

From: Tim Davis [mailto:pdxfan@gmail.com]

Sent: Wednesday, February 25, 2015 10:44 PM

To: Community-Initiated Trails; Planning and Sustainability Commission; Transportation System Plan

Subject: Supporting a substantial public trail system in SW Portland--and a quick completion of the Red Electric trail

Hi everyone!

This is Tim Davis, and I VERY enthusiastically support the work that Don Baack and many others have done to greatly improve the lives of Portlanders by focusing on the many PUBLIC benefits of trails formed by the many natural ROWs in Southwest Portland (as well as other areas in Portland).

[Note: be SURE to look at the Web page linked at the end of this message; it's a huge collection of beautiful descriptions and pictures of the stunning-beyond-belief network of *public* paths and stairways throughout the hills above downtown Berkeley!]

It's typical NIMBY crap to fear increased criminal activity (or, more accurately, to simply be afraid of your own shadow) when trails are created near or adjoining your property.

Take Seattle's legendary Burke-Gilman Trail, for example. Before it was built, almost NONE of the nearby property owners supported it. Now it reigns as one of the most popular urban trails in the U.S., if not the most popular. And, naturally, property values *increased* greatly near the trail. In fact, they have increased faster very close to the trail than have other areas!

A much more dramatic example, though, is the Highline Canal in Aurora, Colorado. If you follow it and look at the property values, there is absolutely no comparison: the homes within 300 feet of the trail are worth WAY more than homes 1000 feet or more from the trail. It's an absolutely wonderful amenity in an otherwise incredibly boring and low-income suburb of Denver.

I just cannot thank Don Baack enough for all the work he has done--and the incredible JOY he has brought me as I explore phenomenal trails such as the 4T--something that no other city could even have if they wanted to! SW Portland could be full of even more wonder if we don't let the NIMBYs ruin things for everyone--including themselves!!

Also, regarding the Red Electric trail: it has taken WAY too long to get built. It needs to get finished immediately. The bicycle traffic throughout its length will be very impressive, and it will be much cheaper to complete than most people realize (from SW 33rd & Bertha to the Hooley pedestrian bridge, among other places).

Finally, I have visited over 70 cities in the U.S., Canada, Mexico and Europe over the past year, and I can say with 100% certainty that Portland FAR lags nearly all of them in improving cycling infrastructure!! It's unbelievably embarrassing! While we celebrated completing a mere 500 *feet* of Marine Drive trail, Minneapolis completed yet another 10 *miles* of new (and completely off-street) trail in the same amount of time. Dozens of other cities are making this kind of progress, as well.

A long time ago, Portland was a huge leader in innovation, transit, cycling, sustainability, urban planning, growth management, and so much more. Not only have we lost the lead in every area, but *people*-

friendly infrastructure (as opposed to car-choked development) is where we are falling by far the most behind other cities. You don't even have to travel to realize this; simply research what other cities are doing lately with pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

Every dollar invested in people rather than cars pays back MANY-fold in the long run. It benefits **every** person going through any neighborhood--yes, even those who solely get from A to B by driving. Let's encourage people to get OUTSIDE and explore their communities--and to, for often the first time ever (tragically), get to actually KNOW their neighbors!! Who knows--they might find that they have some wonderful things in common!

But this will never happen if we keep letting ultra-private-right, often wealthy (and highly entitled-feeling) people wall off the public from the periphery of their property.

If you need to see a real-life example of a vast pedestrian trail network coursing its way through a stunningly beautiful urban neighborhood, Berkeley is a super obvious choice. I visited friends there, and I was **stunned** that I could walk from their house just a few blocks to an achingly beautiful set of 146 interconnected **public** stairways! And I wasn't the only one enjoying these unbelievably amazing public assets. I had never in my life seen anything like it, and I want that SO badly for Portland!!

So, if there's ONE place you must visit to see how wonderful urban trails can be, you really need to see the hills above downtown Berkeley. This one page alone will convince any rational person that encouraging and expanding public ROWs throughout SW Portland is the ONLY logical thing to do:

<http://stairwayfreedom.weebly.com/berkeley--oakland-stairs>

Thank you so very much for your consideration,

Tim Davis
4227 NE 10th Ave
Portland, OR 97211