

## Potholes and other miserable road maintenance issues, Part II

By Lee Braymen-Cleary  
The Southwest Portland Post

You may recall that in the April 2014 edition of *The Post* I wrote about Southwest Portland's potholes. These are holes you drive over, back into from your driveway or hit time and again as you motor to work.

These same potholes send you to the auto repair shop to keep you car on the road and thus reduce the possibility of a vacation and increase the possibility of a "staycation."

It turns out you may or may not qualify for Portland Bureau of Transportation services when you call them to fix your potholes.

As you might suspect, current budgetary constraints limit what the Bureau of Transportation can do according to Diane Dulken, media relations manager for transportation.

Undoubtedly, you have seen the city's signs. "POTHOLE HOTLINE 503-823 BUMP (823-2867), City of Portland."

Since I've seen the signs and the same miserable budgetary facts about the city's inability to meet all city-wide road maintenance needs, I have trusted in city transparency.

Hence, my original advice which was: If you live on an improved street with a pothole problem, give the city hotline a call or use an app they have devised for just that purpose.

Well, I told the truth as I knew it and nothing but. Nevertheless, one

Hillsdale resident, Larry Sloan—his own particular potholes filled—believes that those chasms crippling our streets can be repaired if they fall within areas annexed to Portland from Multnomah County.

Well, that's easy, I thought. I'll call the city contacts my editor gave me. The exact truth is just a few phone calls away.

But surprise! Perfectly nice transportation employees with decades of experience maintaining city roads were personable and knowledgeable about many things gravel, concrete and asphalt.

One employee even has a map of which city areas need treatment in the 2013-2014 biennium. It could be potholes, it could be repaving. Bravo to whatever is achieved! *You can see a similar, if not identical map by visiting [www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/451483](http://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/451483).*

Still these helpful folks could not tell me about annexation rules—who gets the helpful but down-and-dirty treatment, and who live with potholes and catastrophic street terrain?

Sloan's information continued to nag me and I kept digging. I did find a City of Portland Annexation History chart on the Web. Annexations began in 1851 and occurred at least until 1991.

Web Search "City of Portland Annexation History," and you can see for yourself. Still searching and getting antsy, I had a brainstorm. I phoned the Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc.

(SWNI) office for some tips.

Alas, the folks at SWNI don't archive Southwest Portland annexation documents, but Leonard Gard, a longtime land use and transportation specialist, passed along something that he is reasonably sure explains the ages-long confusion.

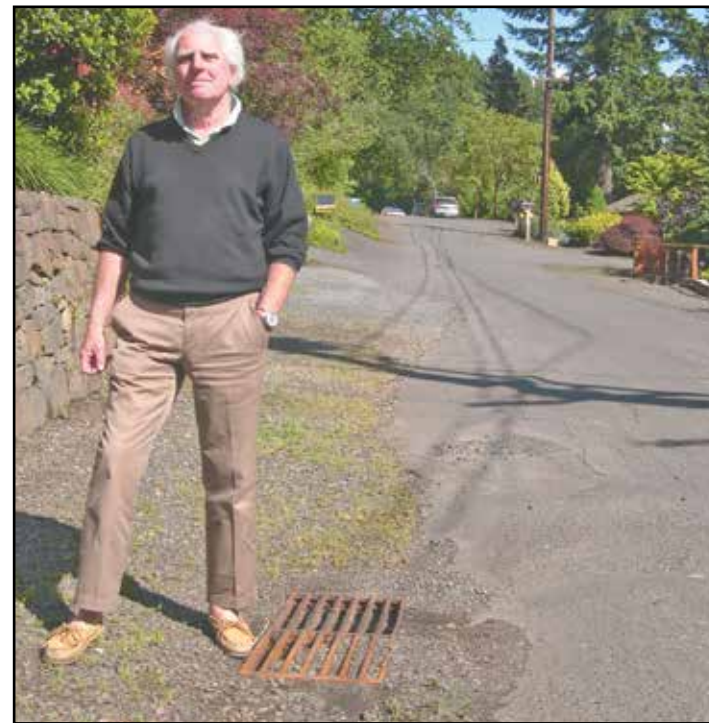
Some Portland/Multnomah County annexations mention road maintenance and some don't!

So can I clear the air over this annoying issue?

Not yet. But Dulken did phone me with the address of Portland's archival site as the city doesn't have time to research it themselves.

It is situated on the Portland State University campus. I'll wend my way there next week. I hope to shed light on it in our July edition.

I also hope to unearth the very latest on one of the city's latest ideas: taxing residents to build the coffers for ongoing street maintenance.



Larry Sloan stands near a storm drain on unimproved Southwest Chesapeake Avenue not far from his home. Sloan said that over the years the city of Portland has done numerous repair and regrading projects, in this case to redirect stormwater. (Post photo by Don Snedecor)

### MAPLEWOOD NOTEBOOK

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up that day at Maplewood Coffee & Tea (5206 SW Custer St) after 9:30 a.m. to buy \$10 tickets, maps and self-guides.

Included in the price will be discussions on native plants and other garden issues. An eco-garden talk is scheduled for 12 noon at one of the gardens. Ticket sales contribute to the association's general fund.

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