

West sidewalk and cycle track reopen in South Waterfront

TRANSPORTATION NOTEBOOK

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

With the opening of the new Tilikum Crossing, (Bridge of the People), new safety improvements along Southwest Moody Avenue have been completed between Sheridan Street and the Ross Island Bridge.

This includes the west sidewalk and cycle track which will improve the flow of pedestrians and bicyclists along Moody Avenue. The work was completed by Portland Bureau of Transportation and TriMet.

"When we begin operating along a new alignment, we see how people behave around our vehicles and tracks, and then make adjustments to improve safety," said TriMet Safety and Security Executive Director Harry Saporta.

"These improvements will help people be more aware and alert of trains and buses along the new MAX Orange Line."

The Orange Line, TriMet's fifth MAX line, will travel 7.3 miles between, inner Southeast Portland, Milwaukie, and Oak Grove in north Clackamas County.

With 1 million new residents expected in the region by 2030, this new line will provide an efficient high-capacity transit option to underserved communities in the congested M McLoughlin Boulevard / Highway.

"At PBOT, we want to encourage Portlanders to ride their bikes and walk their neighborhoods," said Transportation Director Leah Treat. "Working with TriMet, our investment will make it safer and easier for everyone to enjoy the South Waterfront, take advantage of the new Orange Line, and use Portland's newest bridge, the



Pedestrian and bicyclist safety improvements along Moody Avenue in South Waterfront. (Photo courtesy of South Portland Business Association)

beautiful Tilikum Crossing."

These upgrades also allow bicyclists and pedestrians to better share the space. It also enhances access to the Collaborative Life Sciences Building and the new bridge which opens on Sept. 12.

Waivers of remonstrance is the hot topic in Multnomah

A main topic at the August meeting of the Multnomah Neighborhood Association was "waivers of remonstrance."

Editor's Note: This simply means that in order for a developer or land owner to avoid having to pay for sidewalks and half-street improvements during new residential construction, they only have to agree to waive their right to object to future improvements. The city of Portland currently has something like 12,000 waivers on the books—none of which they plan to enforce.

Chris Lyons has been leading the fight for pedestrian and bicyclist improvements along Capitol Highway. He recently learned that a waiver was granted by the Portland Bureau of Transportation for street frontage improvements to a house under construction at 40th and Capitol

Highway.

"This waiver is not in accordance with development on substandard streets," Lyons wrote to Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. transportation members.

"PBOT does not consider this a local service street," Lyons continued. "However, TriMet recently recognized the importance of bus line no. 44 and has identified it for frequent transit service."

Lyons was told that the waiver was approved because it was too challenging for the developer to meet stormwater requirements.

"Hence, the citizens that live nearby get no sidewalks, no bike path, no stormwater management, no access to transit, no nothing," Lyons fumed.

This reporter left several messages for the developer, Main Street Development, for comments on the waiver. The calls were not returned.

Marianne Fitzgerald, former SWNI president, requested a meeting with Commissioner

Nick Fish, who heads the Bureau of Environmental Services, and Commissioner Steve Novick, who heads PBOT. A meeting with Fish only is scheduled for mid-September.

Bill Ryan, chief engineer for the environmental bureau, responded to Fitzgerald that both PBOT and BES are committed to collaborating on addressing both stormwater and transportation needs across the city.

"The city has many priorities," Ryan wrote, "and must be mindful of limited budgets and the impact of fees on our citizens."

Ryan said that more than 30 percent of the sewer systems are upwards of 80 years old and places priority on maintaining aging infrastructure.

Jessica Wade, Capitol Highway resident, reminded everyone to keep an eye on the Tyron-Stephens Creek Headwaters Project which has proposed stormwater and arterial transportation improvements.

According to Denver Igarta, who heads up this project, the city is revising the draft plan in the fall based on internal and external comments.



Owner of this house at Southwest Capitol Highway and 40th Avenue received a waiver of remonstrance from the city. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

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