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# The Southwest Portland Post

Southwest Portland's Independent Neighborhood Newspaper

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## Fulton Park Community Center on chopping block as park bureau faces cuts

### PARKS AND RECREATION

By Lee Perlman  
 The Southwest Portland Post

In response to the directive from Mayor Sam Adams, the Portland



Fulton Park Community Center may be closed due to proposed budget cuts by Portland Parks and Recreation. (Photo courtesy of Isabel Souza)

Bureau of Parks and Recreation has prepared a proposed series of budget cuts. Among the proposed cut items is closure of Fulton Park Community Center.

The proposed cuts, equal to four percent of the bureau's budget, also include closure of Buckman Pool in Southeast Portland. Other cuts are reductions in park trash removal, "scholarships" to residents who cannot pay normal fees, tree inspections, and "pass-through" grants to senior centers for recreation programs.

Outdoor recreation programs will be eliminated and port-a-potties will be substituted for restrooms. Responsibility for SUN School recreation programs will be given to Multnomah County with \$1.13

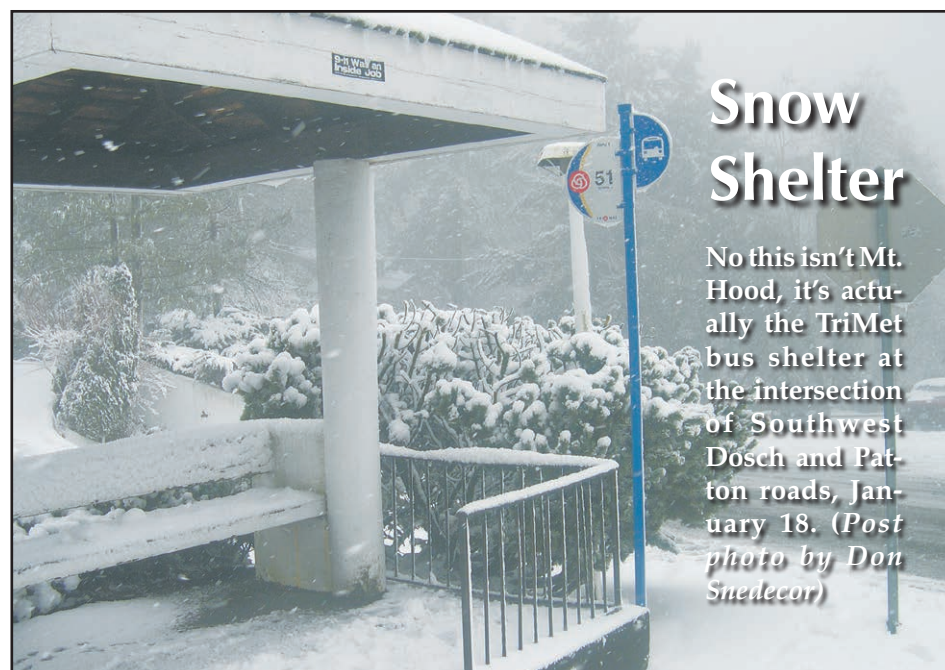
million, \$238,000 short of that program's annual budget.

If the system must be cut by six percent, the draft budget calls for closure of Hillside Community Center in the northwest hills, reductions in landscaping, natural area maintenance and irrigation, and

closure of elm disease prevention and operation of "splash pads."

Linda Robinson, a member of the bureau's Budget Advisory Committee, told *The Post* that the BAC had called for reductions in several areas, rather than elimination of any

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### Snow Shelter

No this isn't Mt. Hood, it's actually the TriMet bus shelter at the intersection of Southwest Dösch and Patton roads, January 18. (Post photo by Don Snedecor)

## Senators Burdick and Devlin meet with voters at Hillsdale town hall

By Scott Mobley  
 Special to The Southwest Portland Post

Oregon must stop eroding its education funding even as it prepares to cut spending elsewhere, State Sen.

Richard Devlin (Democrat-Tualatin) said at a recent town hall meeting in Hillsdale.

"I think we are at a point where we say enough is enough," Devlin told a group of about 20 like-minded

voters attending the Jan. 10 meeting. "We can't diminish our resources in education any more. It's a core responsibility."

Devlin conducted the meeting at the Watershed affordable senior housing center with State Sen. Ginny Burdick (Democrat-Portland/Tigard), who has represented the Hillsdale area for some 15 years. But Hillsdale will fall into Devlin's district under the new legislative map drawn up last year to reflect the 2010 census.

The updated boundaries will go into effect after the November election when Burdick, Senate President Pro Tempore, faces an as yet unknown challenger for her fifth term.

Devlin and Burdick met with voters a few weeks before legislators go into special session to wrestle with a budget shortfall pegged at between \$50 million.

State service cuts will likely continue, though not as severely as before, said Devlin. He predicted the state, national and global economies will remain weak for three to four more years at least.

Legislators paring spending must spare Oregon's schools and universities, where the long-term costs of cuts far outweigh any short-term cost-saving gains, the senators said.

"We don't do enough to make sure people succeed and when they don't succeed, the public ultimately has to pay the bill," Devlin said. "The primary determinate of whether a person will need government

services in the future is education."

Oregon in the 1980s spent roughly 15 percent of its budget on education and eight percent on prisons, Burdick said. Those percentages have reversed since voters capped property taxes dedicated to schools and approved mandatory sentencing, she said.

Burdick called for greater focus on early childhood education to help keep people out of prison, and more emphasis on drug courts and transitional programs to prevent recidivism.

"'Smart on Crime' programs are so much cheaper than just locking somebody up," Burdick said. "You have to understand we can't just throw these meth addicts in prison because it feels good. It costs \$35,000 a year, way more than the amount of support we give for public higher education. Let's send them to college, not prison."

Voters attending the meeting also raised concerns about economic development, health care reform and the future of Oregon's senior property tax deferral program, gutted by declining home values.

The legislature recently approved a \$19-million loan to the property tax deferral program, designed to keep disabled and senior citizens in their homes.

Hoping to stimulate the Oregon economy, lawmakers narrowed the state's tax-credit program to better target small businesses. But the

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Sen. Ginny Burdick



Sen. Richard Devlin

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