



PRESS RELEASE
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Legislature Poised to Deliver Transformational Investment in Outer Powell Blvd.

SALEM – The Oregon Legislature is set to deliver a major investment in outer Powell Blvd. that will dramatically improve traffic and pedestrian safety. The state’s bonding package, which was introduced in the Capital Construction Committee today, includes \$17 million to build sidewalks, improved roadways, crosswalks, street signals, bike lanes, buffer zones, a center turn lane, proper lighting, and a score of other safety improvements on Powell Blvd. from SE 122nd to SE 136th Ave.

Powell Blvd. and SE 122nd Ave. is the single most dangerous intersection in the state of Oregon, with 37% more crashes than similar Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) roads. The frequency and severity of these crashes leaves residents with little to do but wait anxiously for the next tragedy. Pedestrians who travel along Powell Blvd. have no option but to walk on the road itself with no barriers between themselves and traffic traveling 35 mph to 50 mph.

Nighttime serves to exacerbate the problems with sparse lighting doing little to improve visibility. In a community survey, East Portlanders identified the passage from SE 122nd to SE 136th as their number one safety priority.

Sen. Chuck Thomsen (R-Hood River), Sen. Rod Monroe (D-East Portland), Sen. Michael Dembrow (D-NE Portland), Rep. Shemia Fagan (D-North Clackamas/East Multnomah), Rep. Jessica Vega Pederson (D-East Portland), Rep. Jeff Reardon (D-Happy Valley/East Portland), and Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer (D-Portland) have continually advocated for improvements to outer Powell Blvd.

“This investment is the product of a bipartisan effort to keep the East Portland community safe,” said Sen. Thomsen. “These improvements will transform the intersection of Powell Blvd. and SE 122nd from the most dangerous in the state to a place where drivers, bikers, and walkers can all traverse safely, greatly improving the quality of life for those who live and work in the area.”

“In my short service in the legislature, I have already attended two candlelight vigils for pedestrians who died tragic deaths on outer Powell Blvd.” Rep. Fagan said. “That’s two too many.”

“As leaders,” Rep. Fagan continued, “we are called, not only to mourn with these families, but to take real action to prevent these tragedies in the first place. Today’s investment means our community’s long awaited transformation of outer Powell Blvd. will become a reality.”

After the Legislature allocated \$3 million for Powell Blvd. in the 2013-2015 biennium, HDR, Inc.’s Portland office was hired to design and engineer the Outer Powell Blvd. Project. HDR, Inc. assessed the cost of full construction of Powell Blvd. from SE 122nd Ave. to SE 136th Ave. at \$17 to \$20 million. Upon learning about today’s \$17 million investment, the City of Portland committed an additional \$3 million to the improvements, ensuring full funding for Powell Blvd. from SE 122nd Ave. to SE 136th Ave.

“Members of the East Portland community consistently rank improvements on outer Powell Blvd. as one of their top transportation priorities,” Portland City Commissioner Steve Novick said. “I applaud the Legislature, and particularly the East Portland delegation, for prioritizing transportation safety investments on outer Powell. I am proud to partner with the state legislature and ODOT to make this state highway safer for everyone.”

This partnership between the legislature and the City of Portland means the design and engineering will be completed and ODOT will break ground in 2018.

Watch an engaging video overview of the Outer Powell Blvd. Project created by HDR, Inc. [here](#).

Attached separately: Funding Request Submitted by Representative Fagan from April 2, 2015.

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