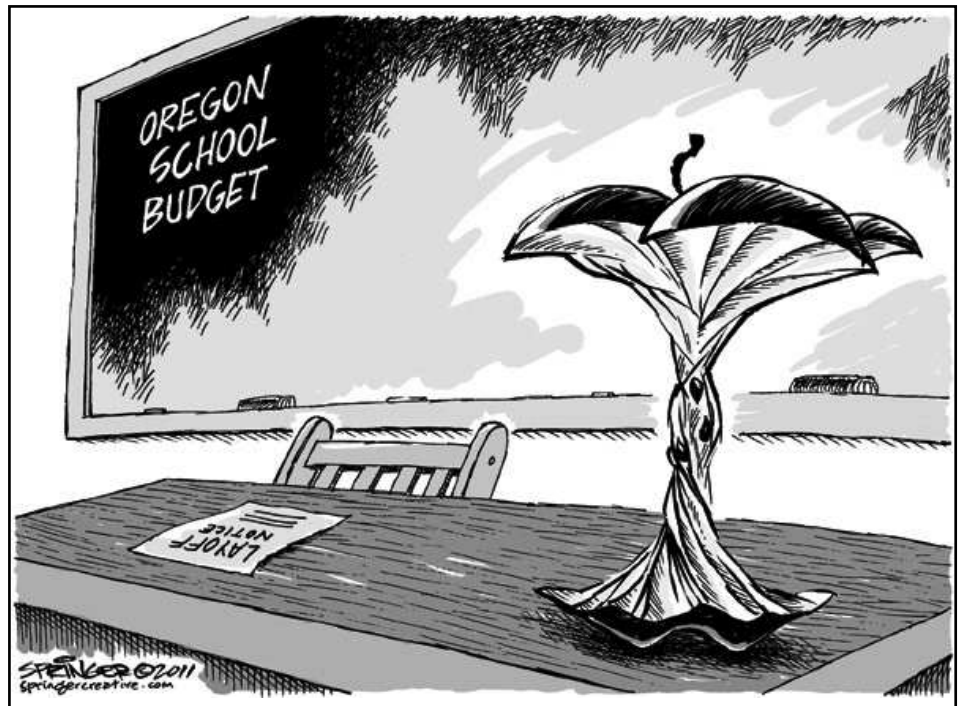
We are asking BES to coordinate with PBOT and share the costs of achieving the win-win of improving transportation systems and water quality associated with sidewalk and bike path improvements. We need sidewalk and bike path infrastructure improvements in order to meet the CIS's goals to create healthy, connected communities.

We need to be able to walk to shops and transit stops and schools. We envision more flexible designs that account for the local environment and other unique situations.

The segment of SW Capitol Highway between Multnomah Village and SW Taylors Ferry Road is a key missing link in the transportation infrastructure in SW Portland.

It is a major north/south spine that travels through the heart of SW Portland, with good bus service, well-worn goat paths, and major destinations within a half-mile in either direction, and the Portland Community College Sylvania campus to the south.

The full cross-section improvements are needed to help people walk and bike
(Continued on Page 4)




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4207 SE Woodstock Blvd #509
Portland, OR 97206
Phone: (503) 244-6933; Fax: (866) 727-5336
general email: news@multnomahpost.com
web address: www.swportlandpost.com

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Reporters/Writers: Polina Olsen and Lee Perlman
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