

The Oregonian

Portland State Students Will Get Free Biketown Rides Starting Thursday

By Andrew Theen

July 11, 2018

Beginning Thursday, Portland State University students will be able to ride Biketown bikes for free for up to 90 minutes per day.

The state's second-largest public university announced the arrangement on Wednesday. Biketown is a bike rental organization that's a partnership of the city, Nike and Motivate, the New York-based company that runs bike rental programs in several cities.

PSU and Biketown plan to formally roll out the new program Thursday morning. Students must register through Biketown's platform.

The news comes on the heels of a popular "free" rental month citywide in May, which saw ridership spikes and record-breaking days for the city system.

Clint Culpepper, the university's transportation program manager, said he'd been discussing making Biketown more accessible for students since the orange bikes debuted in 2016.

As Biketown continued to expand its service area on the eastside and in the Northwest neighborhoods, Portland State saw more value and a chance to step in.

"This is something that they're able to use every day of the week," Culpepper said, "They can use it to run errands from campus or they could try commuting on it. It's kind of limitless."

The university is estimating its costs to subsidize the program could be \$45,000, roughly \$1.70 per student per year.

The average Biketown user takes a relatively short spin on the two-wheeled behemoths, with most rides going 1.92 miles.

PSU students already had a discounted monthly Biketown package available, but Culpepper said an estimated 200 students were regularly using the service. The campus is also a specially demarcated "free lock zone" where all users can park bikes for free at any rack.

Portland State has roughly 27,000 students.

Offering free rides should encourage more students to sign up for the service, he said.

"We see it as not just a transportation tool but something that will allow students to experience the city in a way that they wouldn't otherwise," he said. Culpepper added that he believes bicycling is good for students' health.

Portland Demolition Rules Targeting Lead Dust, Asbestos Take Effect

By Elliot Njus

July 12, 2018

A new set of home demolition regulations intended to control the spread of toxic asbestos and lead dust took effect this month in Portland, though dozens of demolitions already planned aren't required to adhere to the new rules.

The new rules require contractors to take down parts of homes by hand if using heavy equipment could release lead or asbestos, and it also requires water misting to further stop the spread of dust.

The new rules are among the strictest around lead dust in the nation. Federal regulations that require lead dust control during home renovations don't apply to demolitions. Those intended to protect demolition workers, meanwhile, don't address people who live nearby.

"Where you're looking at a landscape where there are relatively few regulations that dictate the control of fugitive dust, having any rules at all makes you among the most strict," said Perry Cabot, who manages Multnomah County's lead safety program.

Exposure to asbestos fibers in the air can cause cancer and other lung ailments, while lead dust can lead to brain damage.

The new rules are intended to keep airborne particles from leaving the work site for an adjacent property, where they could be inhaled by neighbors.

"This is just common sense," Cabot said. "These rules do increase the cost and time that these projects take, but they're not whimsical and arbitrary."

In addition, each site will be inspected before, during and after the demolition. Previously, demolition sites were only inspected after the tear-down was complete to ensure the sewer line was capped and the site was safe to passersby.

Justin Wood, a homebuilder who chairs the city's Development Review Advisory Committee, which helped draft the rules, said the regulations probably wouldn't be a major burden for most contractors.

"I do think this strikes a good balance," he said. "I just want to see how it's enforced and how it plays out."

The new regulations were approved by the City Council in February, but administrative rules weren't in place until July 1.

There are dozens of demolitions in the offing that won't be held to the new standards. Contractors who applied for permits before the new rules took effect won't be required to undergo inspections or prevent the spread of dust.

There have already been 144 homes demolished this year, while contractors had applied for or received permits for more than 100 more as of July 1. Last year saw 277 home demolitions in Portland, while there were 320 the year prior.

The city in 2016 passed rules requiring that homes built before 1916, or otherwise designated historic, be taken apart by hand, rather than demolished by machine, so the materials can be recycled.

