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# The Southwest Portland Post

Southwest Portland's Independent Neighborhood Newspaper

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to Maplewood School  
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Portland, Oregon

Complimentary

April 2011

## Somali American culture and community celebrated at Multnomah Arts Center

By Polina Olsen  
*The Southwest Portland Post*

Portlanders from around the world packed the Multnomah Arts Center auditorium on March 25 as they celebrated Somali American culture and community.



Traditional Somali food, beautiful flowing robes, and swinging African music formed the backdrop to the art exhibit developed by Colored Pencils Art and Culture Night and the Somali American Council of Oregon.

Colored Pencils, an organization made up of a myriad of ethnicities, lifestyles and generations, hosts an art exhibit in different Portland locations each month.

Their website ([www.coloredpencil-art.com/](http://www.coloredpencil-art.com/)) explains: "To date, artists representing 32 mainstream, ethnic minority, and newcomer communities, including recently resettled Iraqi singers, musicians, and poets, have contributed to our broad shouldered and big hearted vision of New Portland."

Tonight, Somali artist Said Amir watched from the front row. Before coming to the United States in 1997, he painted portraits on commission.

Here, hard work got in the way of art. His wife and children were in Yemen. Now with the family together and things looking brighter, he hopes to continue with his chosen profession.

Musee Oloi from the SACOO greeted the crowd and started the chain of musicians and speakers. Oloi introduced Uma Abdullahi, a Madison High School senior and newly crowned Rose Festival Princess.

Abdullahi's parents Lul Sharif Ibrahim and Isgou Mohamed brought their family to the United States when she was three years old. "I want to repre-



Anisa Omar (in green) and Rahma Omar (in blue) were among the Somali Americans at the Multnomah Arts Center celebration. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)

sent all those people who are under-represented, people who don't have a voice, people like me," she said. "It doesn't matter where you come from.

It matters where you're going."

For more information about the Somali American Council of Oregon visit <http://sacoo.org/>.

## South Waterfront transportation project receives \$23 million federal grant

By Lee Perlman  
*The Southwest Portland Post*

U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood last month participated in the groundbreaking for the Southwest Moody Project, a reconfiguration of that street and its streetcar line, made possible by a federal stimulus grant he had approved.

At the same ceremony, LaHood announced the award of two other federal grants for transit improvements.

The Moody Project will reconfigure Southwest Moody Avenue between River Parkway and Gibbs Street. It will extend Southwest Bond Avenue to the north, and allow the Portland Streetcar to travel on two tracks rather than one through this part of town.

Finally, it will raise the street 14 feet to allow for a connection to the pending Portland to Milwaukie Light Rail Proj-

ect and its transit bridge. The project was made possible by a \$23 million federal TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) grant.

LaHood and Mayor Sam Adams also announced the awarding of two other federal Stimulus grants to TriMet. One, for \$6 million, will pay for the purchase of 17 new fuel-efficient buses. Another, for \$4 million, will pay for 20 on-board energy storage units for 20 light rail vehicles.

Adams noted that the funds had been "reprogrammed" from other projects deemed less critical. "Thank you for being here, and for spending some time and money," he told LaHood at the ceremony at Moody and River Parkway.

Thanks to the project, Adams said, the former industrial property to the south will soon be "unrecognizable." A new building for the Oregon Health and Sciences University will soon rise there, the first part of a planned 19-acre



U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood (right) participates in a press conference at the groundbreaking of the Moody Avenue Project in South Waterfront. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)

campus, on "the largest piece of undeveloped land left in the Central City," Adams said.

According to Adams, the project will be served by "all modes of transportation – nine, counting kayaks. No matter where you live, this will benefit you in a number of ways."

Except for U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden, Oregon's entire congressional delegation attended the event. U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley noted that the land, together with the Portland State University and Oregon Museum of Science and Industry campuses, is "fittingly called the Innovation Quarter. We're particularly fortunate to have this piece of the puzzle fall into place."

Merkeley added, "Oregon couldn't have a better benefactor than Ray La-

Hood." LaHood, in his turn, said Oregon is "blessed with a congressional delegation that works extremely hard. The TIGER grant wouldn't have happened without them."

