

March 3, 2017

Director Leah Treat  
Portland Bureau of Transportation  
1120 SW 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 800  
Portland, OR 97202

**RE: Add Reedway Ped/Bike Overcrossing to TSDC List, Advance for Design**

Dear Director Treat:

A coalition including the Boards of Directors of the Brooklyn Action Corps, Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association, Reed Neighborhood Association, Sellwood-Moreland Improvement League, Woodstock Neighborhood Association and Southeast Uplift (SEUL), requests that PBOT staff add the Reedway Pedestrian/Bicycle Overcrossing to the city's Transportation System Development Charge (TSDC) Capital Project List as part of the current TSDC update process, and to subsequently move forward with project development and design of this important piece of infrastructure.

The Reedway Ped/Bike Overcrossing is adopted in the Portland Transportation System Plan as project #70049 and is assigned a project timeline of 1-10 years. It remains one of the top transportation priorities for the organizations signing this letter and would provide significantly improved connectivity, mobility and safety in southeast Portland. In addition, the project exhibits a strong nexus between the rapid development that our neighborhoods are experiencing – over 1,200 new homes are in the development pipeline in our five neighborhoods – and the legal requirement to spend TSDCs on transportation capacity serving growth. Please consider the following:

- **The overcrossing would solve one of the worst connectivity problems in the entire city:** There is no way across the Union Pacific Railroad in the 1.1-mile stretch between Holgate and Bybee Boulevards, despite a plentitude of destinations in the area including Reed College, Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden, Oaks Bottom Wildlife Refuge, hundreds of family wage jobs in the Brooklyn Industrial Area and thousands of homes and apartments in the Westmoreland, Brooklyn, Reed and Eastmoreland neighborhoods. This poor connectivity results in lengthy, out-of-direction travel and encourages driving instead of walking and biking. For example, a resident of the new apartment building at 22nd & Reedway would have to travel 1.7 miles to reach a job at industrial employer Wayne-Dalton on 26th Avenue. With a Reedway Ped/Bike Bridge, that person could walk a quarter mile to work.

- **The existing Holgate and Bybee viaducts, along with the roads leading to them, are at best substandard, and at worse, dangerous and hostile for pedestrians and bicycles.** Holgate is a four-lane auto-oriented viaduct hosting 15,000 vehicles per day and significant freight traffic with no bike lanes and with sidewalks impeded by utility poles and street lights. Bybee/28th is a curvy, hilly roadway with narrow four-foot bike lanes that are perpetually covered in debris. Both routes would require major reconstruction to become marginally safe and comfortable for people not in cars, and even then they would still be busy driving routes. The Reedway Overcrossing would provide a far superior “low stress” connection.
- **The overcrossing would directly serve neighborhoods that are experiencing rapid and intense development.** In northern Westmoreland alone, over 300 apartments are recently completed, under construction or proposed in the vicinity of the overcrossing, most with no car parking. Another 900 apartments are proposed further south in Sellwood-Moreland and to the north in Brooklyn. Reed, Eastmoreland and Woodstock neighborhoods are experiencing significant infill and tear-down development of large single family homes. Reed College has constructed new dorms for 125 students at the northwest corner of its campus, a quarter mile from the overcrossing site. Union Pacific and other industrial employers are at full employment. All of this growth translates into travel demand on our congested streets while TSDCs add to city coffers.
- **Transit service has been degraded in the area of the overcrossing.** The Harold Street MAX light rail station, which would have been located adjacent to the Reedway Overcrossing, has been postponed indefinitely, despite strong support from nearby residents. Making matters worse, the #33 McLoughlin bus was discontinued north of Milwaukie in order to eliminate “redundant service” with MAX, leaving nearby residents and workers with a long walk to the heavily congested #10, #19 and #70 bus routes, or a 20-minute walk to the nearest MAX station. If TriMet were to ever construct the Harold Street station in the future, the Reedway Overcrossing would provide the necessary connection to Westmoreland and Reed College. Even if TriMet never builds this MAX station, the overcrossing is needed to provide other means of travel for nearby residents who have been stranded by transit.
- **The City appears to be forging ahead with at least three other major pedestrian/bicycle bridges.** Sullivan’s Crossing (NE 7th Avenue over I-84) and NW Flanders over I-405 look to be funded and moving forward, and the demolished Brooklyn Pedestrian Bridge near Clinton MAX station appears to have traction as part of PDC’s Clinton Triangle redevelopment. These may be good projects, but they’re all located just a few hundred feet away from other bridges and crossings where people can walk and bike today. The Reedway Overcrossing is two thirds to one mile from the nearest crossings and serving an area with poor connectivity relative to the Central City. It’s only a matter of fairness that the Reedway Overcrossing be advanced as well.