That had the side effect of helping curb the spread of dust -- but mostly in the close-in neighborhoods where older houses abound, and home values tend to be high.

"Children in those neighborhoods received a significant protection from exposure to lead dust resulting from demolition," said Tony Green, the city's deputy ombudsman. Other sections of the city, including wide swaths of East Portland, didn't get such protections, he said.

A 2015 investigation by the Oregonian/OregonLive found that about half of Portland homes likely to contain asbestos that were demolished between 2011 and 2014 had the material removed first, and the state's standards to handle asbestos were the weakest in the country.

Two years later, the state Legislature gave cities more power to regulate lead and asbestos in demolitions.

City Watchdog Says Portland Demolition Policy Undermined by Bureaucratic Errors

*By Elliot Njus
July 12, 2018*

When residents of Northeast Portland's Roseway neighborhood learned a home in the neighborhood was slated to be knocked down, they moved to delay the demolition, as allowed under city code.

But their appeal got lost in the shuffle, an error that they and a city watchdog say exposes loopholes that could undermine a city policy intended to preserve old houses.

The Portland City Council in 2015 passed an ordinance expanding neighborhoods' power to delay home demolitions. The policy was intended to give neighbors time to negotiate with the developer and perhaps save the house, either by buying it outright or moving it to another site.

It's rarely worked out that way. In nearly all cases, homebuilders moved ahead with demolition plans, and a few deals to save a historic home were reached outside of the process.

In the case of the Roseway house, neighborhood land-use chair Margaret Davis -- who has previously bought and renovated homes and said she was willing to buy the house herself -- followed the instructions laid out in a notification sent to the neighborhood association by the Portland Bureau of Development Services.

She filed paperwork requesting the delay and contacted Vantage Homes, the owner listed on much of the demolition paperwork. But Vantage had sold the house to another company, the builder Renaissance Homes, which was moving ahead with the demolition.

The neighborhood's appeal was knocked down by a city hearings officer, who ruled the demolition could proceed because she hadn't been in contact with the property owner. (Even though it had won permission from the city, Renaissance was never notified by the city and waited for the full 90 days.)

"It was just this double whammy," Davis said. "We give you the wrong info, you relied on it, and now we're going to deny your delay because you wrote to the wrong person."

The code also requires contacting the property owner in a certified letter, but the city's notification didn't say that special service was required.

Margie Sollinger, the city ombudsman, said the bureau was effectively allowing developers to obscure the actual owners of properties in order to throw a wrench in the demolition delay process.

In a letter to Commissioner Chloe Eudaly, who oversees the Bureau of Development Services, Sollinger said demolition permits should not be transferable between property owners. She added that the fog of ownership could cause problems as the city begins to enforce new, tougher rules on controlling toxic dust.

"Whoever comes and applies for the demolition permit and certifies they're going to comply with the toxic dust suppression rules needs to be the entity carrying out the demolition," Sollinger said in an interview. "I think you've got an enforcement problem and a public health problem, potentially."

Eudaly's chief of staff, Marshall Runkel, said that despite the transfers, it's clear to regulators who's responsible for following the city's demolition rules, and stuff civil liability will keep contractors from violating the rules.

But he also said that a process that obscures ownership, as illustrated in the Roseway case, was not fair to the neighborhoods.

"What we talked about is straightening up the processes and regulations so that BDS and the owner-developer understands there's an affirmative responsibility for informing the neighbors who the property owner is," Runkel said. "Our office is asking the ombudsman to work with BDS to identify process improvements to fix this problem."

The Portland Tribune

City Seeks to Thwart Redevelopment of Mobile and Manufactured Home Parks

*By Steve Law
July 11, 2018*

Planning and Sustainability Commission votes to create new manufactured dwelling park zone for more than 50 parks; plan now goes to City Council for approval.

The Portland City Council will now consider a proposal to create a new manufactured home park zone for about 56 of the city's mobile and manufactured home parks, which could prevent the parks from being redeveloped for other, more lucrative uses and allow more stability for some 3,000 families.

