

# Fir Street Bridge to get rehabilitated

**Bridge will be more likely to survive earthquake**

By Lyra Fontaine  
Cannon Beach Gazette

During a tsunami or earthquake, the Fir Street Bridge that connects downtown to the city's north end is likely to collapse. City officials want to make it safer. The bridge will undergo repairs and seismic rehabilitation this fall to increase its survivability in the event of a moderate earthquake.

"What this will do is improve the bridge's odds of surviving a moderate earthquake in that it would still be functional after that," Public Works Director Dan Grassick said.

The City Council approved a resolution to adopt a supplemental budget for the bridge's rehabilitation at a meeting last week.

The cost for Oregon Bridge Engineering Consultants to create a design, plans and specifications is \$26,500, funds existing in this year's bridge repair and replacement fund. The construction cost of up to \$150,000 is in the proposed budget for next fiscal year.



R.J. MARX/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

**The Fir Street bridge will undergo reconstruction.**

"What the engineers will do is increase the width of the bearing pads of each of the spans and do some other improvements," Grassick said. "There are a couple of cross ties that have corroded and we'll fix all of those."

Oregon Bridge Engineering Consultants will complete design work by July, and the construction would be completed by October.

"The vehicle bridge has got some maintenance issues so while we're doing those, we thought we might as well have

the design engineers increase its survivability," Grassick said.

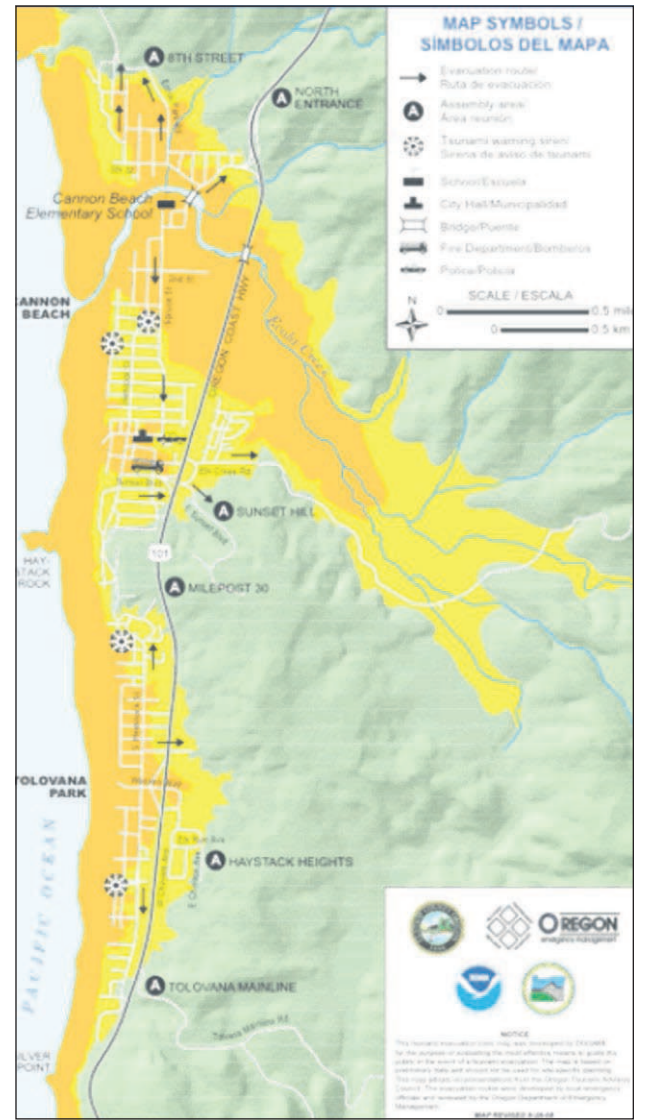
City plans still include constructing a "tsunami survivable" pedestrian bridge near the Fir Street Bridge to make it easier for residents and tourists to vacate the downtown area within the 15-minute evacuation time frame.

The construction of the pedestrian bridge depends on whether the city is awarded a \$1.8 million Connect Oregon grant, which the city would match with \$500,000. If received, the grant would be awarded this fall.

"The reason why this is critical and that council is acting on this grant is that it was estimated by Professor (Althea) Rizzo that this would save between 500 and 1,500 lives in a tsunami event," City Manager Brant Kucera said at a budget committee meeting last week. "That area takes a very long time to get out of that downtown area to higher ground and not having access to that bridge is one reason why."

The pedestrian bridge project, which would cost \$1.7 million, will only move forward if the city receives the state grant, Kucera said.

City Council voted to pursue a Connect Oregon grant to help build a Pedestrian bridge over Ecola Creek in November.



CANNON BEACH GAZETTE/SUBMITTED PHOTO

**Tsunami map of Cannon Beach.**

*Do you know where to go?*

## Learn the way to safety

By Lyra Fontaine  
Cannon Beach Gazette

When the ground begins to shake on the north end of Cannon Beach, will you know where to go? The Cascadia subduction zone earthquake could create a tsunami that will reach the Oregon coast within 15 to 20 minutes, according to the state.

The fifth annual evacuation route practice walk on Saturday, May 28, offers an opportunity for both residents and tourists to learn how to get to the tsunami safe zone.

The walk should take 15 to 20 minutes, volunteer tsunami walk coordinator Jeneé Pearce-Mushen said.

"We want to make sure people understand and start doing the walk on our own," she said.

Participants will gather at 10 a.m. at the Les Shirley Park bus stop and will walk the Oak Street route to Eighth Street. The new "safe area" on Laurel Street north of Fifth Street will be discussed. An open house will take place at 11 a.m. on Eighth and Oak Street. At 12:30 p.m., participants can meet at Les Shirley Park to discuss potential improvements.

