

MEMO

Date: Jan. 30, 2015

From: Hans E. Steuch

To: SW Trails Red Electric Trail Website (www.redelectric.org) and Page (<http://swtrails.org/campaigns/red-electric/>)

Subject: Red Electric Trail Planning History

The Red Electric Trail has been in City of Portland plans at least since the 1990's. When the City of Portland adopted the Southwest Urban Trails Plan in 2000 the Red Electric Trail was set aside for further study. The plan, on page 10, has this to say:

"The Red Electric Line is a future route because its development potential is contingent on a feasibility study by Portland Parks and Recreation. The study is planned to begin in the fall of 2000 and will look at developing a multi-use trail.

The route was identified in the primary trail network because it provides a key east-west recreational and transportation route in Southwest Portland for both pedestrians and bicyclists. It would also create an important regional link to the new Fanno Creek Greenway Trail, which will travel through Beaverton, Tigard, Durham, and the City of Tualatin. Although it is included in the final urban trail network of the Southwest Urban Trails Plan no development or improvements are proposed."¹

The study got underway in 2003 and was completed in 2007 with the document "Red Electric Trail Planning Study, May 2007"²

Reference to the feasibility study can be found in the 2007 Transportation System Plan Documents³, specifically in Chapter 12 – Area Studies, from which the following is excerpted.

" RED ELECTRIC TRAIL PLANNING STUDY

Background

The Southwest Urban Trails Plan, completed in July 2000 by the Portland Office of Transportation (PDOT), recommended the Red Electric historic rail alignment as one of seven possible walking routes in southwest Portland. In January 2003, the Fanno Creek Greenway Trail Action Plan was finalized, recommending that the Red Electric alignment be studied as the easternmost portion of that regional trail system extending to Tigard. In October 2003, Portland Parks and Recreation, with the assistance of the Office of Transportation, began the Red Electric Trail Study to investigate potential routes for an east-west trail that would extend the Fanno Creek Greenway Trail, creating a continuous, 16-mile bicycle and pedestrian trail between the Willamette and Tualatin Rivers.

¹ The 2000 Southwest Urban Trails Plan is available at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/article/222843>

² The study can be found at <http://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/469555>

³ The 2007 TSP Documents can be found at <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/52495>

Process

A comprehensive public involvement process was developed that focused initially on landowners and neighbors living along potential routes. A public open house was held in June and October 2004. A draft trail study was released for public review and comment in August/September 2005.

Staff reviewed potential routes and trail types in the field to evaluate road crossings, note sight distance constraints, select potential sidewalk locations and locate right-of-way encroachments.

Recommendations

The process resulted in a recommended route, with some other options that could still meet project criteria and result in a safe and useful east-west route for a diversity of trail users. The trail would look different along various stretches of the route, based on existing conditions, topography, and other features. Cost estimates were developed for each project-sized segment. It will likely take decades to design and construct all segments, but will ultimately offer increased recreational opportunities as well as transportation use to southwest Portland residents and visitors.

Once City Council has taken action on the study, the Transportation System Plan classification maps (and potentially master street plan map) for southwest Portland will be updated to reflect the adopted alignment. “

As of this writing the Red Electric Trail planning is presented by the Portland Bureau of Transportation in the Draft 2035 Comprehensive Plan in this manner:

Red Electric Trail

Project Number: 103540
 Project Status: Candidate
 Lead Agency: PBOT
 Project Timeline: TBD
 Estimated Cost: \$17,653,000

Build remaining segments of the Red Electric Trail to provide an east-west route for pedestrians and cyclists in SW Portland that connects the existing Fanno Creek Greenway Trail to Willamette Park.