

Emergency Bureau submits budget request for former Sears Armory improvements

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

The construction equipment and materials are gone from the parking lot of the former Sears Armory located at Southwest Multnomah Boulevard and 25th Avenue. Trees have been planted along the sidewalk median in front of the building. Pedestrians and bicyclists enjoy the new transportation improvements.

Yet the old armory building remains eerily quiet, dark, and unoccupied. Progress is happening, albeit at a slow bureaucratic pace.

In February, the Bureau of Emergency Management submitted a budget request to Mayor Charlie Hales for \$897,132 to make accessibility upgrades to the West Side Emergency Operations Center, formerly known as the SFC Jerome F. Sears Army Reserve Center.

This request accounts for 15 percent of the Emergency Bureau's budget. The total bureau request was \$5,829,121.

According to Dan Douthit, a public information officer with the Emergency Bureau, the budget will include bringing

the building in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. It will also remove physical barriers benefitting persons with accessibility needs.

It will also allow the building to become available for occupancy by city bureaus dedicated to responding in an emergency and for community meetings of the Neighborhood Emergency Team program.

"In addition to the pending budget request," Douthit said, "full funding has already been secured to put in a fueling station at the site."

For the fueling project, approximately \$12 million was secured by the city council, not just for the emergency center, but also to upgrade five other fueling stations around Portland and add another station east of Interstate 205.

The project is currently in the planning phase. Construction won't begin until permits have been secured and the site master plan is complete.

"My best guess is no sooner than six months from now," Douthit said.

Other site improvements include relocating parking and storm water improvements.



In February, the Bureau of Emergency Management requested approximately \$900,000 for improvements to the former Sears Armory building in Multnomah. (Post file photo by Erik Vidstrand, September 2014)

"We're still early into this process having just secured funding last fall," Douthit explained. "We will share site plans with the Multnomah Neighborhood Association when we're further along into the design phase."

"We'll know in the next few months if the budget will be approved," Douthit added.

For budget info and updates go to <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/lcbol/article/517659>

Sellwood Bridge to be closed weekend of April 17-19 for traffic pattern change

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Due to great weather this past winter, the Sellwood Bridge is progressing



The east and center arch span segments on the new Sellwood Bridge are installed in sequence designed to load the weight evenly between the two spans. (Photo courtesy of Multnomah County)

smoothly. One of three arch spans that will connect the two sides of the Willamette River arrived by barge right after New Year's Day.

Each span features two arch ribs made of weathering steel. This means

it won't need painting and has a rust color.

Fabricated at Thompson Metal Fab in Vancouver, Wash., ironworkers erected the west arch span in January. The arch ribs are so large and heavy they have to be installed in three segments.

"Each span weighs up to 300,000 pounds," commented Mike Pullen, project spokesperson. "More than 3,000 bolts will be used at each connection between arch segments."

In early March, another barge arrived from Vancouver carrying segments for the eastern span. The east and center spans will be installed in an alternating sequence that will carefully load the weight of the arches onto the concrete piers and foundations that support them.

Recently, the contractor demolished most of the old east approach to the bridge. Traffic was shifted onto the new east approach. The contractor is currently building the north half of the

east approach (where the old bridge used to be).

The section of Tacoma Street between 6th Avenue and the bridge will also be rebuilt this year, with new sidewalks and tree planters.

A public art project called Stratum will later be installed along the sidewalks in this area as a gateway feature where the bridge enters the Sellwood neighborhood.

"The artist, Mikyoung Kim, is based in Boston," Pullen announced, "and is funded by the city of Portland. It's their contribution to the project."

The installation includes a series of twisted steel columns, or totems, that represent the earth, river, and sky from the project area. Inspired by the power and beauty of the geologic and natural phenomena of the Willamette River Valley, the totems are layers of various recycled and formed materials.

The contractor plans to close the bridge to all traffic from 7 p.m. on Fri.,

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