

Rod Park

METRO COUNCIL DISTRICT 1 NEWS



METRO

PEOPLE PLACES
OPEN SPACES

Rod Park represents District 1, which includes Fairview, Gresham, Happy Valley, Maywood Park, Troutdale, Wood Village, Damascus and portions of East Portland.



A message from Rod Park

Some of you may have heard about, or even seen, the demolition of the Rockwood Fred Meyer last month. The demolition of this building was a win on two accounts. It was an environmentally friendly demolition of the structure and a beginning for the economically depressed area. A mix of residential and commercial space will be developed in the site. The area will celebrate diversity and provide light rail and pedestrian access.

Not long ago we set up BoneyardNW.com which is a completely free service connecting buyers and sellers of used commercial construction materials in the Portland Metro region. BoneyardNW allows construction companies to easily sell directly to those looking for used commercial construction material in the Portland metropolitan area. The demolition of the Rockwood Fred Meyer will recycle 98 percent of the building into future construction projects, both at the Fred Meyer site and elsewhere. Some of the large beams and rooftop heating/air conditioning units will be resold, and concrete will be broken into rock-size pieces and reused. With this example and the development of the BoneyardNW, environmentally sound demolition will become more common.

— Rod Park

Metro Council approves feasibility study of a headquarters hotel

The Metro Council has taken the lead in a study to determine if a headquarters hotel adjacent to the Oregon Convention Center (OCC) is financially feasible. The Metro Council has set a high bar stating the public's money should not be at risk. A hotel has been discussed since before 1990, when the OCC opened. Studies have shown that such a hotel would significantly enhance the OCC's mission as an economic development tool by enabling it to attract up to 17 additional conventions each year. This would further increase its current economic impact of over 500 million dollars a year, bringing new jobs to our region, specifically to an area ripe for revitalization. These same studies have shown that without building a headquarters hotel, the economic impact of the OCC will severely diminish due to the loss of some of the national conferences it now currently attracts.

The Portland Development Commission (PDC) initially led the project, selecting a development team and obtaining land on which to build. The PDC sought to attract private development of the hotel, but it quickly became clear that private ownership of a convention headquarters hotel would require up to \$80 million in public subsidy, with no public ownership or public return on the investment.

The feasibility of a publicly owned and privately operated hotel is now being analyzed, with Metro, as the owner of the OCC, as the potential public owner. On Feb. 8, the Metro Council voted to take the lead on investigating the public ownership concept, and committed \$250,000 to complete a thorough and rigorous analysis of the hotel, the effect it could have on the tourism industry, the benefits it might bring to the local neighborhoods, OCC's operations, the stability of its revenue sources, and dedicated funding to pay for it.

continued

Headquarters hotel

continued from page 1

The Metro Council is committed to making a go, no-go decision on this project by the end of this summer. We need to give the tourism industry and the public some certainty as to whether this project will move forward. We are committed to doing our homework to see if the hotel can deliver significant benefits to the region, withstand inevitable down cycles in the economy, and pay its debts while minimizing the risk to existing programs.

Metro Council approves list of transportation and related projects

The Metro Council, in its role as part of the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Portland region, recently voted to approve the Joint Policy Advisory Committee on Transportation's recommendation to fund projects through the flexible funding portion of the 2008 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP). MTIP is the biennial program for federally funded transportation projects in the metropolitan region.

MTIP funds are spent on state and federally approved highway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian facilities throughout the region. The flexible fund portion, administered by Metro, may be used for a variety of transportation projects, and for those that do not have another source of funding, such as trail planning, regional transportation options, transit shelters or street improvements.

Jurisdictions and transportation agencies were awarded nearly \$45 million for 32 projects; 66 projects totaling \$132 million in funding were considered.

Projects funded in Multnomah County include:

- Southeast 190th Street: Pleasant View/Highland to Southwest 30th Street
- 223rd Avenue rail road undercrossing at Sandy Boulevard
- Southeast Burnside: 181st Avenue to Stark Street
- Hood Street: Southeast Division Street to Powell Boulevard

Projects funded in Clackamas County include:

- Harmony Road: 82nd Avenue to Highway 224

For a full project list or to learn more about the projects, visit www.metro-region.org and search for "transportation priorities process 2008-11."

Metro councilors, staff meet with congressional representatives on transportation

In March, a group of about 25 representatives from Metro, other public agencies and various cities and counties from throughout the region made an annual trip to Washington, D.C. to discuss transportation policy and funding with members of the U.S. Congress and the federal government.

This annual trip has become a very valuable tool for the region. It disciplines the region to keep with our well-tuned practice having the region's participants identify the most important transportation priorities that absolutely need attention from Congress and the federal government.

This strategic focus has a very strong effect. When members of Congress can see and hear representatives from this region making a unified case and even cross-advocating for each others' needs, it sends a very positive signal to them that this region is unified, collaborative and very worthy of attention and priority from them. Not all metropolitan regions are able to do that as well as we have.

As this region and the federal government update transportation policies to respond to 21st Century challenges, we feel this annual trip helps this region immensely. By keeping open, positive channels with key members of Congress, we are able to help influence their transportation policy making so that it can benefit our region even better.

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About Metro

Clean air and clean water do not stop at city limits or county lines. Neither does the need for jobs, a thriving economy and good transportation choices for people and businesses in our region. Voters have asked Metro to help with the challenges that cross those lines and affect the 25 cities and three counties in the Portland metropolitan area.

A regional approach simply makes sense when it comes to protecting open space, caring for parks, planning for the best use of land, managing garbage disposal and increasing recycling. Metro oversees world-class facilities such as the Oregon Zoo, which contributes to conservation and education, and the Oregon Convention Center, which benefits the region's economy.

Your Metro representatives

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April 2007 dch/final
Printed on recycled paper