



South Waterfront Greenway
Frequently Asked Questions
July 2008

1. What is the status of the South Waterfront Greenway project?

The Greenway project team is developing construction documents and working to obtain the necessary permits from city, state and federal agencies. The project team is currently working closely with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries Service) to find a river bank design that protects the environment, complies with federal regulations and meets City goals.

The start of construction has been delayed about nine months by the complex environmental permit process and other property issues. The project team will work with the contractor to prepare the site in advance for river bank construction and minimize the delay.

2. When will construction start?

Construction will begin May-June of 2009 and the public spaces will be complete by July 2010. The first steps in construction for this project involve grading and stabilizing the river bank and are expected to take about 3 months. This revised schedule reflects restrictions that limit work in the Willamette River or on the riverbank to the period between July 1 and October 31 each year.

3. Does the extended project schedule affect the project budget?

Portland Parks & Recreation is committed to the successful completion of this project. We are making every effort to minimize additional staff costs and deliver the project within the current budget. The budget includes contingencies for unanticipated cost increases in design, permitting, and construction. In addition, the extended schedule provides the City time to seek additional funds through grants and sponsorships. There are many variables that could affect fluctuations in the final cost of construction. For example, the delayed construction schedule may mean higher material costs, but these increases may be offset by lower bids during a slower and more competitive construction market next winter. A revised budget will be developed based on the approved design and additional funds will be sought as needed.

4. What are the issues of concern in the permitting process and which agencies are involved?

A permit application for work in and along the Willamette River was submitted to the US Army Corps of Engineers and is being formally reviewed by the NOAA Fisheries Service. The City is working with them to

resolve issues involving bank stabilization, vegetation and habitat, public access, and testing for contaminated sediments.

A Streamlining Agreement between the City of Portland, NOAA Fisheries Service, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Division of State Lands, the Bureau of Development Services and the US Army Corps of Engineers establishes a process for developing scientifically sound project designs, identifying projects with significant permitting issues and addressing those issues in a timely manner. The project team discussed the Greenway design with representatives from these agencies and made improvements based on their feedback. This early consultation is important preparation, but it does not guarantee a simple permit process. To obtain the permit involves negotiation to balance agency needs.

6. Is a light watercraft boat dock still included in the design?

Portland Parks & Recreation is committed to providing public access to the river as part of the Greenway development. The design and construction of a dock for non-motorized boats is one of the issues being discussed with NOAA Fisheries Service. A revised budget will be developed based on the approved design and additional funds will be sought as needed.

7. Does the public art installation of the historic ship bows affect the project timeline or contribute to the delayed construction schedule?

The placement of an art installation featuring two Liberty Ship bows is planned to occur after this phase of the Greenway is complete and has no impact on the current project schedule. The bows will be located at the Curry Street viewpoint above the riverbank level that is governed by the by the in-water restrictions. An installation date for the public art has not yet been set.

8. Will construction of the Greenway overlap with construction of the South Waterfront Park Neighborhood Park?

Yes, there will be a short period during which work will be underway on both projects. Construction of the new neighborhood park will begin next winter and be complete in August of 2009. The current schedule for the Greenway has work above the river bank starting in June 2009. The delayed timeline for the Greenway reduces the period when construction will occur on both sites.

9. To reduce costs, could the Greenway design be changed to include only a single trail? Could the existing temporary trail be saved and incorporated into the design?

The Greenway code for South Waterfront requires divided bicycle and pedestrian paths. Much work went into developing the required design. Portland Parks and Recreation did a trail user survey in the late 1990s to better understand what trail design and width was needed in the City and to help guide Greenway code for the South Waterfront district. We found that when bicycles and pedestrians are together on a trail, user conflicts and frustration abound. Existing trail widths up to 18' in popular areas like Waterfront Park are not

sufficient to eliminate the conflicts and allow for safe travel. The best solutions in other cities have proven to be divided trails that separate cyclists and walkers.

There are significant environmental advantages in the new trail design. The Greenway trail will capture and treat rainwater in planted swales between the separated paths. This is an integral part of the overall Greenway design to improve environmental conditions in and along the Willamette River. Finally, the existing trail cannot be retained for use after the Greenway is completed. The temporary trail is not located at the appropriate elevation or along the final alignment of the permanent Greenway trail.

10. How can I learn more about the design and construction of the Greenway, and receive periodic updates?

You can find complete Greenway project details online at PortlandParks.org. While there, you can sign up to receive periodic email updates and newsletters by completing the online notification form. For more information contact Patty Freeman, Greenway Project Manager, at 503-823-5592 or pkpatty@ci.portland.or.us.