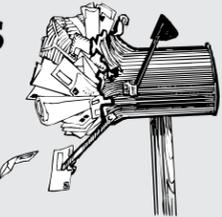
LaHood added, "Transportation isn't an end in itself; it's a means to an end. It affects the way we live our lives and fulfill our dreams." Less time spent in traffic congestion "means less time on the road, more time with our families. In order to compete, we have to outwork and out-innovate the rest of the world. The president's vision is coming into life right here in Portland."

Congressman Earl Blumenauer recalled LaHood from his days as an Illinois congressman and said, "I was delighted when he was appointed Sec- (Continued on Page 7)

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# Letters to the Editor



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## Long-time pedestrian urges motorists to drive cautiously

I am responding to Patti Waitman's letter, "Pedestrians need to share responsibility for their own safety," [*The Post*, March 2011]. The author advises [against] wearing dark clothing when walking at night, face traffic, and look both ways before crossing--self-evident perhaps to most except children.

I am not sure whether the author is referring back to a time when there were fewer cars on the road, and people drove more responsibly than many do today, but things have changed everywhere, and the pace of life and realities are far different today than at the time of "our mothers" or "their mothers."

I have been a pedestrian for several decades, by which I mean I do not drive. The experience of pedestrians is something that most drivers, who only walk in and out of the car to get to the storefront, mall, etc., do not experience, especially not on a daily basis.

It is probably "scary" to come across someone walking in the dark barely visible. I know this area very well and

it is a fact there are very few sidewalks and even the sides of the roads, where many drivers seem to think pedestrians should be are unsafe, wet and slippery, and unstable to walk on.

For this reason few attempt to do so. Only those who must catch a bus, or have no transportation have to negotiate these awful, intermittent spaces on edges of roads, like Capitol Highway, Multnomah Boulevard, Taylor's Ferry Road, etc. Others, attempting to get some exercise, occasionally make the effort, perhaps being more agile or foolhardy.

I have seen countless drivers using cell phones, which is against the law, and drivers speeding daily, even on blind curves. These people are driving recklessly, and are not facing the consequences of their actions. By the time there is an accident it is too late.

It is arrogant to think that cars are entitled and pedestrians/cyclists are not. We all have to look out for others on the streets and drive responsibly. Carrying a bright flashlight is almost a must in unlit areas.

I call on [City of Portland] officials, the Mayor, and the [Bureau] of Transportation to serve the community they were elected by and install lights, pedestrian crossings, and start work immediately on sidewalks on all these major roadways.

It "scares me to death," when I see cars veering towards me, or cutting me off when I am crossing the road legally at crosswalks on Barbur [Boulevard] and elsewhere.

To the comment, "Use the common sense that mothers preached for years", I would say this: try taking a walk on these roads someday, and if you care enough to take the time,

please give officials a call and lobby for some real changes, because times *have* changed and they are continuing to change.

Irene J.  
Southwest Portland

## Effects of bullying at any age can last a lifetime

Every seven seconds, a child somewhere in the U.S. is bullied on the playground, on the bus and/or online (National Institute of Child Health and Human Development).

The effects of bullying at any age can last a lifetime; it lowers the self-esteem and security of our youth, and has a

deep impact in how people view themselves into adulthood.

As President Barack Obama addressed to the nation recently, bullying is not a rite of passage and "no child should feel that alone."

Bullying goes beyond pushing and shoving. Today's youth are utilizing technology to expand the reach and harm of bullying without any direct consequences.

Bullying is also when a child suddenly finds no one will eat lunch with or play with them at recess. It is relational aggression, not just physical aggression. Both are destructive.

There are programs available to help decrease bullying in our schools, such as *Kids on the Block Awareness Program* (Continued on Page 7)



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# City budget forum survey says 83 percent favor dividing resources according to need

By Lee Perlman  
The Southwest Portland Post

If judged by a recent City budget forum, most folks in Southwest would rather see the most City funds go to the neediest areas, rather than divided up equally.

That was one of the main messages of a forum held on March 1 at Wilson High School, one of two staged by the City. More than 100 people attended and, based on an electronic survey, 49 percent came from Southwest, which represents just 20 percent of the city's population.

Andrew Scott of the Bureau of Financial Planning said that Oregon appears to be in recovery from the recession, but that it is projected to be "a long, slow recovery."

