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EUGENE CITY COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

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AROUND THE CITY

Children's Right to Play Outside Guaranteed

Friday, Sept. 27, is Oregon Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights Day. "OCOBOR" is combatting a disturbing trend in Oregon and the United States: today's youth are spending less time outdoors and are less connected to the natural world. Children who are indoors all the time are more likely to engage only in sedentary activities and be less fit. That can lead to obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and other direct negative consequences to their health.



The Recreation Division has long recognized what research has now confirmed: just being outside has a remarkable rejuvenating and calming effect that can reduce hyperactivity in children. In response to the recent trend away from outside play, Recreation developed the Full Moon Rising Program that uses outdoor activities to teach science, technology, engineering, and mathematics curriculum in local schools and then, depending on the season, takes the children tree climbing, rock climbing, boating, or sledding.

It was at the urging of the Recreation Division that the Oregon Recreation & Park Association launched the OCOBOR initiative. It guarantees the right of every Oregon child to follow a trail, go boating, camp out under the stars, learn to swim, walk barefoot on the beach, climb a tree, observe animals in their habitat, catch a fish, play in a nearby park, and explore Oregon's culture and history.

For more information, contact Recreation Division Manager Craig Smith at 541-682-5334.

Second Meeting Scheduled on 30th Avenue Crossing Safety

A meeting to continue discussing safety concerns about pedestrians crossing 30th Avenue east of Hilyard Street has been scheduled for Thursday, Oct. 3, beginning at 6 p.m., in the cafeteria of Camas Ridge Elementary School, 1150 East 29th Avenue. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss community input, describe evaluation studies, and present the City's recommended improvement option.

Many pedestrians, bicyclists, transit users, and neighborhood residents have expressed a desire for a safer street crossing that is easy to use. Many of the concerns have been submitted on behalf of students who attend Camas Ridge Elementary School. While there is a pedestrian bridge across from the school near University Street, it has steep stairwells and doesn't work for people with mobility challenges or families with strollers, large bicycles or tag-along trailers. Another group of concerned users are transit riders who board at 30th Avenue and University, which is five blocks from the only marked crosswalk on 30th Avenue east of Hilyard.

An initial meeting was held on May 23 to identify safety challenges and begin the discussion of potential options. Staff is still developing a recommended improvement option for the Oct. 3 meeting. More information, including notes from the May 23 meeting and the results of speed studies and traffic counts, is available at www.eugene-or.gov/30thcrossing, or by contacting Reed Dunbar, transportation planner, at 541-682-5727.

ODOT to Build a Wider, Safer Sidewalk/Shared-Use Path on Franklin Boulevard

Wildish Construction will start construction of a shared-use path on the south side of Franklin Boulevard between Walnut Street and Judkins Point, Friday, Sept. 27. City of Eugene staff worked with Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to develop a design that will improve the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists as well as improve the quality of their experience on this popular transportation corridor.

Currently at this location, a narrow, two-directional, five-foot-wide sidewalk handles a heavy volume of bicycle and pedestrian use. This sidewalk is the primary pedestrian and biking facility in and out of the Laurel Hill Valley neighborhood and serves the University of Oregon campus and the Lane Transit District's Walnut EmX Station. The new sidewalk will be constructed to a 12-foot width with a five-foot planting strip from Walnut Street to the east end of the project. An improved drainage system will be included in the new design to keep rainwater from flowing across the sidewalk and freezing in winter. The City of Eugene is providing the landscape plans, and although some trees will be removed, numerous trees will be planted. The low-bid contract of \$252,664 was provided through ODOT'S Bicycle and Pedestrian Program and awarded to Wildish Construction, Inc. Completion is expected by the end of December.

During construction, there will be one eastbound lane open to vehicle traffic and a four-foot-wide temporary bike/pedestrian path sharing the roadway. The bike/pedestrian path will be delineated by pedestrian channelization devices and tubular markers. During the weekends, there will be two lanes of eastbound traffic open to vehicle traffic with a four-foot-wide temporary bike/pedestrian adjacent to traffic. Westbound traffic will not be affected.

Visit the [ODOT project web site](#) for more information, or contact Eugene Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator Lee Shoemaker at lee.shoemaker@ci.eugene or 541-682-5471.