People are "going to be distressed and need help" when a tsunami comes, and those who know the route will be able to assist others, Pearce-Mushen said.

The walk is open for anyone in the county and tourists. People can bring their go-bags, pets and anything else they need to be prepared.

"If we have a Cascadia earthquake, we'll know where to go," Pearce-Mushen said.

# New Fire Chief Benedict to start June 1

Fire Chief from Page 1A

"The department seems to have a lot of potential," Benedict said. "I want to help them get to that point to bring out all the potential to make us one of the premier agencies on the North Coast."

Benedict was chosen out of 20 applicants from across the country. He emerged as one of three finalists after interviews from an area fire chiefs' panel and a Cannon Beach citizen panel. The board selected Benedict at the end of April.

Benedict began his career in 1994 as firefighter paramedic for the Pendleton Fire District. He was promoted to lieutenant paramedic, captain paramedic, then assistant chief and fire marshal in 2014. For six years, he was also chief of Helix fire district.

"We're really excited to have Matt here," Stearns said. "He brings professionalism and a drive in the fire service that I think will be very beneficial to the community."

Benedict started in Pendleton when Stearns was Hermiston's fire chief.

"I've had the benefit of knowing Matt since he started in the fire service," Stearns said. "I was in a neighboring



LYRA FONTAINE/CANNON BEACH GAZETTE

**Chief Matt Benedict familiarizes himself with the ladder truck.**

agency and got to watch Matt come up through the ranks pretty quickly within the organization."

Born and raised in Portland, Benedict said he is excited to live on the northern Oregon coast, where he vacationed as a child. He also looks forward to being closer to family in Portland.

"The people I've met down here have been very friendly and have so far welcomed me to the community," he said.

After selling their Helix home, Benedict and wife Amanda, an emergency room nurse, will rent or buy in the

Cannon Beach area. They have four children who will visit often.

"I looked up to firefighting my whole life when I was a little kid," Benedict said. "I fulfilled my dream."

Benedict said he brings "education, experience and knowledge" to guide the core group of firefighters and strengthen the fire district.

He has dealt with many challenging firefighting situations.

Last summer, an explosion and fire in downtown Pendleton destroyed part of a building. Benedict and other firefighters prevented the fire from spreading past the former City Hall building.

In 2012, a tour bus crash into a ravine near Pendleton led to multiple fatalities and injuries. Numerous agencies from surrounding counties worked with Pendleton Fire District during the situation, using an incident command system.

Benedict looks forward to working with agencies near Cannon Beach.

"In Pendleton, your neighboring agencies are a half hour away," he said. "Here we have Seaside, so it's going to be a good working relationship."

Cannon Beach fire district has 25 firefighters and are "always looking for more," Stearns said. There are also six members of Fire Corps, made up of retired firefighters.

"I took a look at the organization and how it was operating and helped them decide who would be the best fit for the organization," said Stearns, interim chief since December. "I think Matt is going to be excellent."

After his time in Cannon Beach ends, Stearns will visit his grandchildren, return to Hermiston and see where life takes him. He may take another interim chief position.

"I don't think I'm done yet," Stearns said.

At the May 9 meeting, resident Eric Reiter thanked Stearns for his work.

Benedict will be at the next fire board meeting June 13.

102.3 KCRX & KAST-AM 1370 present

the **California Beach Boys** Friday, May 27th at the **Liberty Theatre**

Tickets at the box office and ticketwest.com

102.3 fm **KCRX** the Classic Rock Station

1370 AM **KAST** NEWS & TALK

**WHIRREN HOUSE PUB** CANNON BEACH, ORE.

**SERVING LUNCH & DINNER**

OPEN AT 11:30  
Tuesday's Open at 4pm

Delightful Beer  
Garden • Ocean View Deck  
Pool Tables • Darts  
Full Bar (including Bill's Tavern brews) but that's not all...

Smoked Pork Ribs • Steak • Seafood and much, much more!

Located in SOUTH Cannon Beach  
3301 S. Hemlock St. • Tolovana Park  
503.436.1130 • Minors Welcome

**THE WINE SHACK** EST. 1977 CANNON BEACH

**CANNON BEACH'S LARGEST SELECTION OF OREGON AND WASHINGTON WINE!**

**UPCOMING TASTINGS**  
May 21 • Great Wines for Grilled Foods  
May 28 • Sokol Blosser  
June 4 • A Galaxy of Wines  
June 11 • Capitello Wines  
June 18 • D'Anu Wines  
June 25 • Kramer Vineyards

**"Best Wine Shop"**  
- 2016 Reader's Choice Award

**Shack Hours**  
Sun-Thurs • 11am to 5pm  
Fri-Sat • 11am to 6pm

**Tasting Room Hours**  
Saturdays • 1 to 5pm

**124 N. HEMLOCK, CANNON BEACH**  
**503.436.1100 - WWW.BEACHWINE.COM**

**TURKISH RUG EVENT**

**Memorial Day Weekend**

**Friday and Saturday**  
**May 27th - 28th**

**SESAME + LILIES**

183 N. Hemlock St.  
Cannon Beach  
10am - 5:30pm  
436.2027

**Making Sweet Memories for Over 50 Years**

Freshest Homemade:  
Saltwater Taffy  
Chocolates  
Caramel Corn  
Caramel Apples  
& MORE!!  
Wedding Treats & Gift Baskets Available!

**TWO LOCATIONS**  
Downtown Cannon Beach & Seaside Outlet Mall

**THE ONLY TAFFY MADE IN CANNON BEACH!**

Making Sweet Memories Since 1969

**Bruce's Candy Kitchen**

WE CAN SHIP CANDY DIRECTLY TO YOU!

www.brucescandy.com • 503-436-2641 • 503-738-7828

Find us on Facebook