As a result, the City's "public safety" bureaus – Fire and Police – have been instructed to prepare budgets with a 0.75 percent cut, while all others are being asked to cut 1.5 percent. "We're looking for things you may be willing to let go of," he told the audience.

This year, for the first time, the City is tracking both revenue and public expenditures by its seven neighborhood coalition areas, Scott said. Since the areas have different populations, the

data is presented in terms of per capita intake and outflow. "We've never done this before, and it's extremely difficult," Scott said.

In terms of revenues, "The west side tends to pay more," Scott said. To no one's surprise, he noted that East Portland and Southwest lead in the number of unimproved streets. The survey also measured proximity to services such as parks, police and fire protection. "This is not just about dollars, but need," Scott said.

Those present obviously agreed. As one item on an electronic survey, 83 percent said the City should divide its resources so as to give most to those most in need, rather than dividing funds equally among all areas.

In discussions during the sessions, the lack of pedestrian facilities was a common theme. One woman noted that Southwest has more parks and open space than some other areas, but parents fear to let their children walk to them.

Mayor Sam Adams and Commissioners Amanda Fritz and Randy Leonard attended the session, and Adams acted as master of ceremonies. Fritz, a mother of three, recalled, "I spent eight happy years as a parent here. I had to call my daughter to be reminded of the fight songs." Scott said that Adams would publish a draft budget in April.



City Commissioner Amanda Fritz, ONI Director Amalia Alarcon, and SWNI Program Manager Leonard Gard at the Budget Forum at Wilson High School. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)

## Safeway seeks zone change for expansion

Safeway plans to build a new, expanded "lifestyle" supermarket on the site of its existing store (located at Southwest Barbur Boulevard and Capitol Hill Road) and an adjacent residential lot. To do so, they will need a hard-to-get Portland Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

According to Safeway's Dan Floyd, the chain plans to tear down the existing store and build an entirely new structure. This will be approximately 40 to 50,000 square feet – larger than the new Pearl and Downtown stores but not quite as large as the two-story mega-store on Northeast 122<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Floyd said.

The new supermarket will include expanded prepared food, floral, meat and seafood offerings, he said. The store will cover most of the expanded site, with underground parking, Floyd said.

A potential stumbling block is securing approval for development on the residential property. This will require a Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment, the most difficult and expensive land use approval to obtain. As part of the process Safeway will have to satisfy the City's No Net Loss Housing Policy.

This policy calls for the housing development potential on the residential parcel – rather than the houses actually sitting there – to be replaced somewhere else in town, either by rezoning a non-residential property for residential use or by increasing the zoning density of a residential property.

Floyd said Safeway is confident that the process can be accomplished, and that he hopes the new supermarket will be under construction by the end of the year.

--Lee Perlman

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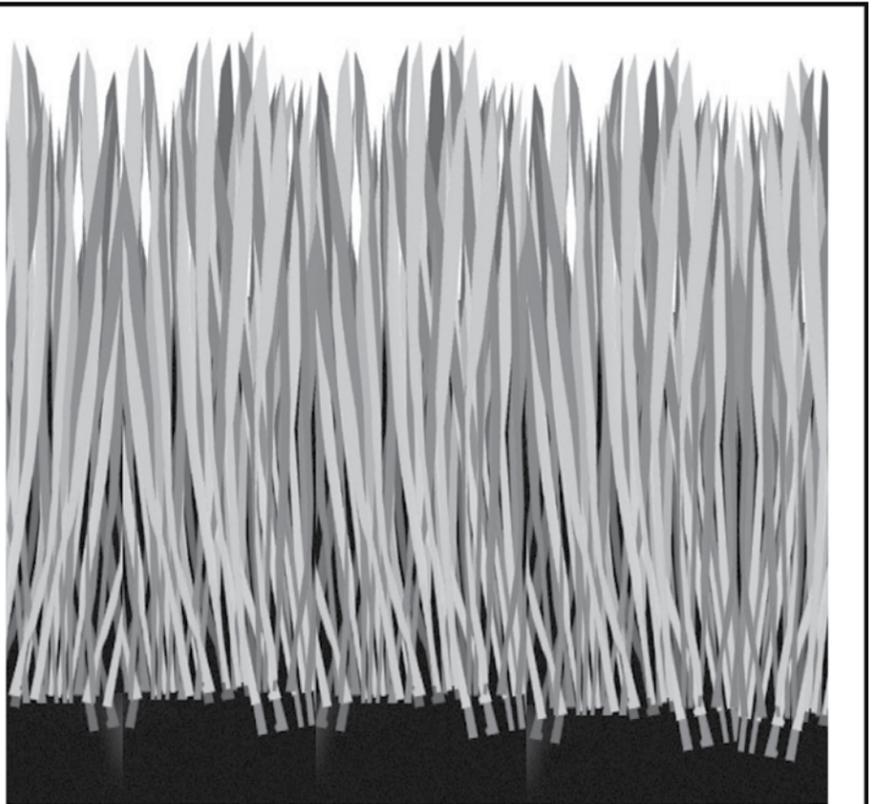
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**COMMUNITY LIFE**

