

Pedestrian obstacles studied if grant gets nod

By **CRAIG MURPHY**
Of the Keizertimes

The City of Keizer is teaming up with Salem-Keizer Transit District to apply for a grant.

Keizer City Councilors unanimously approved the request from Nate Brown, director of Community Development for Keizer, at their May 16 meeting.

The transit district has asked Keizer and Salem to be joint applicants for a Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) grant, which would allot funds to study and identify pedestrian impediments to access the fixed route bus network system.

The estimated budget amount in the application is \$72,300. The city wouldn't have any direct financial impact, instead supplying a soft match in terms of staff time, meeting space and logistical support.

"The intent is for a study to be done to look at obstacles for people to access the transit system, then incorporate that into a grant for things to

address in the future," Brown said.

Ted Stonecliffe spoke on behalf of the transit district.

"We're very interested to study those obstacles that make people unable to reach a fixed transit system and thus have to use other systems," Stonecliffe said. "Those are very costly systems we run, about 10 times the cost compared to the regular Cherris bus system. It is in our best interest to close the gap as best we can."

Stonecliffe said many neighborhoods in Keizer and Salem don't have adequate sidewalk infrastructure, as well as disconnected street networks. As a result, older riders and people with disabilities are forced to rely on the transit district's American with Disabilities Act (ADA) paratransit CherryLift service or the RED Line Dial-a-Ride.

"By engaging this grant, we can identify certain sections of sidewalk that are missing - and we have a few," mayor Cathy Clark said. "My question is, will it help us get a grant we may not have been otherwise

eligible for?"

Stonecliffe said it couldn't hurt.

"It's always good to identify the data that is needed," he said. "A few years ago Salem and Keizer did a sidewalk study. The access to transit component was not there. The more data we have to draw a picture to the gaps and importance to closing those, it could be to your advantage."

Clark said everyone would gain from that.

"By making sure roads, sidewalks and buses are there, that gives us the choice," she said. "Then everybody can access it, so it's an advantage for us to do so."

In response to a question from councilor Marlene Parsons, Stonecliffe said the study should take between six and nine months to complete once a consultant is on board.

In other recent council business:

- In light of the upcoming roundabout construction at Chemawa Road and Verda Lane, what is the best alternate route? Bill Lawyer, Public

Works director for Keizer, said there isn't a truly good route.

"The best route is to take Lockhaven Drive to River Road, or take the parkway," Lawyer said. "For getting to Keizer Little League Park, the best way is the parkway to Verda, then Keizer Road to the complex."

As discussion took place, council president Dennis Koho, who has voiced his displeasure over the roundabout project in the past, shook his head.

"Councilor Koho, this construction will affect me a lot since I take that route every day," Brown said. "All the construction in South Salem will affect me as well."

City Manager Chris Eppley felt sorry for Brown.

"Nate will have no way home for three months this summer," Eppley quipped. "But we have a shower here, which is good."

- Brown said a presentation for the state grant for the next phase of the Big Toy playground is set for Wednesday, June 1.

Volunteers needed for city advisory boards

The City of Keizer is soliciting applications for volunteers to serve on the following committees and advisory boards:

- **Festival Advisory Board** - Serve in an advisory role to the City of Keizer by researching the feasibility for developing venues for events and festivals, streamlining policies and ordinances for potential events, developing an all-inclusive community calendar and developing a marketing plan to enhance the use of Keizer-area facilities for events, festivals, and conferences. The committee meets on the fourth Monday of February, April, July, September and November at 6 p.m.
- **Keizer Points of Interest Committee** (two vacancies) - Identify, authenticate, and memorialize sites of interest located in the Keizer area. Sites to be identified may be of the historical, geographical, botanical, or unusual value. The committee meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m.
- **Public Art Commission** (two vacancies) - Review, eval-

uate, select, maintain and document all artwork, public art, and public murals within the city. Commissioners may advise the city council and city manager on the management, execution, installation, or placement of the artwork, public art and public murals and will recommend guidelines for adoption. The commission meets on the fourth Tuesday of every month at 6 p.m.

- **Youth Councilor/Youth Liaison/Page** - Opportunities are currently available to area teens for service on city council and various city committees for 2016-17.

Nominations are also being accepted for Volunteer of the Quarter.

Volunteer applications and Volunteer of the Quarter nominations are available at Keizer Civic Center, 930 Chemawa Road NE, Keizer, or you can request an application be mailed to you by calling 503-390-3700. Electronic applications are available at www.keizer.org.

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