The new zone was endorsed Tuesday by the Planning and Sustainability Commission in a 7-2 vote, sending the idea to the City Council for final vetting and approval.

"We're thrilled that it passed this first hurdle," said Cameron Herrington, anti-displacement coordinator for Living Cully, a coalition of nonprofits that led the campaign to create the new protections for residents.

The real estate boom has created pressures for some park owners to redevelop their properties into more profitable ventures, causing anxieties among mobile and manufactured home owners. Moving such homes is quite costly and often not worth the effort, causing some homeowners to lose their properties.

Even if the council approves the new zone, though, some property owners are expected to file claims under the state's Measure 49 initiative, arguing the city move has reduced the value of their property. The city would then have the option of reversing the zone change for individual properties, to avoid having to pay compensation.

Willamette Week

City Council Has Renewed Its Push to Toll All of I-5 and I-205 in the Portland Area

By Rachel Monahan

July 11, 2018

After an Oregon Department of Transportation Committee recommended more limited tolling on June 26, every member of City Council signed a letter supporting tolling throughout the region.

Last month, an Oregon Department of Transportation advisory committee took a first step toward instituting tolls on Portland area highways.

The committee recommended starting with limited tolling—on Interstate 5 south from North Alberta Street and on the Abernethy Bridge along I-205.

But Portland City Council is continuing to advocate instead for tolling all I-5 and I-205 throughout the metro region.

Every member of City Council signed onto a letter dated June 29 that restates that preference. It also argues for “more detailed consideration of starting and ending points” for any tolls on I-5.

The letter also calls for “improved transit” as well as to “maintain or improve safety levels” on streets near the tolling—meaning finding ways to address the problem identified by Overlook neighborhood residents who fear more people will travel on side streets to avoid tolls.

Tomorrow the Oregon Transportation Commission will hold a hearing on tolling. The group, which oversees transportation policy in the state, is charged with coming up with a tolling recommendation by year end.

The Portland Mercury

Hall Monitor: Hail to the Chief

By Alex Zielinski

July 11, 2018

Will New Leadership Help—or Hinder—the Mayor’s Office?

Mayor Ted Wheeler’s office is not known for its transparency.

Granted, mayors’ offices are never as transparent as the public (and the press) would like them to be, but since day one, Wheeler’s team has remained remarkably closed-off to outsiders—including city hall employees working just a floor below. Meanwhile, the limited info that does

trickle out of Wheeler's office drops at seemingly random times, and often contradicts other statements coming from his staff.

In the words of Marshall Runkel, chief of staff to Commissioner Chloe Eudaly: "Disagreement and debate is inevitable and healthy... but [our offices] could work together more effectively if the mayor's office spoke with one voice."

There's no easy explanation as to why Wheeler's seemingly cloak-and-dagger office functions the way it does. But, as with most workplace problems, it's easy to point fingers at whoever's in charge. Up until Friday, that person was Wheeler's enigmatic chief of staff, Maurice Henderson.

Next week, Henderson, who held the chief of staff position since Wheeler entered the mayor's office in 2016, will start a new job as TriMet's Chief Operating Officer. He's since been replaced by Wheeler's communications director, Michael Cox.

While Cox's promotion might not fix all of the puzzling problems coming from Wheeler's office, it's as good of an excuse as any to examine the role a chief of staff plays—or should play—in the mayor's office.

"The mayor's chief of staff sets the tone for the entire mayor's office," says Tim Crail, chief of staff for Commissioner Amanda Fritz.

According to Sonia Schmanski, chief of staff for Commissioner Nick Fish, the ideal chief of staff in the mayor's office is "someone who wakes up every morning thinking about the best way to help all of council reach the right outcome." That person should also treat the other commissioners' chiefs of staff as their primary colleagues, not distant coworkers. I'll let Schmanski's wonderfully macabre analogy explain this better: "We're all flies on the same spiderweb," she says. "Every move one of us makes affects all of us." (Note: Schmanski doesn't think this is a great analogy. "Who's the spider?" she asks—a question that only improves this analogy.)