By Don Snedecor  
The Southwest Portland Post

**4 Multnomah Historical Association's** board of directors meets on the first Monday of the month (April 4) at 7:00 p.m. History Center open hours are Thursdays 2- 4 pm and by appointment.

The History Center is located at 2929 SW Multnomah Blvd, Room 107 and includes local southwest Portland neighborhood history, photos, maps and memorabilia. Donations and new members are always welcome.

If you have an interest in your neighborhood history, we encourage your involvement. For further information go to [www.multnomahhistorical.com](http://www.multnomahhistorical.com) or call 503-893-5549.

**15 School Bond Forum.** Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. (SWNI) is holding a forum on the Portland Public Schools bond and levy measures on Friday, April 15, from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Multnomah Center, 7688 SW Capitol Highway at 31st Ave. in Multnomah Village

The forum will feature detailed information on the measures and a panel of speakers for and against them. There will also be time for audience questions, comments and discussion.

This is a great opportunity to hear and be heard about these important measures, with enough time before the May election to consider them carefully and cast an informed vote. For more information contact Will Fuller, chair of the SWNI Schools Committee, at 503-246-2328. E-mail [wwfuller@teleport.com](mailto:wwfuller@teleport.com). Or visit <http://swni.org/schools>.

**15-16 OPB Electronic Recycling Drive** sponsored by Green Century Electronic Recycling. Recycle your unwanted electronics on Friday April 15, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. and Saturday April 16, 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at OPB/Green Century Parking Lot, 6932 SW Macadam Ave.

Electronics FREE to Recycle: LCD Monitors, cell phones, telephones,



Portland artist Bobby Foucher was among the vendors at the Samali America celebration, March 25, at the Multnomah Center. Story on Page 1. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)

networking and communication equipment, computers, laptops, printers, fax machines, standing floor copiers, UPS (uninterruptible power source), wire, ink and toner, networking and misc office electronics, keyboards, mice, VCRs, DVD players, stereo and audio video equipment, telephones, cameras, PDAs and hand held devices. Fee for Recycling: CRT Monitors \$5 each; Televisions \$1 per diagonal inch. Proceeds from CRTs & TVs to benefit OPB. More info at [www.opb.org/connect](http://www.opb.org/connect).

**19 Borrow tools for free?** What would you think of a library that allows members to check out tools rather than books? Portland has tool libraries in North, Northeast, and Southeast that lend tools just like your local library lends books. In order to judge the need for a tool library in Southwest Portland there will be a meeting at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 19, Hillsdale Library, 1525 SW Sunset Boulevard.

If you have a need for tools that you don't have, have tools you no longer use and would like to donate, have expertise using tools, or if you just want to find out what the heck a tool library is please join us. For more information please call Honey at 503.245.0223, or send an e-mail to [swptl@hotmail.com](mailto:swptl@hotmail.com).

**May 1 Hillsdale SpringFest.** Hillsdale is planning one big celebration for May Day: A birthday party (the Hillsdale Farmers Market's tenth), and Arts Fair (at Rieke Elementary School) and a Main Street promotion festival.

So much is planned that organizers are calling the day — and those that follow — the Hillsdale SpringFest. The May 1st kick-off will have May Pole

dancers, bicycle taxis, a composting demonstration, the arts fair, music and promotion specials in several Hillsdale stores.

The celebration will last from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., but, if you haven't had your fill, a post-celebration wine tasting and live music are also in the works.

"We want it to be a day when everyone is out," said Linda Doyle, a Main Street Board member. "And we want them to come back," said Doyle.

