



**Frequently Asked Questions
Pier – Chimney Parks Bridge
Updated 26 March 2013**

Why is a trail going through Chimney and Pier Parks?

The vision of a continuous trail along both sides of the Willamette River has been promoted by trail advocates in Portland for more than 10 years. In a continuing effort to complete this trail, Portland Parks & Recreation applied for and received a Regional Flexible Funds grant from Metro to determine the preferred alignment for the 10.4-mile-long North Portland Greenway Trail. The project trail corridor extends from the Eastbank Esplanade at the Steel Bridge to Kelley Point Park. The North Portland Greenway Trail is a key piece of the metropolitan trail system which allows people to travel from Washington to Oregon and the Columbia River to the Willamette River.

Who was involved in developing the North Portland Greenway Trail?

The North Portland Greenway Trail was adopted by City Council in 2003 as part of the North Reach River Plan. Additionally it was incorporated into the Portland Parks & Recreation Recreational Regional Trail Strategy, 2006. Hundreds of individuals have been involved in and actively working for the development of this trail alignment. The bridge is an integral piece of that network.

Why do we need a bridge?

The bridge project will close a key gap in the North Willamette Greenway Trail. The bridge is not only a critical connection between the two parks but it is also part of the regional 40-Mile Loop trail system and the North Portland Greenway Trail. Locally, the trail, when completed, will connect Cathedral Park to the Smith-Bybee natural area and Kelley Point Park.

How was the bridge designed?

The North Portland Greenway Trail vision came from the community and included a bridge between Pier and Chimney Parks.

The location and alignment of the bridge was driven largely by topography in the parks, Federal, State and City codes and design guidelines. At the December 2011 open house, the public was asked to give input on the bridge finish and structure. There was also an opportunity to list general questions and comments. The notes from that meeting are on the project webpage.

April to June 2011 – Project kick-off meeting and site survey, participants included; representatives from David Evans & Associates and their historical and geotechnical subconsultants, ODOT, Metro, PP&R.



The purpose of the meeting was to establish lines of communication and roles and responsibilities and review the project tasks requiring action by the group including: schedule, site survey, archeological/historical investigation, hazardous material assessment, railroad coordination, geotechnical investigation, etc.

June 29, 2011 – Site Rail Diagnostic Meeting held on site. The meeting was attended by representatives from David Evans & Associates (bridge engineer), Portland Parks & Recreation, Metro, ODOT and Union Pacific Railroad. The tentative location of the bridge was marked/staked and reviewed by meeting attendees. Items discussed included that the bridge span would be approximately 125', clearance over the rail lines would be 23'-4", the embankment in Chimney Park would be approximately 18 feet above existing grade, no fill materials or structures are allowed on railroad right-of-way, the crossing site was chosen to make use of high ground in Pier Park and avoid removal of large, healthy trees in Pier Park, fill of 2-3 feet will be required on the Pier Park bridge approach, the staked bridge location was shifted west several feet to center on a group of dead trees on railroad property.

August 2011-David Evans & Associates developed three alternatives for the Pier Park bridge approach. These were reviewed and evaluated by representatives from Parks' Urban Forestry specifically for impacts to the Pier Park trees. The alternative with the least tree impact unfortunately required the removal of one sequoia tree but provided better protection from construction and grade change impacts of the remaining trees. Of the other alternatives, one would have required removal of two sequoia trees and the third would have jeopardized the long term survival of three sequoia trees. The alternative that limited tree removal/damage to a single sequoia was recommended based upon Urban Forestry's review and was selected.

August 2011 to January 2012 – Perform geotechnical studies, investigate for project impacts on rare plants or endangered species, investigate archaeological impacts, potential hazardous materials assessment

October 2011 – Present project to Portland Parks & Recreation Disability Advisory Committee for comment and approval

November 2011-David Evans & Associates completed and distributed the 30% design documents for review/comment by the project team.

December 19, 2011-Public Open House at St John's Community Center to provide information on the objectives and progress of the bridge project, the long and short term impacts to Pier and Chimney Parks, provide an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on the bridge project 30% design documents and presentations on the bridge design and finish. The 30% plans reflected the loss of one sequoia and a preliminary landscaping plan to mitigate its loss. There was also information available regarding the bridge project impacts to the Chimney Park dog off-leash area, North Portland Greenway



Trail Project and park users. A summary of the open house and feedback forms is posted on Parks webpage for the project.

January to December 2012 – Refine design documents and coordinate with Union Pacific Railroad for easement and construction and maintenance agreement.

January to March 2013 – Bid and award of construction contract

April 2013- Construction contractor given notice to proceed (anticipated)

Where will the new construction be?

<http://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/437604>

This link will take you to the bridge construction drawings. The highlighted areas are new construction.

In Pier Park the trail will be paved 65’ from the end of the bridge abutment straight ahead into the park. This distance is required to meet ADA and provide a safe path off the bridge-the height of the bridge/path is 2.5’ above the surrounding grade. The paved portion of the trail will be asphalt. A portion of the existing paths turning right and left off the bridge will be paved.

When will construction take place?

Construction is planned for April – November 2013.

When will construction of the trail through the sequoia grove be completed?

This trail has not been designed. There is no funding at this time to continue work on the trail design. When funds do become available, we will continue to work with the community to ensure that everyone who is interested in the project has the opportunity to participate.

The design plan shows a tree in the way of the path. Does this mean that another tree(s) will come down?

The line extending beyond the end of the trail is for illustration purposes only. The continued trail alignment has not been determined.

Does the road need to be built to accommodate vehicles?

The design of ODOT bicycle/pedestrian bridge projects rely on the AASHTO (American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials) Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities. This guide recommends a path width of 12-14’ to accommodate maintenance and emergency vehicles. The trails and bridge in Pier and Chimney Parks will be 10’ wide plus a 2’ shoulder on each side. The bridge structure is closed on top with a vertical clearance of 10’ and a weight limit of 10,000lbs. This should limit the size



of vehicles that will be able to use the bridge to police cars, ambulances and maintenance pickups.

Service vehicles will continue to use the road along the rail side of the park.

There is no road being built through the Sequoia Grove. The trail connecting to the bridge has not been designed.

What will happen with the wood from the tree?

PP&R will work with Friends of Pier Park to determine an appropriate installation. Portland Parks & Recreation Director Mike Abbaté has voiced his support for a park bench made from the Sequoia that would remain in Pier Park. Additionally, a portion of the wood will be used in the development of a Nature Based Play area in PP&R's Westmoreland Park. We received a grant from Metro to develop a Pilot Nature Based Play area in Westmoreland Park. The site of the play area is in coordination of the restoration of Crystal Springs.

How was the community informed about the previous open house?

Signs were placed in Pier Park at several locations including the park entrance and at the Frisbee golf area. Additional signs were posted in Chimney Park. Notification for the meeting was placed in the St. Johns Review and meeting information was distributed through the Friends of Pier Park, St. Johns Neighborhood Association and to contact in our PP&R database.

How do we make sure that our concerns about the Sequoia Grove are heard?

In response to community feedback, we are including information in the North Portland Greenway Trail Report reflecting the concerns and frustrations cited by some members of the community regarding the future impacts of the trail on the grove.

Will the trail and the bridge hurt the remaining sequoia root systems?

The bridge construction documents include a detailed tree protection plan. The installation of the tree protection will be reviewed by a Parks Tree Inspector. The tree protection will also be monitored during construction to ensure effectiveness and compliance.