

June 3, 2016

Essay to the Portland Tribune

June 7, 2016, is the 100-year anniversary commemorating the completion of the breathtaking Historic Columbia Gorge Highway. To appreciate this incredible jewel embedded in the Columbia Gorge, it is important to note its history, what effort is going on today to reconnect it, and imagine a new flat off-street bike corridor from the Rose Quarter to Multnomah Falls for the next century.

Hats off to activists like Sam Hill, Sam Lancaster, Simon Benson, John Yeon, Julias Meier, Sam Jackson, Henry Pittock and Margaret Henderson who pursued a state-of-the-art highway idea by using their persuasive powers, skills, influence and at times their pocketbooks to make it happen. When Hood River County issued a \$75,000 bond for needed highway construction funds, Simon Benson promptly wrote a check to provide the needed funding.

The Columbia River Highway was Sam Hill's brainchild and Sam Lancaster's heart and soul. Highway construction and design was greatly influenced by a trip they took together to the Alps in Switzerland, where they experienced the mountainous Axenstrasse roadway. Dramatic engineering feats were matched in the Columbia Gorge by Lancaster's masterful corridor planning and technical skills. Curvilinear guard rails, retaining walls, and tunnel entrances were built by imported Italian stone masons to impress future generations. Work crews were supervised by hardworking and personable by "Johnny" Yeon, who volunteered his two years of service.

Crown Point, Mitchell Point and quaint waysides were built at strategic viewpoints so that, as Lancaster said, "people could marvel at the glory of God's creation." Auto touring became a new kind of entertainment. Just a short distance from Portland, you could take the family or friends and cruise winding curves through a dramatic rain forest of waterfalls and monuments of basalt cliffs.

Much of the Columbia Gorge Highway was destroyed east of Multnomah Falls to make way for the I-84 slab. "Progress" or building something new fed the narrow-minded thinking to destroy rather than preserve a major historic engineering marvel. No thought was given to its great historic value and tourism potential. In 1966 Governor Mark Hatfield approved blowing up Mitchell Point Tunnel rather than paying Union Pacific to move their tracks further north.

In 1987 the Oregon Legislature created the Historic Columbia River Highway Advisory Committee to work jointly with Friends of the Historic Columbia River Highway (FHCRH), founded by Jeannette Kloss, to spearhead an effort to restore and reconnect the HCRH. Encouraged by the efforts of Congressman Peter DeFazio and fundraising by FHCRH, the Oregon Department of Transportation is now facilitating restoration and reconnection of this grand and historic corridor. The most difficult segment to be rebuilt will be Mitchell Point Tunnel, high above the Columbia River the new tunnel will replicate the original five large arched openings as viewpoints.

Multnomah Falls once had a train stop for tourists from Portland. By improving this rail connection from Gateway Transit Station, it would help relieve current parking issues at the Falls. There is also a need to create an off-street 28.5 mile bike corridor from the Rose Quarter to Multnomah Falls. Similar to the 100-year-old Columbia River Highway scenic drive, this leisurely bike trail will stimulate the senses by connecting Oregon state parks at Lewis and Clark Park, Rooster Rock Park, Multnomah Falls, Horsetail Falls to the new bike/pedestrian trail at John Yeon Park. Waysides off this trail for picnics could be similar to what my family experienced over 55 years ago on the old Columbia River Highway.

Today, safe trails and high speed rail corridors need to be planned to benefit all. Just as citizens of the past who worked with public officials to build enduring roadways, we need to do the same today by developing progressive durable rail and bike trail corridors. Oregonians are ready for environmentally bold leadership.

Brad Perkins, CEO

cascadiahighspeedrail.com -503 317-6455, 1722 NE Schuyler, Portland, OR

May 29, 2016

Portland Mayor Charlie Hales
Commissioner Steve Novick
Commissioner Amanda Fritz
Metro Commissioner Bob Stacey
Metro Commissioner Shirley Craddick
Metro Commissioner Sam Chase

Re: Rose Quarter to Gorge Trail (RQGT) Funding Plan

I'll be brief and to the point. I believe we understand how Sullivan's Gulch Trail (now RQGT) can be a real asset for commuters, recreationalists, tourists and bike-oriented development dwellers if we build it between the Rose Quarter and Multnomah Falls. The Comprehensive Plan is now including the SGT on the official land-use map, which is a good start and requires developers to recognize it in their plans along the SGT corridor.