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**The Southwest Portland Post**

# Portland planning fair at the Oregon Zoo called 'crowded, festive and noisy'

By Lee Perlman  
The Southwest Portland Post

The Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability last month kicked off the latest phase of the Portland Plan process with four public "fairs," including one on March 6 at the Oregon Zoo.

Mayor Sam Adams, who oversees the bureau, officially opened the fair, and played the drums of one of several ethnic musical groups who performed. About two dozen community groups and public agencies had tables offering information; these varied with each fair and, at the zoo, included the National College of Naturopathic Medicine.

Children's activities included a supervised petting zoo, featuring an Asian lizard and a baby python.

The main business of the day was discussions and surveys of strategies in four subject areas: Healthy Neighborhoods, Education, Economic Prosperity and Affordability, and Equity.

The strategies contained in the last called for equity in the apportionment of City resources, opportunities, and provision of basic services among geographic areas of the city as well as ethnic groups.

The Economic Prosperity and Affordability strategies included the development and preservation of educational and health institutions, industrial operations, trade and transportation industries, "green" enterprises, and local small businesses. It also called for helping individual households remain economically viable.

The Education section called for a



A group of Southwest folks meets to discuss Healthy Neighborhoods at the Portland Planning Fair. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)

variety of strategies under the heading "Cradle to Career," all intended to give young people the training to be "self-sufficient" by age 25. High school graduates should be equipped to pursue a college education whether they choose to or not, since this level of training and literacy will be necessary for any other family-wage job.

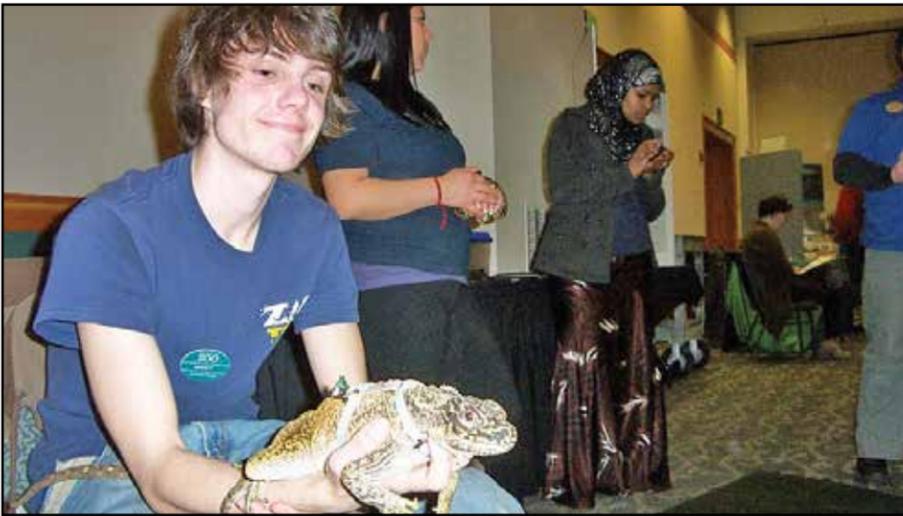
The Education strategies called for dealing with cultural disadvantage and family problems that could get in the way of academic achievement. They also called for greater integration of schools into the communities around them, and more community-related use of school property.

The Healthy Neighborhoods component was an extension of an earlier

direction toward creation of "20 minute neighborhoods," in which most basic needs are located within a 20-minute walk of most residents. One goal called for public acquisition of "high-priority natural areas" in, among others, the Tryon and Fanno creek drainages and Willamette Greenway. Another strategy called for creation of "greenways" connecting Hillsdale and Multnomah among other locations.

Unlike the other Portland Plan components, feedback here was more like a public open house, with interaction limited to written responses and one-on-one interactions with staff, than organized discussions. At the Oregon Zoo fair, planner Marie Johnson, who

(Continued on Page 7)



Mikey, an Oregon Zoo volunteer, holds an Asian lizard named Imelda at the petting zoo at the Portland Planning Fair. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)



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**Dear EarthTalk:** Vice-President Joe Biden just announced a commitment by the Obama administration of \$53 billion to high-speed rail. Isn't it about time? Why is the U.S. so far behind other nations in developing environmentally friendly public transportation? -- Diane A., Boston, MA

There are many reasons why public transit hasn't taken off in the U.S. as it has in parts of Asia, Europe and elsewhere. For one, ever since the Model T first rolled off Henry Ford's assembly line, Americans have had a love affair with cars.

