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DAILY ASTORIAN

145TH YEAR, NO. 124

DailyAstorian.com // THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2017

ONE DOLLAR

MAJOR BRIDGE WORK AROUND
ASTORIA WILL PAUSE IN 2018

Photos by Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

A worker navigates scaffolding underneath the Astoria Bridge in April.

A RARITY THIS DECADE

By JACK HEFFERNAN | *The Daily Astorian*

What has become a rarity this decade, drivers and businesses will not need to concern themselves with prolonged closures next year on the major bridges surrounding Astoria and Warrenton.

The state Department of Transportation is in different phases of refurbishment projects on the Astoria Bridge, New Youngs Bay Bridge, Lewis and Clark River Bridge and Old Youngs Bay Bridge. The Old Youngs Bay and Lewis and Clark projects are nearly complete, while repairs on the other two are scheduled to take place in 2019 and beyond. Though some smaller closures may still occur, it will mark the first time in at least six years that travelers are not expected to endure extended delays, ODOT spokesman Lou Torres said.

"It has to do with funding. You fit them into different steps and you have different funding windows," he said. "It will probably be a welcomed break for everybody."

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Work to repair the Old Youngs Bay Bridge was completed earlier this year.

'Cap and invest' bill takes shape

Aimed at reducing greenhouse gases

By PARIS ACHEN
Capital Bureau

PORTLAND — Two Democratic lawmakers have released details of a carbon "cap and invest" bill that their party has prioritized for approval during Oregon's legislative session in February.

Modeled after a program in California, their proposal would effectively charge Oregon industry for emitting carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. The goal of the program is to encourage businesses to embrace technologies and practices that curb the release of greenhouse gases that warm the climate and to invest in projects that help the general population reduce their carbon footprint.

"We have two competing needs: We want to reduce emissions, but we don't want to put businesses out of business so their progress is light in the early years."

Michael Dembrow
State senator of Portland

A similar bill in 2016 drew strong opposition from certain Oregon business groups, including Associated Oregon Industries, since merged into Oregon Business & Industry.

Since then, state Sen. Michael Dembrow of Portland and Rep. Ken Helm of Beaverton have assembled a series of work groups to address concerns from business and industry, environmentalists and advocates for minorities and residents of rural areas.

A bill summary released Wednesday outlines changes to the proposal that address some of those concerns.

"We have two competing needs: We want to reduce emissions, but we don't want to put businesses out of business so their progress is light in the early years," Dembrow said. "Heavy emitters that are at risk of competition from other states or countries that don't have high standards, they are going to be given allowances in early years to help them transition into the program. We want to keep it predictable and not have rate shocks."

The bill is scheduled to be drafted and released to the public in early January. Some of the highlights of the changes are:

- About 20 percent of the hundreds of millions of dollars generated from carbon allowance sales would

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Downtown ambassador — with ticket power

New parking enforcement officer in Astoria

By EDWARD STRATTON
The Daily Astorian

Ronni Harris promises she won't be a parking Nazi.

The local artist was hired as Astoria's new community outreach officer to enforce parking rules and help visitors navigate downtown.

Her role is "educating, and then also writing tickets, but also being a friendly downtown Astoria ambassador," she said.

Harris is a part-time employee funded by lodging taxes in the city's Promote Astoria fund whose hours will mirror the times of metered downtown parking. Sarah Lu Heath,

the director of the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association, said the city had requested the partnership and will receive any of the money from tickets, while the downtown association gets an ambassador to help direct visitors.

The city has long had a downtown parking district between Seventh to 16th streets and the Astoria Riverwalk to Franklin Avenue where parking is mostly limited to two hours or less. Parking is also prohibited to business owners, employees and downtown residents to help create turnover for visitors and customers.

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Colin Murphey/The Daily Astorian

Ronni Harris, Astoria's new community outreach officer, crosses Commercial Street in downtown Astoria.

