

Sewer construction on Interstate 5 ramp at Multnomah Blvd rescheduled

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

The Portland Bureau of Environmental Quality will continue with sewer work in southwest Portland, to the chagrin of some.

The pending closure of the Multnomah on and off-ramps to the Interstate 5 freeway as part of the Burlingame Sewer Trunkline Replacement Project, originally scheduled to begin September 6, was moved back to October 3, according to BES spokesperson Stephen Sykes.

The bureau hopes to complete the work and re-open the ramps by November 16, Sykes said; they have a mandate to finish by November 18 so as not to interfere with access to Multnomah Village during the holiday shopping season. However, some merchants feel that holiday shopping will have begun in earnest by November.

The City will have signage directing downtown-bound motorists to Southwest 40th Avenue, Capitol Highway, Huber Street, and the Capitol Highway on-ramp as a detour route, Sykes says.

There is some concern that the detour will burden the already-congested Barbur Boulevard-Capitol Highway interchange. Sykes commented, "There are other ways to get to I-5 and Barbur, and we would expect and encourage motorists to use all of them."

During the closure all traffic, including bikes and pedestrians,

will be diverted from Southwest Multnomah Boulevard at 22nd Avenue, Sykes said. Westbound traffic on Multnomah Boulevard will be open.

Meanwhile, BES has been relocating fiber optic cable on the north side of Multnomah Boulevard between Barbur Boulevard and 31st Avenue, and this should be complete by early this month if it isn't already, Sykes said. Later this year this section of Multnomah Boulevard will be repaved, Sykes said.

Fanno Creek sewer pump under construction on 86th Avenue

BES is also working on the creation of a new Fanno Creek Basin sanitary sewer pump station west of an existing one on Southwest 86th Avenue, in unincorporated Washington County.

During a public hearing, BES spokesperson Dan Hibert said the existing pump, constructed 12 years ago, has proven "inadequate" for the flow and a new pump is considered to be "the most efficient way" to deal with the issue.

Michael Lilly, a neighbor, objected. Much of the Fanno Creek Basin, "including my house," is served by Washington County's Clean Water Services. If such a facility is to be built, Lilly said, "It should impact the people who benefit from it" rather than people such as himself.

He is not alone, Lilly said; Washington County authorities "turned the proposal down big time" in 2010. A better approach would be



This photo taken July 12, 2010 by a city inspector shows new sewer pipes being installed along Multnomah Boulevard.

to fix leaking storm water pipes in the west hills, which are the root of the problem, Lilly said.

Hibert said the current proposal is significantly different from the one proposed in 2010. He agreed that leaking storm water pipes is a contributing factor, and that repairing them is his bureau's "long term" approach.

However, Hibert added, "There are very valid technical reasons why it must be located where it's located. We will make it as compatible (with nearby residences) as possible in terms of noise, odors and vibrations." Asked if CPO3, Washington County's citizen involvement organization, is happy with the plan, Hibert said, "No, they're not."



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