Schmanski adds that it can also be useful when the chief of staff is actually present.

Famously, Henderson didn't check that box. According to multiple city hall staffers who asked to remain anonymous, Henderson was one of the most absent chiefs of staff for a Portland mayor.

"[Henderson] functioned as an ambassador for the mayor's office... both within Portland and around the world," says one. "He was not as visible within city hall as I expect Michael [Cox] will be."

Unlike Henderson, Cox has a background in communications, something that city staff say could detangle the clarity issues that have plagued Wheeler's office. (That said, ask any Portland journalist about the matter, and they'll say Wheeler's current communications team—run by Cox—could use some refining, too.)

Cox also has a history with the mayor that Henderson lacked—he ran Wheeler's communications team both when Wheeler was state treasurer and when he ran for mayor.

Time will tell if that will make Cox a savvy manager or another yes man. Regardless, the changing of the guard should allow for some intentional tweaks to the office's current status quo. It's an opportunity for Wheeler to start fresh with Portlanders, his fellow commissioners, and the press. (Hi!) Because in Portland, every move Wheeler's office makes affects us all.

Oregon's Weak Hate Crime Laws Have Left Victims Disillusioned

By Alex Zielinski

July 11, 2018

"The process is inherently unsatisfying."

Thirty minutes after Katelin Durnal and her brother Gregory left the Portland Pride parade on Sunday, June 17, a stranger punched Gregory in the face and called him a "faggot."

The siblings had been walking along Northwest 21st Avenue, accompanied by Gregory's girlfriend and their cousin, when the man approached the group and yelled homophobic slurs at Gregory before hitting him. Durnal—who was wearing a rainbow crown for the parade—fought to push the man, later identified as Justin Watling, off her brother.

"Have a gay day!" Durnal recalls Watling yelling as he fled the scene. Durnal then called 911 to report a hate crime.

When Portland police officers showed up and arrested Watling for assault, they told Durnal he had a record of mental illness and that it would be difficult to pursue hate crime charges—because her brother isn't gay.

"They asked all of us what our sexual orientations were," says Durnal. "They said they wouldn't pursue the case as a hate crime unless anyone would go on the record as homosexual."

This didn't sit well with Durnal—so she called the Multnomah County District Attorney's office to follow up. They scheduled her and her brother to testify against Watling before a grand jury later that week. The grand jury indicted Watling for second-degree "Intimidation"—the terminology used in Oregon's hate crime law—along with one count of menacing and two counts of assault.

Had she not made that call, Durnal believes Watling's assault wouldn't have been investigated as a hate crime.

"I'm still really frustrated by the way the police handled all of this," Durnal says.

She's not alone. As Portland sees an uptick in reported hate crimes since Donald Trump's ascension to the White House, a number of Portlanders have expressed disappointment with the Portland Police Bureau's response to hate crimes.

Zakir Khan, chair of the Oregon chapter of Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-Oregon), says his office hears reports weekly from Muslims who have felt victimized because of their religion or skin color. But getting the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) to act on those reports, he says, is a challenge.

"We're just not taken seriously by PPB," Khan says. He's been pushing PPB to strengthen the city's hate crime policy since May 2017, when Jeremy Christian hurled anti-Muslim slurs at two women on a MAX train and then fatally stabbed two men who tried to defend them. While Khan has had some success in advancing policies with the Oregon Attorney General's office and Oregon's members of Congress, he's felt largely ignored by Mayor Ted Wheeler, whose office directly oversees the PPB.

"Presence is one thing, and action is another," says Khan, noting Wheeler's appearances at events that have supported the Muslim community. "It's easy to show up to events. It's harder to implement policies that actually empower communities."

Three days after the 2017 MAX stabbing, a woman told Khan she had been harassed by a man in a car who told her to take off her hijab and “go back to your fucking country.” After reporting the altercation to the police, she said officers told her it would be reported as a road rage incident rather than a hate crime.

