



December 7, 2016

Mayor Charlie Hales
Commissioner Nick Fish
Commissioner Amanda Fritz
Commissioner Steve Novick

RE:

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council directs PBOT to continue to advance the Gideon Street Pedestrian/Bicycle Bridge (Transportation System Plan Project No. 20185) for funding consideration and undertake a feasibility study to develop a conceptual alignment and planning level cost estimate.

Dear Mayor and Commissioners

On behalf of the Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood District (HAND) board members and residents I urge you to support the construction of a pedestrian and bicycle bridge across the UPRR and MAX tracks near the MAX Orange Line Clinton Station and the crossings at SE 11th, 12th Avenues and Milwaukie Boulevard in the very near future. The project is currently at the end of the TSP list of projects with a 20-year expected time-line for completion. It is matter of safety, zoning concept and reality, and ridership.

The bridge would replace a bridge that once crossed the UPRR tracks at SE 16th Avenue, but was removed during construction of the Orange Line. There were initial assurances that the bridge would be replaced, but that segment was put aside during recalibration of the project when Federal funding was provided at fifty percent rather than the expected sixty percent. Even though the project was under budget at time of completion, Federal funding was removed before the replacement of the bridge.

The crossings at 11th, 12th and Milwaukie are frequently blocked for long periods by long slow-moving freight trains, which according to information provided by UPRR are likely to increase in length and frequency, along with the passage of the MAX trains, and a complex signal cycle managing traffic at a complex and confusing intersection.

Impatient bicyclists and pedestrians have been observed and documented on videos climbing through couplings between train cars. In a video recorded by an elected official such there were at least eight such events during one thirty-five-plus-minute wait. (The battery on his phone died before the train had completed the crossing.) A bridge for pedestrians and bicyclists would offer an alternative to this very dangerous and risky activity.

Current and proposed zoning provides for increased density and limited parking for automobiles within a proscribed one-quarter-mile radius of a transit stop, including the Clinton Station, a reasonable concept. However, all HAND residential sites within that quarter mile are subject to those zoning rules in spite of the fact that access to the station is often blocked by the trains. The current alternative route for pedestrians and bicycles is a lengthy detour to reach the multiuse path that parallels Powell Boulevard under the 17th Avenue rail and automobile overpasses, a distance of well over a quarter of a mile. Many people are reluctant to use



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that route because of the intimidating presence of houseless campers. As we have noted in several letters to the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability, the Planning and Sustainability Commission, and City Council proximity does not equal accessibility. A pedestrian and bicycle bridge would help to make an unrealistic zoning concept more true.

HAND residents from within and beyond the quarter-mile circle are reporting that they are fearful of relying on using the Orange Line for transit after having found themselves unable to catch a train and being late or missing important commitments. Potential ridership of the Orange Line is therefore lost, with more losses likely until the bridge offers a way over the trains. Meanwhile people are sometimes resorting to use of the bus, others the surety of their automobiles.

The original bridge was a neighborhood icon that is very much missed. There is a sense of betrayal that results from the removal of funds and the uncertain time-line for replacement.

Many of us believe that a bridge extending from SE Gideon Street at 13th Avenue to SE 14th Avenue would be an ideal site but are open to discussion and negotiation. We just want the bridge...for safety, a move toward realistic zoning concepts, and increased use of transit.

We repeat our request that you support the construction of the Brooklyn/Gideon bridge, TSP project 20185 in the near future.

Most Sincerely,

Susan E Pearce, Chair, Hosford-Abernethy Neighborhood District Board