

## DEFORESTATION LOOMS

As I sit here, thunderous crashes accompanied by chainsaws dominate the acoustics in my home. Trees that provide clean water, air, habitat for healthy, diverse forest eco-systems and sequester carbon are being clearcut in front of my eyes. Deforestation is the second-biggest cause of climate change, and habitat destruction is the major reason for species extinctions. The BLM had an information and public comment forum in Springfield recently, planning to dismantle the Northwest Forest Plan in case [Sen. Ron] Wyden's O&C bill fails to do so. Wyden's bill would clearcut 1.6 million acres of our healthy public forests as logging on private land has destroyed the forests, leaving tree plantations.

The public forests in the Pacific Northwest are one of 10 of the most carbon-dense forests in the world. From Northern California to Alaska, these temperate rainforests are

essential to help mitigate climate change and protect the biodiversity of species. The forum the BLM hosted in Portland only had about 13 attendees; clearly, this issue is critical and the public deserves more transparency and accessibility.

Public comment deadline is March 31. See BLM plans for "Resource Management for Western Oregon" at [wkly.ws/1pb](http://wkly.ws/1pb).

Don Alexander  
Dexter

## DELAYED FLIGHTS

We had an experience on another recent date of a midflight cancellation [see Biz Beat last week]. We left Portland late, which is not uncommon for the last flight of the day. After leaving PDX on Horizon at 12:30 am Feb. 9, our initial in-flight announcement stated conditions were OK and that we would be landing in a half hour, but as we approached Eugene, we were told that the weather or wind recorded

announcements had ceased and there was no one there to restart the announcements or provide necessary weather information.

We ended up turning around and going back to Portland, arriving there at about 1:30 am, spending the night and flying out the next day.

This may happen more than is publicly acknowledged.

Alan Cohn  
Eugene

*EDITOR'S NOTE: We asked Cathryn Stephens, deputy airport director, about this and she tells us the FAA's Automated Surface Observing System was "working intermittently" for several days, but has been fixed. "Overall, this does not happen often," she says.*

## REGULAR BUS IS NO PICNIC

The other day, a matter of personal business occasioned me west on 11th Avenue. Although I would have arrived earlier and closer to my final destination had I availed LTD's #76/Oakpatch, it was

while aboard the #43/West 11th I came to recognize the true victims in the battle over LTD expansion are the very ones I was riding with, and the countless others who do business along this stretch and rely upon LTD to get them there and back.

Whatever those obnoxious "No Build" signs would lead one to believe, the fact is riding #43/West 11th is a less-than-pleasurable experience on a good day. A roomier, more frequent EMX would not relieve all problems, but it would be quite an improvement from what's currently available. I would encourage those who oppose LTD expansion to ride this route with those very customers who patronize your very establishments (and thus, put food on your tables) and to appreciate those who suffer the indignity and indignation of the ride, only to suffer the indignity and indignation of your prices. But don't forget to proudly display your "No Build" pin.

Adam Dale Howard  
Eugene

## DESIGN MATTERS BY JERRY DIETHELM

## The Third City Hall Redux

MOVE THE COUNCIL CHAMBER BUILDING TO OAK STREET?

Rhymes with aw-shucks, but since many of you have asked me what a new City Hall on the North Park Block might look like and what would happen to the existing council chamber and mural, I propose something like this. The Council Chamber building, as it turns out, has its own separate structure and is movable. It would need to be moved nearby anyway under the present 8th Avenue scheme, and I think it would have a much more striking, important and symbolic public presence if located on Oak Street (see map) across from the County Courthouse.

Once upon a time there was an access road through the Butterfly garage called North Park just as there is an East Park, West Park and South Park today. In this scheme it would return as access to the new City Hall's below-level parking and Skinner Market Square. And City Hall itself would be a glorious, south-facing, four-story structure of confidence and stature that commanded the city's most important central and historic open space. The awkward and sloping Butterfly garage level would flap and fly away, and the bustle of our markets would un-squeeze themselves away from 8th Avenue to sell and celebrate in the new square.

What's the matter with the 8th Avenue site? Well, we've gotten used to it, but it's just not the same. When City Hall occupied — and was — the whole block, when it weighed in equally with the Public Services Building across the street, it could create its own significance and public meaning. If it gets reduced to a 20,000 sq. ft. mostly office building along 8th, it will no longer be able to hold its own or add much needed excitement to the street environment. Instead of a Park Block foyer, it will have only the city parking lot across the street.

What about other suitors for the North Park Block site? Unsurprisingly there are others nearby, namely those desiring to replace the aging and worn-down Lane County Courthouse, who have long had their

eyes on the site. My choice, if anyone really wanted to know, would to rebuild the courthouse on its present site with a better face out onto a new City Hall, Council Chamber and North Park Block. But this is and should be an important public decision, just like the present one about how to make a new City Hall, and I think both need much more public discussion than they're getting.

Why are we in this present position? Two reasons: The city spent \$2 million in fees for the first \$130 million City Hall proposal and now has only an \$11

million building budget remaining, putting itself in the too big-too small, Goldilocks situation I described earlier [3/6 column]. But the more important reason I think is that the Great Recession has, and I hope only temporarily, sapped everyone's energy and confidence. Small may be beautiful, but too small is still too small. And one place is so much better than the other. ■

*Jerry Diethelm is a Eugene architect, landscape architect and planning and urban design consultant.*