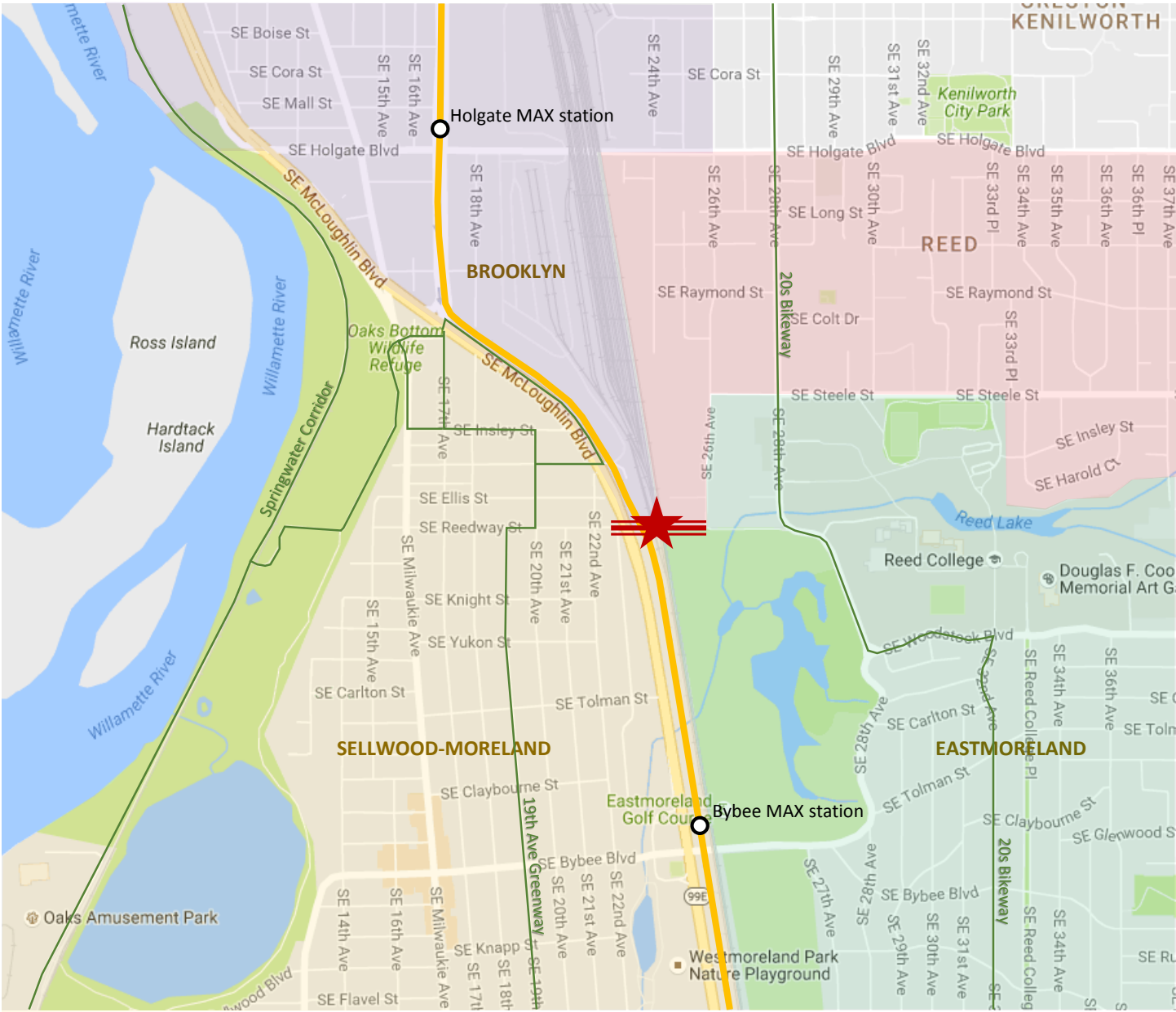
In summary, constructing the Reedway Ped/Bike Overcrossing would be a prudent use of TSDCs in this growing area of southeast Portland. We urge PBOT staff to not only add it to the TSDC Project List for approval by City Council, but also to advance the project for design.

This letter was voted on and approved by the Boards of Directors of the five neighborhood associations and Southeast Uplift:

 Eric Wieland, Chair Brooklyn Action Corps Board of Directors	 Tom Hansen, President Eastmoreland Neighborhood Association Board of Directors
 Robert Kirchmiller, Chair Reed Neighborhood Association Board of Directors	 Corinne Stefanick, President Sellwood-Moreland Improvement League Board of Directors
 Elisa Edgington, Chair Woodstock Neighborhood Association Board of Directors	 Robert McCullough, Chair Southeast Uplift Board of Directors

CC: Commissioner Dan Saltzman  
Mayor Ted Wheeler

Attachment: Reedway Pedestrian/Bicycle Overcrossing Location Map



**★ Reedway Pedestrian/Bicycle Overcrossing Location**