Only after CAIR called on the City of Portland to conduct a more thorough investigation was her harasser indicted on hate crime charges.

“There’s a real, categorical problem with regards to [PPB] not even being able to properly identify hate crimes,” Khan says. “It seems they fundamentally don’t understand the hate crime laws.”

He worries this blind spot could deter victims from reporting hate crimes in the first place.

Local law enforcement, however, says it’s Oregon law that restricts their ability to fully investigate alleged hate crimes.

The intimidation law that is used to prosecute hate crimes in Oregon applies to people who cause “substantial inconvenience to another because of the person’s perception of the other’s race, color, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or national origin.”

According to PPB Bias Crime Detective Jeff Sharp, it’s the intimidation law’s specific phrasing that hinders his work.

“It’s not framed around the perception of the victim, but the perception of the suspect,” says Sharp. “That means we have to be able to prove what a person’s perception is.”

The easiest way to detect someone’s perception is through an interview with the suspect or a witness, says Sharp. Even then, he says, it’s hard to be certain. Individuals suspected of hate crimes often have histories of mental illness, which officers have to factor into their charges.

Another problem with the current law: Suspects acting alone will never be indicted on first-degree charges. A first-degree intimidation charge only applies when “two or more persons [are] acting together,” according to the Oregon law. While someone convicted of a first-degree charge (a Class C felony) faces up to five years in prison and a \$125,000 fine, those guilty of a second-degree conviction (a Class A misdemeanor) won’t see more than a year behind bars and won’t be fined more than \$6,250.

Sharp says Oregon’s “outdated” intimidation law, enacted in the 1980s, was likely a response to a rise in organized skinhead attacks, which often involved more than one perpetrator assaulting minorities in the state.

But almost 40 years later, Portland’s hate crime victims are rarely aware of the complexities and restrictions embedded into Oregon law that can keep their cases from moving forward.

“It’s a real uphill battle,” says Randy Blazak, a Portland State University sociology professor who chairs the Oregon Coalition Against Hate Crimes. “Sometimes officers can clearly identify the motive; other times, it’s far less clear. The process is inherently unsatisfying to the victims.”

In lieu of a legislative overhaul to the state statute, Blazak says victims like Durnal and her brother need a court-appointed hate crime advocate to explain the process and help them seek some type of justice. He likens the role to one an advocate for victims of rape or sexual abuse plays in a criminal investigation.

Without a legal guide, Blazak adds, it’s easy for victims to think police are working against them. Durnal has certainly adopted that mindset.

“I’m disillusioned by the Portland police now,” she says. “It’ll be hard to trust them in the future.”

The Portland Business Journal

Freeway Toll Recommendations Mask Polarized Views in Portland Region

By Pete Danko

July 11, 2018

The long trek toward possible freeway tolls in the Portland area continues on Thursday when the Oregon Transportation Commission meets to take public testimony on recommendations from an advisory committee that recently wrapped up work.

The committee [largely endorsed pilot projects](#) on portions of Interstate 5 and Interstate 205 as a way to begin tolling. But at their final meeting, many members were eager to express more nuanced points of view. And they did so in letters submitted with a [final committee report](#).

Below is an outline from Oregon transportation officials of the tolling process the lies ahead, followed by key excerpts from the committee report that reflect how polarizing the issue continues to be in the region.

Clark County Council

"The Clark County Council previously expressed concern to you regarding potential tolling on the Interstate 5 and 205 corridors and its outright opposition to the proposed maximum tolling design known as "Concept C." In addition to Concept C, the Clark County Council strongly urges you to abandon "Concept B" (tolling portions of I-5 and I-205)... We do not believe that alleviating the congestion that takes place in Portland should be disproportionately paid for by Clark County commuters. The Clark County Council believes county residents who travel to Oregon will receive little to no benefit from infrastructure improvements constructed with the tolling design proposed (in concepts B and C). It is unfair to ask Clark County residents to pay for transportation enhancements that will not address their concern of spending an inordinate amount of time in traffic that means less time at home with their families."