Also, a successful plot by General Motors and several partner companies in the 1930 and 1940s bought up and shut down rail transit lines across 45 American cities, replacing them with bus routes driven on GM buses.

Meanwhile, the U.S. government embarked on a plan to link the nation's metro areas via interstate highways, further encouraging car travel. The sexy new car designs of the 1950s then drove the final nail in the coffin, relegating public transportation to an afterthought.

But with rising oil prices and growing fears about global warming, public transit is looking sexier to many Americans. As part of 2009's landmark American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the White House commit-

ted \$8 billion to efforts to create and maintain high-speed intercity passenger rail service.

And just weeks ago, after calling for giving 80 percent of Americans access to high-speed rail within 25 years, Barack Obama pledged another \$53 billion to increase the nation's network of high-speed rail lines.

Plans to expand high-speed rail service are already underway in several U.S. regions. Illinois was the first of 31 states to receive a portion of the funding to begin building high-speed rail lines linking Chicago and St. Louis.

A recent report found that high-speed rail in the Midwest would reduce air travel by 1.3 million trips and car travel by 5.1 million trips per year by 2020, saving 188,000 tons of carbon dioxide emissions (equivalent to taking 34,000 cars off the road while still getting everyone to and from work).

Funding is also slated to go to California, where trains traveling up to 220 miles per hour will move people between San Diego and San Francisco in less than three hours. California's high-speed rail system, which should be in service by 2020, is expected to cost about half as much as would expanding highways and building new airport runways and gates to accommodate fast growing passenger transportation demand.

Not everyone is on board with high-speed rail. Florida's Republican governor Rick Scott recently rejected \$2 billion in federal funding to build an 85-mile high-speed rail line between Tampa and Orlando, arguing that cost overruns would likely leave Florida taxpayers making up billions of dollars for something they don't need.

Scott's move in killing the Tampa-Orlando run calls into question whether or not Obama can push his plans through in other parts of the country that are also conservative strongholds.



Plans to expand high-speed rail service are now underway in several U.S. regions. Pictured: High speed trains at the St. Pancras international station, London. (Photo courtesy John Curnow, Flickr)

No matter how quickly Americans get up to speed on high-speed rail, the U.S. certainly has some catching up to do. According to statistics from the International Union of Railways and other sources, China leads the world with upwards of 2,800 miles of high-speed rail lines in operation and another 5,500 miles planned.

Spain, France and Japan each have around 1,200 miles in operation; Germany has 800 miles and Italy has 577. The U.S. has only 226 miles in operation currently. The Obama administration would like to see Americans riding on more than 16,000 miles of high-speed rail lines by the middle of the century.

**CONTACTS:** ARRA, [www.recovery.gov](http://www.recovery.gov); International Union of Railways, [www.uic.org](http://www.uic.org).

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**Portland Planning Fair**

*(Continued from Page 5)*

helped shepherd the Southwest Community Plan through City Council, simply told those present, "We've done a lot of talking in previous phases of this plan. Now we want to hear from you."

An exception, at the Oregon Zoo, was a table full of southwest residents who had enough critical mass to have an independent discussion. One of these, West Portland Park neighborhood activist Jim McLaughlin, later told *The Post* he found the strategies vague.

"I'm an educated man and when I read these things I understood each word, but together they're all mushy," McLaughlin said. While they are "wonderful aspirational statements," he did not see how they would be implemented.

Worse, McLaughlin said, there seems to be a lack of understanding that much of Southwest Portland, with its lack of infrastructure and steep topography, poses special challenges for accessing resources without a car.

Another participant, Roger Averback, said that while some staff people present such as Johnson were quite knowledgeable about Southwest, a staffer who sat in on the discussion proved so ignorant of the area that 15 minutes were spent explaining the location of significant destinations to him.

Averback was intrigued by the concept of creating new neighborhood "hubs," small centers of retail services at locations such as Southwest 45th Avenue at Multnomah Boulevard, and 45th Avenue and Vermont Street. However, he added, "A cause of concern which residents might have to pay attention to, is changing zoning and increasing the density" near the hubs to make them viable.

