



June 28, 2011

File Code:

Brian Russell
President, Southwest Neighborhoods Inc.
7688 SW Capitol Highway
Portland, OR 97219

RE: Safety Improvements on Newbury and Vermont Bridge Structures

Dear Mr. Russell,

This letter is in response to your letter of May 26, 2011, requesting that the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) design and install safety improvements for people walking and biking on SW Barbur Boulevard at the Newbury and Vermont bridge structures. As indicated in the SWNI letter, the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) project to rehabilitate the two bridges is not currently scheduled. Any improvements to the bridges will come from funding outside of the STIP.

In order to get a better understanding of the costs of improving bike and pedestrian access to the Newbury and Vermont bridges, I asked ODOT technical staff (Traffic, Roadway, Bridge, Environmental and Maintenance) to provide estimates on expanding one of the sidewalks (northbound or southbound Barbur Boulevard through the two-bridge area) by two feet, adding railing, improving the ramps to the sidewalks and installing striping and other enhancements.

Here are some of the expected costs for expanding the sidewalk by two feet:

- Installing the sidewalk concrete and improving the ramps
- Grinding and paving Barbur Boulevard in the bridge area (necessary to completely remove current striping so that Barbur users are not confused by seeing "ghost striping" on the roadway)
- Striping the new alignment
- Installing a geo-membrane for waterproofing the bridge decks
- Relocating stormwater inlets
- Railing installation
- Erosion control
- Traffic control

Estimates for this work are \$500,000 to \$800,000, assuming no bridge joint or concrete deck repairs are needed when the current asphalt is removed. ODOT's Bridge program funding is not available for this sidewalk widening project. The region's Bike/Ped program could provide some funding for this project, but it would be a small fraction of what's needed.



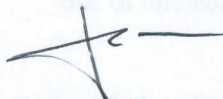
Given the limited funding currently available for the two-foot sidewalk widening, we've looked at the following short-term improvements for the bridges, which we'd like to discuss with you and other stakeholders:

- Improve bicycle striping at the transition from Barbur Boulevard southbound to the Capitol Highway on-ramp
- Improve bicycle signing
- Cut back hillside vegetation to improve visibility to signs

These improvements can be designed, funded and installed in the short term. In the long term, Metro's Southwest Corridor planning effort that is getting started this summer is an opportunity to significantly improve bike and pedestrian facilities on Barbur Boulevard.

My office will contact you to set up a meeting to discuss these short-term improvements. In the meantime, please contact me with any questions.

Sincerely,



Jason Tell
Region 1 Manager

cc: Marianne Fitzgerald, Southwest Neighborhoods Inc.
Tom Miller, Director, Portland Bureau of Transportation
Sue D'Agnese, ODOT Region 1 Traffic Manager
Mike Mason, ODOT Community Affairs