Metro, Portland Parks and PBOT need to decide if they wish to see the Trail developed by prioritizing funding. To make it easier for you to decide, RQGT Advocates propose the following funding plan:

Basically, the needed financial plan will be proactive by proposing a public/private partnership:

1. Preliminary Engineering/Negotiating Right of Way: \$2.5 million of \$5 million first phase from the Willamette River to Gateway Green. \$1.25 million will be raised by Rose Quarter to Gorge Trail Advocates.* The \$1.25 City of Portland match can be funded by Convention Center Urban Renewal District Funds.
2. Final Engineering/Negotiating Right of Way: \$2.5 million second phase from the Hollywood Transit Station to Gateway Green. \$1.25 million will be raised by Rose Quarter to Gorge Trail Advocates. The \$1.25 million match can be funded by the City of Portland, Metro and/or State of Oregon.
3. Construction: \$36 million derived from new urban renewal district funds.**

*Possible private funding sources: Nike, Addidas, Under Armor, Providence, Legacy, etc.

**Create a new urban renewal district from NE 16th to 181st Avenues along I-84 and use the tax increment financing for trail construction costs. Call it a "string of pearls," with the pearls being the bridgeheads across I-84, where bike-oriented development is planned or will be developed adjacent to I-84.

Over a dozen neighborhoods adjacent to the RQGT have registered their overwhelming support. I and four others wish to meet with you regarding our commitment to work with your public jurisdiction to make it happen. We are open to your suggestions for a better financial plan.

We look forward to a healthier and more robust communication with you in advancing the Rose Quarter to Gorge Trail. (See Trails:cascadiahighspeedrail.com)

Sincerely,



Brad Perkins, RQGT Advocates
503-317-6455

cc: Ted Grund, Garlynn Woodsong, Daniel Pirofsky, DJ Heffernan, Art Pearce, Lake McTigue, Jillian Detweiler.

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**PORTLAND CITY COUNCIL
COMMUNICATION REQUEST
Wednesday Council Meeting 9:30 AM**

Council Meeting Date: June 8, 2016

AUDITOR 05/11/16 AM 10:28

Today's Date May 11, 2016

Name Brad Perkins

Address 1222 NE Sawyer

Telephone 503 317 6555 Email perkinsrealty@comcast.net

Reason for the request:

Sullivan's Gulch Trail Funding


(signed)

- Give your request in writing to the Council Clerk's office to schedule a date for your Communication. Use this form or email the information to the Council Clerk at the email address below.
- You will be placed on the Wednesday official Council Agenda as a "Communication." Communications are the first item on the Agenda and are taken at 9:30 a.m. A total of five Communications may be scheduled. Individuals must schedule their own Communication.
- You will have 3 minutes to speak and may also submit written testimony before or at the meeting. Communications allow the Council to hear issues that interest our citizens, but do not allow an opportunity for dialogue.

Thank you for being an active participant in your City government.

Contact Information:

Karla Moore-Love, City Council Clerk
1221 SW 4th Ave, Room 130
Portland, OR 97204-1900
(503) 823-4086

email:

Karla.Moore-Love@portlandoregon.gov

Sue Parsons, Assistant Council Clerk
1221 SW 4th Ave., Room 130
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(503) 823-4085

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Susan.Parsons@portlandoregon.gov

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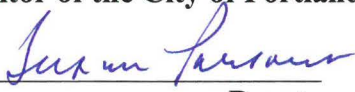
Request of Brad Perkins to address Council regarding Sullivan's Gulch trail
funding (Communication)

JUN 08 2016

PLACED ON FILE

Filed MAY 31 2016

MARY HULL CABALLERO
Auditor of the City of Portland

By 
Deputy

COMMISSIONERS VOTED AS FOLLOWS:		
	YEAS	NAYS
1. Fritz		
2. Fish		
3. Saltzman		
4. Novick		
Hales		