Portland City Council

"The primary objective of any pricing program must be to manage demand, as opposed to generating revenue for unmanaged increases in capacity.... Portland supports the referral of Option C to the Oregon Transportation Commission for further analysis."

Curtis Robinhold, executive director Port of Portland

"While it is a good tool for reducing congestion, value pricing should not be considered as a replacement to freeway expansion and modernization projects. To meet the needs of our growing region, we must both address bottlenecks in the system to increase capacity, and better manage the system with pricing."

Chris Hagerbaumer, deputy director, Oregon Environmental Council

"ODOT’s consultant report clearly demonstrates ... that a focus on demand management on all of I-5 and I-205 in the Portland area yields the greatest outcomes. The report anticipates significant travel time savings and some \$300 million in annual revenues that could be used to improve

travel options. It is quite probable that some of the planned capital improvements on the system may not be necessary with pricing in place. In other words, congestion pricing is — in and of itself — new capacity."

Jana Jarvis, president and CEO, Oregon Trucking Associations

"Implementation of value pricing must result in meaningful investment in additional capacity for freight. While some suggest that 'if you build it, they will come' and adding more lanes merely induces demand, it is important to recognize two key points: Year after year, Oregon continues to be a top migration state, with people arriving at rates not seen since the 1990's. Portland also has the distinct honor of being the only major city, from Canada to Mexico, to restrict Interstate 5 down to two lanes through a heavily congested urban region. While no single method alone is the 'silver bullet' solution, additional capacity must be part of a balanced approach to significantly reducing congestion in the region."

Roy Rogers, Washington County commissioner

"Link tolling directly to increased freeway capacity in the region. In the short term, this means targeting revenue to completing the investments in the region's bottleneck projects in the Rose Quarter and I-205/Abernathy Bridge. In the longer term it means identifying the next priorities for additional capacity improvements and linking these investments with additional tolling. It is important the people who pay the toll see benefits both in terms of better traffic flow and increased capacity."

Jessica Vega Pederson, Multnomah County commissioner

"Value pricing will be a more responsible, effective, and appropriate tool for addressing congestion than trying to expand our freeway and road system. Given our burgeoning population, warming climate, and values around walkability, health, and alternative transportation, we must make value pricing work."

Paul Savas, Clark County commissioner

"I believe there has not been adequate time or opportunity for this committee to complete its work. It has been the ODOT staff and consultant that apparently did the evaluating, drawn the conclusions, eliminated certain options, and prepared the recommendations. Although during the final meeting the committee was given the latitude to reframe the questions, there was simply not adequate opportunity to do any meaningful analysis or create any alternative recommendation(s)."

The Portland Observer

Kids Tee Up for Golf

July 11, 2018

Play is free on Mondays at two public courses

Mondays are free golf days for junior golfers up to the age of 17 at Portland's Colwood Golf Center in northeast Portland and the Eastmoreland Golf Course in southeast.

Junior golfers can play for free from sunrise until 3 p.m. on Mondays at both city-owned courses until school begins again this fall thanks to the program sponsored by Portland Parks & Recreation.

Kids ages nine and under must be accompanied by an adult when they play.

The revitalized Colwood Golf Center is located in northeast Portland's Cully neighborhood and managed by KemperSports. In recent years the property has received notable improvements and been transformed into a haven for both junior and beginner golfers, featuring a 9-hole, par 3 course layout and premier driving range.

The historic Eastmoreland Golf Course features an 18-hole course layout. The course offers a wide variety of junior golf lessons, as well free use of the driving range for kids up to the age of 17, every morning.

"We want junior golfers who are both experienced and brand-new to the game to enjoy Portland Public Golf facilities even more this summer," says John Zoller, Portland Parks & Recreation Director of Golf. "Golf is a fun, lifelong game and we are delighted to welcome the next generation of golfers for free, all summer long."

