



Clatsop County Historical Society

A trolley travels on wood planks at 14th and Commercial streets in 1905 downtown Astoria.

Transit: Sunset Empire not the first mass transit network

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of a state transit grant. By 1999, Sunset Empire had taken over all public transportation services in the county.

“By creating the special district, we were able to enhance service throughout the county, to get communities connected, especially this north-south route between Astoria, Seaside and Cannon Beach,” Hazen said.

But Sunset Empire wasn’t the region’s first mass transit network.

Before buses

“In 1888, Astoria had a population of 8,000 needing transportation to employment in over a dozen salmon canneries, two breweries, three sawmills and two box plants,” wrote historian Jim Dennon in the Clatsop County Historical Society’s quarterly magazine, “Cumtux.”

Nearly 180 years ago, Astoria Street Railway Co. began running a fleet of horse-drawn streetcars between the city’s

downtown and Uppertown neighborhoods.

“Fare was 5 cents,” Dennon wrote. “The street railway operated daily from 5:45 a.m. to 11 p.m. at intervals of not more than 20 minutes apart. Each car was pulled by a single horse.”

The system began converting to electric-powered streetcars in 1889, and expanded via a trestle bridge to Alderbrook on the east end.

Around the same time, rail connections were being established between Seaside and Warrenton. By 1897, the first trains had crossed Youngs Bay on a newly built trestle. A year later, the first train arrived in Astoria on a line along the Columbia River from the town of Goble upriver.

By 1900, Astoria’s streetcar system had gone bankrupt.

“Before automobiles could be blamed, riders were too few,” Dennon wrote. “Revenue was insufficient to retire the \$25,000 indebtedness incurred when the company electrified the system.”

The 13 canneries in Astoria had dropped to one, sapping ridership, he wrote. The property of Astoria Street Railway Co. was taken by General Electric to satisfy debt. General Electric reorganized the streetcar network under Astoria Electric Co., improved equipment and expanded the network to Alderbrook before the entire system was acquired by Pacific Power & Light Co. in 1910. A new trestle to Alderbrook opened in 1917.

Taken by fire

Fires would eventually doom Astoria’s streetcars.

The Hammond Lumber Co., which employed more than 600 people east of Astoria, burned Sept. 11, 1922. On Dec. 8, 1922, a larger fire swept through Astoria, destroying much of downtown and Pacific Power & Light’s streetcar tracks, power distribution and gas mains.

The company abandoned the lines in 1924 because of continued financial losses and the cost of rebuilding down-

town, Dennon wrote, and neither the city nor the Port of Astoria were interested in taking on the lines.

Local car dealer Sherman Lovell and W.E. Young, operator of the Linnton Transit Co. near Portland, formed Astoria Transit Co. The company secured a bid to offer the city bus service in exchange for complete abandonment of the trolleys.

Six 25-passenger Mack buses arrived June 27, 1924, and two days later the streetcars stopped running. Most of the rails were left in the ground, covered up or removed during road improvements. Some of the streetcars were scrapped, while some were sold to other communities.

Astoria in 1998 received a 1913 streetcar from a former system in San Antonio, Texas, that ceased operations in 1933. After a restoration, the volunteer Astoria Riverfront Trolley Association began running the streetcar, called Old 300, as a tourist attraction along the Astoria Riverwalk.

Opioids: Law requires medical providers to register with monitoring program

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suffering from the disease of addiction,” the executive order states.

Reducing barriers to comprehensive behavioral health care could help “lift a burden” off of families, hospitals, law enforcement, prisons and the state foster care system, Brown said.

The governor signed the executive order and signed House Bill 4143 and House Bill 4137 during an event at Lines for Life, a southwest Portland-based nonprofit agency that provides a 24-hour substance abuse and suicide crisis line.

House Bill 4143, proposed by the governor, is the work of her Opioid Epidemic Task Force, which began convening in September.

Among other things, the law requires medical providers to register with the Oregon Health Authority’s prescription drug monitoring program. The monitoring system allows physicians to look up patients to find out if they have misused opioids or have been shopping for a doctor who will prescribe an opioid.

Woodburn Police Chief Jim Ferraris, who represents the Oregon Association Chiefs of Police on the task force, said doctors should be required to look up a patient in the monitoring program before prescribing an opioid. However, the law only requires that doctors be registered with the program.

“It really should be mandatory use, but this is a first bite of the apple; this is a first step,” Ferraris said.

In 2016, 245 Oregon residents died from opioid overdoses, according to the most recent statistics from the Oregon Health Authority. That’s about six per 100,000 residents.

House Bill 4137, by state Rep. Tawna Sanchez, D-Portland, sets deadlines for the Alcohol and Drug Policy Commission to develop a framework for a statewide strategic plan for addiction prevention, treatment and recovery by Sept. 15 and to submit the strategic plan to the Legislature by July 1, 2020.

The Capital Bureau is a collaboration between EO Media Group and Pamplin Media Group.

Carts: Nourish Juice Bar opts to open a brick-and-mortar store

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Good Bowl and Snackle Box were previously located in a parking lot on property near City Hall farther up 11th Street with two other food carts.

The property was in flux, however, and some cart owners weren’t sure if they could continue to lease space. Judith Stokes, the owner of Snackle Box and a tenant at

the property, leased space to the other carts. She remained a while longer but eventually closed the makeup shop she maintained at a building on the property and moved the food cart. The owners of Nourish Juice Bar opted to open a brick-and-mortar location on 14th and Commercial streets. The fourth cart, DJ’s Vinyl Vegan, has new owners who have not launched their business yet.

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