



Virtually Meet Your Neighbors

NWNA Quarterly Meeting FALL 2022

Thursday, Oct. 20, 6-7 p.m.
This meeting will be our last
Zoom.

Here's the link:

NWNA Quarterly In Person WINTER 2023

Thursday, Jan. 26, 2023
7-8 p.m.
Franklin Elementary School

NWNA Quarterly In Person SPRING 2021

Thursday, April 26, 7-8 p.m.
Franklin Elementary School



Follow calendar updates and
changes on Facebook and
Nextdoor.com.

Our Very Own Rail Line



Feature Story - The short line that starts in the Northwest Neighborhood dates back before Washington statehood, when Vancouver brick magnate L.M. Hidden led a group of investors who envisioned a cross-state connection to Yakima. Read Erik Robinson's in depth look at the short line on pages 4 and 5.

Final Zoom Quarterly Meeting

By Jim Mains

Our fall quarterly meeting is coming up on Thursday, Oct. 20 from 6-7 p.m. This will be our final virtual meeting. Please join us on Zoom as we check in with our neighbors, discuss future transportation in our neighborhood, and receive important city updates.

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85995727010?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85995727010?pwd=eUZzV3RSZUcwbUZ1NEFDWW9LM2VyUT09)
[pwd=eUZzV3RSZUcwbUZ1NEFDWW9LM2VyUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85995727010?pwd=eUZzV3RSZUcwbUZ1NEFDWW9LM2VyUT09)

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Jim Mains, NWNA President

Greetings, Neighbors!

We had a busy summer here in the neighborhood. Lots of road construction.

In the last month I have received positive feedback on our new sidewalks from Lincoln to Franklin Elementary School, as well as the new paved trail at the end of 50th and 51st streets. These safety improvements have opened up many discussions from neighbors on how can we do more.



The new sidewalks on Lincoln at 53rd give us a taste of how nice it would be to continue sidewalks up and down Lincoln to improve safety for our walkers, joggers and bicycles.

We will begin this discussion at our next meeting on Thursday, Oct. 20. What kind of transportation improvements would you like to see in our neighborhood in the next 3 to 5 years.

By starting these discussions we can begin the process of figuring out the best way to work with the city and seek out funding. As you know, funding is slow and takes time. So the sooner we can work on a plan the better.

This summer we also had our kickball team return to action. The Fireballs played throughout the summer competing with other neighborhoods. Thank you to Ben McCarty, our Vice President, for coordinating our neighborhood team. Before you know it, summer will be back and it will be time to get kicking again.

With fall upon us this is the time to prepare your home for the winter months. Check your gutters, downspouts, prune the trees and bushes and bring in all your outside furniture. Although it feels like summer, winter is coming.

Until next time, do good in the neighborhood.

Jim Mains

Thank you Fireballs!

The sun has set on the 2022 Fireballs kickball season. It was a fun season with a great group of folks. Our thanks to Bartnik Insurance & Financial Solutions for sponsoring the team.

A very special thank you to Ben McCarty, NWN vice president for coordinating this years team.

Join us next year! Look for more details in the spring newsletter and on social media.



Find us on
Facebook

Facebook.com/
NWNeighborhood

Northwest Neighborhood's rail line

By Erik Robinson

The sight of an Amtrak Cascades locomotive parked in our neighborhood, on the tracks running along the north bank of Burnt Bridge Creek, caught my attention in March.

I later found out that locomotive was merely parked there waiting to be plucked onto the nearby BNSF main line for maintenance – and not, alas, a prelude to commuter rail service between Vancouver and Battle Ground – but it did spark my curiosity.

Known today as the Chelatchie Prairie Railroad, the tracks that split off BNSF's main line toward Seattle have been part of the landscape in the Northwest neighborhood for more than a century. Other than very occasionally having to wait for a short freight train on the crossing at Fruit Valley Road, few of us give the tracks much thought.

It turns out that the tracks have a fascinating history, and they're about to be infused with some new life.

Clark County owns this short line, which angles northeast of Vancouver and runs a total of 33 miles through Battle Ground, on to Yacolt, before terminating at the site of a long-defunct paper mill in Chelatchie Prairie.

The county recently received \$4.1 million of state transportation funding to maintain the line. Area residents will see the first tranche of state funds, \$1.4 million, go to work beginning this fall as a contractor replaces the wooden ties under the rails and shores up the gravel ballast that supports the line. Later, the county will use \$2.7 million in state funding to inspect, repair and rehabilitate trestle bridges along the line as well as more rehabilitation of ties and ballast, said Kevin Tyler, the county staffer who oversees the rail line.

The line doesn't earn a dime for the county, at least not directly. In fact, under the county's lease agreement with the Portland Vancouver Junction Railroad, the company doesn't pay a fee to the county until it moves more than 1,000 cars annually.

The line currently carries about 700 cars a year on average, Tyler said.

Tyler said the railroad serves industrial businesses lining the route between Vancouver and Battle Ground, transporting items such as plastic pellets used for producing milk jugs by Anderson Dairy and granular product used to coat asphalt roof shingles. Although it doesn't generate revenue, county leaders have been steadfast over the years in maintaining the line as a way of helping to sustain an industrial job base that, in turn, generates revenue in taxes paid to the county.

In short, the line isn't about to go the way of other short lines around the Pacific Northwest that have been removed and converted to recreational hiking and bicycling trails.

The line has deep historic roots dating to 1888, a year before Washington achieved statehood.