No reservations are needed nor taken for Free Golf Mondays. Tee times are offered on a walk-up basis every Monday from opening until 3 p.m. based on availability.

Officials with Portland Public Golf have noted fewer kids playing golf in recent years and hope to reverse that trend by engaging and encourage the next generation of golfers and to foster greater diversity in, and access to, the game.

For more information on the program, contact Colwood Golf Center at 503 254-5515 or Eastmoreland Golf Course at 503-775-2900.

Low Income Fares Begin

July 11, 2018

Adults who qualify pay half the cost

Some good news on affordability for public transit this month as new low-income fares went into effect for qualified adult riders on TriMet and new governmental agreements mean many Portland area high school students will again ride free when classes start back in the fall.

TriMet officially began its low-income fare program on July 2, allowing adults who qualify to pay half the cost of a single ride or day pass, or to purchase a monthly pass at a 72 percent discount, the same as it now offers on "Honored Citizen" fares.

Reducing costs for low-income riders removes a barrier to using transit. The financial help is one of TriMet's goals for better access to the public system and a top priority by rider advocates like Opal Environmental Justice Oregon, a group that's advocated for a low-income fare program.

"Adding this new eligibility to our Honored Citizen program removes yet another barrier to using transit," TriMet General Manager Doug Kelsey said, announcing the low-income fare last month. "When that happens, doors of opportunity open. Whether it's getting to a new job or a child's daycare, making transit accessible and affordable for those struggling financially make a difference in the communities we serve."

The transit agency began testing reduced fares for low-income adults in June. The program expands eligibility to TriMet's "Honored Citizen" fare, the term the agency uses for providing reduced fares for people over 65 and for people with mental and physical disabilities.

Now those earning up to 200 percent of the federal poverty level are eligible for the discount, reducing a single trip from \$2.50 to \$1.25 or a monthly pass from \$100 to \$28. That means individuals who make \$24,276 or less annually can qualify (an amount just below the \$24,960 a full-time minimum wage worker in metropolitan Portland would make annually) or \$50,198 or less for a family of four.

The program was made possible when the 2017 Oregon Legislature passed and Gov. Kate Brown signed into law a bill which established a dedicated and stable source of funding for TriMet to offer reduced fares for low-income adult riders.

Previously, TriMet had a fare assistance relief program that provided grants and discounts to nonprofit organizations that assisted those who are struggling financially.

TriMet hopes to reach enough people to register 15,000 participants in the first year and 45,000 within the first three years.

Once eligibility is certified, participants present documentation at the TriMet Ticket office at Pioneer Courthouse Square, downtown, where they will be issued a personalized Hop Fastpass fare card to which funds can be loaded immediately and used for fares on buses, Max light rail and trains. A \$3 fee associated with the issuing of the re-loadable Hop Card is waived for the first card issued to an individual enrolling.

For high school students, the free fare is offered where no yellow bus service is provided and is made possible by financial support from TriMet, the city of Portland, and the Portland, David Douglas, and Parkrose school districts.

“This agreement means that for the coming year these students will have greater access to jobs, training opportunities, classes at Portland Community or Mt. Hood Community colleges, libraries and other destinations that support their education, Mayor Ted Wheeler said.

A working group consisting of City of Portland and TriMet will convene to determine long-term strategies for providing transit passes to other low-income students in the Portland-area and could include formulating how funds are used from a new employee payroll tax that was signed into law last summer.

Part of HB2017, or the Keep Oregon Moving Law, requires one percent of the revenue from the tax to go toward high school student transportation.

For more information on how to sign up for the new low income fares, visit trimet.org/lowincome.

OPB

How Do You Fix A Broken Street? Portland Tries On Division

*By Anna Griffin
July 10, 2018*

Kim Stone's son did everything right.

It was October 2013. Joe Stone was headed from his family's East Portland home to his mom's office downtown. He was 25 and going back to school. He wanted Stone's help in filling out a

financial aid package, but his car was in the shop, so he walked out to Southeast Division Street to catch a bus.

