

**STATEMENT FROM COMMISSIONER STEVE NOVICK  
ON BUREAU ASSIGNMENTS**

**Contact Chris Warner**  
**Office: 503-823-1055**  
**Cell: 503-490-4592**

I am excited and honored that Mayor Charlie Hales has entrusted me with being the Commissioner in charge of three bureaus, the Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT), the Bureau of Emergency Communications (BOEC) and the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management (PBEM).

At PBOT, Portland faces great challenges and great opportunities. I am very excited by the prospect of working with the PBOT's 725 dedicated and talented staff, the citizens of Portland as a whole, and our regional partners to meet those challenges and meet those opportunities.

In the coming months, I'll be having many conversations with Portlanders about a wide variety of transportation issues. I'll talk about big sweeping safety issues, like the need for more sidewalks and safer crossings in East and Southwest Portland, and more targeted safety issues like providing for a suicide barrier on the historic Vista Bridge. I want to talk about how to ensure that Portland is a city that welcomes walkers, cyclists, transit users and motorists, while ensuring that commerce and freight can move efficiently to keep and create jobs. I am also committed to working with the citizens of Portland on how to address the multi-hundred-million-dollar road maintenance backlog.

Transportation and health care costs are linked. By changing the way we use transportation, we can save money while improving our own health by creating safe transportation infrastructure for walking and biking. I don't ride a bike myself – but when I see a bicyclist, I think “She is reducing my health insurance premiums.” So I am dedicated to continuing Portland's commitment to giving our citizens a variety of transportation options.

In BOEC, I am honored to work with the real unsung heroes of our public safety system, the dedicated public servants that dispatch police, firefighters and ambulances calmly, swiftly and correctly to emergencies of all kinds. I have seen how BOEC workers coolly and efficiently handle high-pressure calls from people in danger. And since a large number of BOEC's calls are medical in nature, I want to work with the health care system how to more effectively and efficiently integrate BOEC, Fire & Rescue and the ambulance service into the larger health care system to improve health care outcomes and save everyone money and hassle. I look forward to working to ensure that BOEC's workers have the resources they need to get the job done.

Finally, I am very excited to be the Commissioner in charge of PBEM. Even though it is a small bureau, it is one that is vitally important to every Portlander in case there is a manmade or natural disaster. By working with other governments, the private sector and community organizations, PBEM will work before, during and after emergencies to save lives, protect our economy and prepare the community to get back on its feet. I am especially interested in the fact that at least 50,000 homes in Portland that were built before 1970 and may not be bolted to their foundation. With a seismic strengthening fix that can cost around \$5,000 many of these homes can be saved in the event of a major earthquake. In fact, I have been working with PBEM, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), Oregon Emergency Management and our congressional delegation to secure some federal pre-disaster mitigation dollars to help get this job done.