Averback also noted, "Just doing that, without creating multi-modal facilities on the streets, isn't adequate. People would be willing to walk further for

services if they could do it safely."

The "equity" component would appear to favor Southwest, which is acknowledged by the City to have less than its share of sidewalks and other basic infrastructure. However, McLaughlin said, although the area has significant pockets of poverty, it is perceived by many as the domain of the rich, neither needing nor deserving of City resources.

About 80 people attended the Oregon Zoo event, which was held on a Sunday. Some participants felt it was a good event that respected the needs of working families. Others complained that it had a high cost, in terms of staff time and resources, in relation to the input received.

Averback said he found the main hall "too crowded, too noisy, too festive. Perhaps this was aimed at people who don't normally go to these types of meetings, but I wanted to get past that and into the discussion."

Staff members said they can also

send speakers to interested organized groups, and that they will take online input into May. They can be reached online at [www.portlandplan.com](http://www.portlandplan.com).

**South Waterfront Transportation**

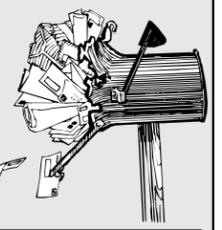
*(Continued from Page 1)*

retary of Transportation." Through his help Portland will "turn unproductive land into an oasis of innovation."

Congressman Kurt Schrader, whose district includes Clackamas County, said that by tying the region together the pending projects would mean "not just jobs for now but jobs for the future, jobs that wouldn't otherwise have happened."

Congressman David Wu spoke of "the innovation this project will enable, tying together OHSU, PSU and OMSI. Their scientists will be working to translate research into technology. The old ways of doing things are just not adequate anymore."

**Letters to the Editor**



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**Effects of bullying at any age can last a lifetime**

*(Continued from Page 2)*

through Impact NW. This program helps educate students with puppetry, an effective form of communication with young children.

Bullying prevention shows are our most frequently requested among Portland-metro schools. Our shows have helped open the eyes of kids to this topic and given them an opportunity to talk about how to respond to bullying in a healthy way.

All children deserve a secure, healthy setting for personal growth. Many children who are being bullied don't tell others out of humiliation or fear.

Please, give children a chance to discuss these issues by talking to them honestly and by supporting the local programs they need.

Visit <http://stopbullying.gov> to search for tips on how to talk to your child. As President Obama said, parents have "a responsibility to teach all children the Golden Rule: We should treat others the way we want to be treated."

Lynette Jelinek  
Program Director  
Kids on the Block, Impact NW



Portland Mayor Sam Adams and Southwest Trails chairman Don Baack at the city budget forum at Wilson High School on March 1. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)

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# Read Across America brings Governor Kitzhaber to Maplewood School

By Polina Olsen  
The Southwest Portland Post

Mrs. Liberty Looney's fourth-grade class was ready for the governor's visit. The Maplewood Elementary School teacher has organized "Read Across America" at the school for 11 years. Held annually on March 2, the program celebrates Dr. Seuss' birthday and the joy of reading. "All children are reading or being read to. That is the goal," Looney said.

Planning for "Read Across America" begins in December when Looney sends out 70 invitations asking people to visit the school. "We usually have 15 to 20 guests," she said. "We've had three chiefs of police, Mark Kroeger, Rosie Sizer and Mike Reese, who is a Maplewood parent."

Mark Mason, the 1190 KEX radio announcer for the Trailblazers, usually comes but he couldn't make it this year. "We've had authors like April Henry and people from the Oregon Zoo and OMSI," explained Looney.

"Four members of Station 18 firehouse visited the kindergarten. The kids can understand firefighters better than city commissioners."

Maplewood students keep track of their reading during the month of February. "They write their name on a raffle ticket every time they finish a book," Looney said. "I draw out names. This year, close to 70 children got a free book."

On March 2, Gov. John Kitzhaber read *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*, which he said was one of his own

son's favorites. "In addition to someone reading to the kids, the children ask about their jobs," Looney said.

"The governor had time for two questions. The first was, 'What's it like being governor?' He said it was a great job. The second was, 'Is there anything you can't do because you're governor?' Not really, he said. [On second thought] the governor said he has people from *The Oregonian* follow him around so he has to be on his best behavior. He can't eat with his fingers."



Governor John Kitzhaber reads to Maplewood School students as part of Read Across America. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)

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