“He needed to cross the street to get on the bus,” Kim Stone said recently. “So instead of crossing at 157th, Joe walked a block down to where there was a crosswalk.”

Division Street is five lanes near the Stones’ home: two lanes going east, two going west, one in the middle for turns. The car in the lane closest to the sidewalk stopped for him. Another car coming up behind it did not.

Instead, the driver switched lanes.

“He hit Joe in the crosswalk going 36 miles an hour,” Kim Stone said. “Joe was like maybe two steps from the median, the center median, and it threw him 71 feet.”

Over the past decade, 129 people have been seriously injured and 19 people have been killed on Division Street. That list includes Joe Stone.

Out where Portland and Gresham meet, Division Street is big and straight with a mishmash of zoning. It also has unprotected bike lanes, on-street parking and a population more likely to rely on mass transit than wealthier parts of the metro area. This cluttered combination makes Division, by almost every statistical gauge, among the most dangerous streets in the entire state of Oregon.

“It feels like so many things happening at the same time: Cars are there, people are walking, it feels like a rush, rushing,” said Lisha Shrestha, executive director of the Division Midway Alliance, a nonprofit that works to build community in East Portland.

She commutes by mass transit and walks across Division Street at 122nd Avenue every day.

“I try to have eye contact with the drivers whenever I see they are turning around or driving. I try to look at them like, ‘Are they seeing me?’” she said. “I don’t just rely on the walk signal. You can’t do that.”

Like leaders in many cities around the world, Portland is trying to combat that chaos with Vision Zero. It’s an overarching philosophy of transportation planning that began in Sweden and says no loss of life on the roads is acceptable.

One of the first big projects city leaders embraced as part of Vision Zero was fixing outer Division and a set of problems that are common among a certain era of urban — or really, suburban — development in the United States.

“What we know is four- and five-lane arterials that are kind of a typical American suburban-style street is highly problematic for safety,” said Dana Dickman, with the Portland Bureau of Transportation. “They are designed in a way that when people are using them, they’re driving at speeds that, if there is a mistake, it may be fatal.”

Years ago, Dickman and her colleagues usually dealt with road safety problems on essentially a case-by-case basis: You have a dangerous intersection, you add a stoplight or a crosswalk. Problem solved, maybe.

In the era of Vision Zero, traffic planners and engineers are taking a more numbers-driven, holistic approach to iffy roads.

“We pulled all the data for Division and analyzed the corridor to determine what the root cause of all these crashes are. When we looked at the data we found it’s really this street design,” said Elizabeth Mahon, the city’s Outer Division project manager. “... The behavior there is similar to

driving on a highway or freeway: It's open, and there are no messages being sent to reduce your speed or telling the driver that they would need to slow down."

The answer, then, is rebuilding a street like Division so that when drivers do make mistakes, they're the kind that might raise your insurance bill but won't end a life.

The city has already lowered the speed limit and added more red-light cameras to speed reader boards to show drivers just how fast they're going.

More obvious changes are coming: More sidewalks, more streetlights, more crosswalks. A tree-lined raised center median. Separated bike lanes. Limits on where drivers can turn onto Division from cross streets.

At first glance, it might seem counter-intuitive: To make the street safer, they're making it feel more cramped.

"By visually narrowing that roadway, we think drivers will actually get closer to that posted 30 mph speed limit," Mahon said. "Right now, it's easy to lose track of just how fast you're going. These kinds of changes really narrow your focus so you have to pay more attention."

The data, that hallmark of Vision Zero, shows some progress. Speeding, for example, is down. And yet, people are still dying on Division — two pedestrians so far in the first half of 2018.

Kim Stone still lives just off Division, and she thinks of her son every time.

"The feelings come back, yeah. I don't flashback, but it's more 'Why more?'" she said. "Why? Why did there have to be more?"

The answer isn't exactly consoling: It took generations for Division and suburban-style streets like it to get this bad. It will take at least a few more years to fix them.