

17: Close the Springwater Gap

Connecting the final gap in the popular Springwater Trail corridor will complete the off-street route between Boring and downtown Portland.

SITUATION

- Springwater Trail runs from Portland to Boring
- Major gap is located in the Sellwood neighborhood
- Trail users must use nearby streets

The popular Springwater Trail is one of Portland's most-used multimodal trails. Spanning nearly 20 miles in length between downtown Portland and Boring, Springwater is a signature piece of the region's bike-friendly reputation as well as a major piece of the 40 Mile Loop. Despite this, there is still a small gap in the Springwater Trail.

The Springwater trail has one final gap in the Sellwood neighborhood. Recent improvements and completed pieces include the Sellwood to OMSI trail and the Three Bridges Project (to be completed in 2006.)



PROBLEMS

- Gap in the off-street trail
- Difficult connections for bicyclists
- Poor signage and navigation systems at gap

Bicyclists seeking to ride the entire length of the Springwater Trail from Portland must take surface streets from the Willamette River through Sellwood. The surface street connection is confusing at best and unsafe at worst, with 17 street crossings, limiting many interested families and others from using the trail as a key recreation route in the Portland metro area.

The on-street route is also not clearly marked. At the Willamette River the trails lets out on to Umatilla street with a small directional sign. The bicyclists have to navigate 19 city blocks with limited additional signage. This link will connect to the future three-bridges projects that will be completed in late summer 2006.

SOLUTIONS

- Separated biking facilities
- Planning in progress
- Improved interim signage

The Springwater Trail is an important connection to many communities and constituencies from Boring to Portland. Completing the gap is primarily a matter of funding that could include contributions from the City of Portland, regional flexible transportation funds, and a trails earmark acquired by Congressman Earl Blumenauer.



Logistical issues still exist that include acquiring the right-of-way and dealing with private railroad properties and operations. The City of Portland also plans on installing a traffic signal at SE 17th Avenue and Ochoco.

In the interim the Sellwood Gap should have more visible and frequent signage that connects the river Sellwood-OMIS trail with the Three Bridges project.

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