



The state of State: Urban Renewal is complete

AT RIGHT, the elevated and street level sidewalks between Second and First streets, looking east. In the future, the upper level can be tied into staircases leading from homes or businesses located on Sherman Street, to the south. Also on this page: then-and-now pairs of photos and images from the December 2014 final stages of the Urban Renewal project. Called the State Street project, it also brought interruptions and improvements — new paving, sidewalks and curbs and gutters — to Oak Street (the views below are out the window of Ground coffeehouse, January 2014) west of First, and on Front Street, where Martin Marquez of Schuepbach Construction shapes newly poured concrete in July 2014.

Photos by Kirby Neumann-Rea



By KIRBY NEUMANN-REA
News editor

For the last two Augusts, State Street was a mess.

This August will be far different.

The Urban Renewal Project on State (and Front and a portion of Oak) is all but finished. It began on Aug. 5, 2013, with the arrival of piles of gravel and backhoes digging the first trenches. August and September 2013 and 2014, and the full summer of 2014, saw extensive traffic interruptions as Crestline Construction and subcontract crews literally tore up the street.

The routine detours, the piles of gravel, the dust, the heavy machinery parked in the road, the blocked driveways, the closed crosswalks, all a thing of the past — except for one final stretch: completion of the restroom at Third Street, set for completion in February.

And, for weather reasons, most of the landscaping will have to wait for the spring. But new ornamental pears went in during fall 2014.

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THIS PICTURE, a worker standing in a hole, putting something new into that hole — in this case a water line valve — best depicts the whole point of State Street Urban Renewal.



ABOVE: TWO VIEWS AT THIRD AND STATE, in September 2013 and December 2014. At left: Sixth and State, the old retaining wall (a mix of rock and concrete chunks that were crumbling into the draining ditch) and formation of the new wall in August 2014. In the background is the county administration building at Sixth and State. Asbury Church building is now in private ownership of Claudia von Flotow, who is developing it for commercial use.

Below, Rick Olmstead of Hood River adds one of the finishing touches to the project, the brick "caps" that are found on seating walls in front of Riverside Church, at Sixth and State, and in front of the County Courthouse at Third Street. Rick's son, Gannon, assisted. At the bottom of the page, center: old sidewalk gets uprooted in January 2014, and in December 2014 parking stripes and bike route symbols were placed on the asphalt.



A NARROW STAIRWAY in front of the County Courthouse, just east of Third Street, used to serve homes on the south side of State before the courthouse construction in 1956. The stairs were filled in and overgrown, but visible; for more views of 19th century remnants, removed during the project, see page B10.

