

# Fred Meyer Gives Expansion Green Light



An artist's rendering shows the design for a new two-story Fred Meyer store to replace the existing store at North Interstate Avenue and Lombard Street. Company officials say construction will begin in January with completion before the December 2004 holidays.

## Interstate store will be replaced with two-story structure

BY MICHAEL LEIGHTON  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

After months of speculation, Fred Meyer has decided it will move ahead with plans to replace a decades-old store at North Interstate Avenue and Lombard Street with a brand new shopping center.

Company officials say the existing store will close in January following the year-end holidays and re-open in a new and expanded building before the year-end holidays of 2004.

Rob Boley, Fred Meyer vice president of public relations, said customers are going to have to make due during the estimated 10-month demolition and construction period.

"We could not figure out a way to keep the store open and do the project," Boley said.

However, the retailer does plan to operate its pharmacy from a temporary site during the construction period.

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—Rob Boley, spokesperson for Fred Meyer

temporary site during the construction period.

"It's tough to close the store in the interim, but the reward for waiting will be worth it in terms of a dramatic and beautiful new store," Boley said.

Fred Meyer, a Portland institution since 1923, first opened an outlet at Interstate and Lombard in 1953.

In recent years, local government officials have urged the company to upgrade the Interstate store to compliment the major street

improvements to Interstate Avenue where a new light rail mass transportation link is scheduled to open next year.

Boley said Fred Meyer has committed more than \$18 million to the project. The new building will provide 150,000 square feet of retail space on two levels, that's 30,000 more square feet than the store currently provides with two separate buildings.

The plans call for food, home improvement, garden, electronics and a pharmacy on the first level and apparel and shoes on

the second level. Elevators and escalators will move shoppers between floors.

The two-story design is similar to the Fred Meyer Wood Village store, but it will have a newer interior design, Boley said.

The retailer is still working on permits to vacate Montana Street where it borders the Fred Meyer property to give the expanded store and adjacent parking lot a larger footprint.

Boyer said preliminary approval for the street plans are "looking good."

## Food Fuels Summer Fun

The Blazers Boys and Girls Club is one of 50 parks and community centers throughout the city that serves breakfasts and lunches during the summertime, to kids in low-income neighborhoods.

The federal Summer Food Program is Multnomah County's tool for combating hunger this summer. Portland Public Schools is the biggest local sponsor to this program, funded through the USDA.

"When cafeterias close, Summer Food meals are often my students' only option," said Kathy Jaffe, principal at chief Joseph Elementary School.

The program is currently underutilized.

Summer Foods sites serve fewer than 25 percent of Oregon students



Danielle Nicol, 10, enjoys a free lunch at the Blazers Boys and Girls Club.

PHOTO BY RON WASHINGTON/  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

who get free and reduced price meals during the school year.

Meals at the Blazers Boys and Girls Club on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard are from 9 to 10 a.m. for breakfast and noon

to 1 p.m. for lunch. The Blazers Club is one of the few sites that also provides snacks, from 3 to 4 p.m.

For more information about Summer Food locations, call 1-800-SAFENET.

## Lents Asks for Input At Open House

The Portland Development Commission has scheduled two community open houses in the Lents community to review proposals for redevelopment of downtown Lents and a parcel of land

next to the freeway. The open houses will be held at Marshall High School, 3905 S.E. 91st Ave., from 3 to 8 p.m. Thursday, June 26 and 1 to 5 p.m. Saturday, June 28.

Both the Lents Town Center and

Freeway Land sites have been identified as having the best potential in Lents for redevelopment. Lents community members and PDC staff will be on hand to answer questions.

## Food Stamp Use In Portland Rises Sharply

For the first time in the history of the federal food stamp program, Oregon has more people receiving food-stamp benefits than living in poverty. By this measure, Oregon also has the nation's highest ratio

of food stamp recipients compared to those living below the federal poverty level. The data is based on the 2000 Census.

"This reflects Oregon's success in removing barriers to a

program that promotes a food resource for families and individuals," said Ramona Foley, Oregon Department of Human Services assistant director for children, adults and families.

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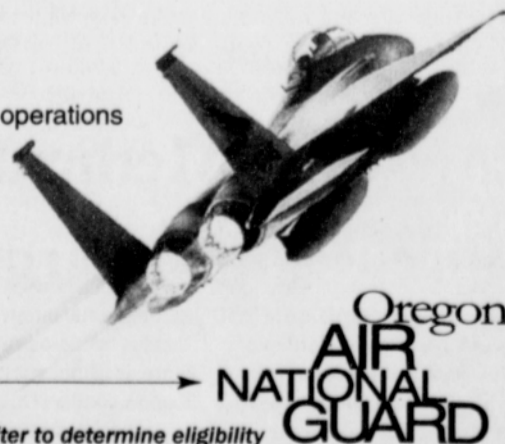
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