That year, a group of investors led by Vancouver brick magnate L.M. Hidden commissioned construction on the Vancouver, Klickitat and Yakima Railroad, according to a county historical account. Originally intended to cross the Cascades at Klickitat Pass, the railroad got as far as Brush Prairie before running out of money. Following the Yacolt Burn of 1902 – until recently the biggest wildfire in state history – a new group of investors pushed the line to Yacolt to salvage timber.

In 1902, the Northern Pacific Railway acquired the line. In addition to hauling timber, it provided passenger service between Vancouver and Yacolt.

Northwest Neighborhood's rail line has long history

Dreams of a cross-state connection vanished in favor of a relatively flat alternative through the Columbia River Gorge. Our neighborhood line eventually served the International Paper Co. mill in Chelatchie Prairie, although freight traffic dwindled when the mill closed in 1979.

The line's private owners abandoned it altogether in the 1980s, when the county stepped in to acquire it for commercial, tourist and recreational purposes. Today, besides the freight hauled from Battle Ground and points in between, a volunteer group operates a seasonal passenger excursion train between Yacolt and Moulton Falls Regional Park.

For those thinking the line might someday revive local passenger service, think again: The speed limit on the line is 10 mph.

To this day, the line's original ambitions are faintly visible on the surface of Burnt Bridge Creek near Fruit Valley Road. There, you can glimpse pilings for an old trestle dating to the steam train era. The county received the trestle in 1996 when BNSF donated the junction near Fruit Valley Road heading east where a bridge carries the line over Interstate 5 south of the 78th Street interchange.

The trestle probably hadn't carried an actual train since the end of the steam era, railroad enthusiast Fred Abraham told me for a story I wrote for The Columbian in 2007. At that time, the remnants of the trestle had collapsed in a jumble into the creek.

Abraham said the trestle dates to a time when railroads relied on Y-shaped intersections to turn around steam-powered locomotives. The combined length of a steam locomotive and coal tender limited the use of railroad turntables commonly used to turn modern diesel engines, he said. "It was a cheaper, more economical way of turning an engine," Abraham told me back then.

The trestle is long gone, but the Northwest neighborhood's rail connection to Vancouver's past endures.

Links:

Clark County: <https://clark.wa.gov/public-works/railroad-history>

Portland Vancouver Junction Railroad: <http://www.pvjr.com/index.html>

An Amtrak Cascades locomotive sparked curiosity when it was parked for a few days in March in the Northwest Neighborhood near the point where the Chelatchie Prairie Railroad crosses Fruit Valley Road. Alas, passenger service between Vancouver and Battle Ground isn't in the cards, not least because of a 10 mph speed limit for trains on the track.



Columbian Street Improvement Update

By City of Vancouver

Columbia Street construction continues as crews install safety and mobility enhancements along the street as part of the ongoing Columbia Street Mobility Project features.

Throughout September and into October, please watch for the installation of the visible cycle lane separators. Zicla Zebra light-reflecting separators will be placed between bicycle and vehicle travel lanes on Columbia Street between 8th Street and 45th Street. Here are some photos showing recently installed separators near the 45th Street area.



NWNA Clean Up Day Totals:

13.1 tons of bulky items collected
5.580 tons of yard debris collected

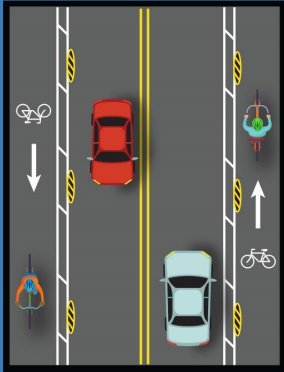
Special thanks to all our volunteers who worked with us, our drivers, flaggers, the Boy Scouts and Waste Connections.



Traveling Safely In Our Community

These illustrations show what people riding bikes, walking, and driving vehicles should do when encountering new bicycle improvements throughout the city.

PROTECTED BIKE LANE

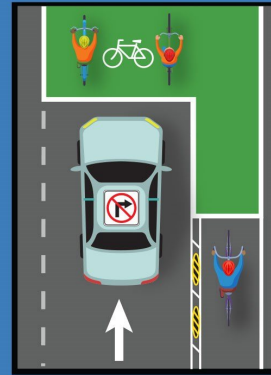


Protected bike lanes include bike lanes by the curbs, with buffer areas on the driving lane sides. The buffers include vertical devices that keep people driving from entering the bike lanes.

 Take care when entering and exiting the bike lanes, and use caution when crossing intersections

 Do not try to enter or park in the bike lanes

BIKE BOX

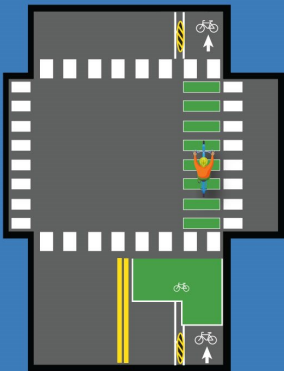


When the light turns green, people biking cross the intersection first and enter the bike lane on the other side of the intersection

 Position yourself in front of people driving

 Stay behind the white line
NO RIGHT TURN ON RED

BIKE LANE EXTENSION

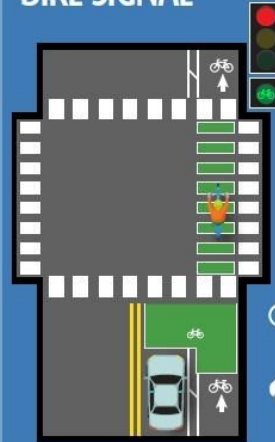


Bike lane extensions are designed to provide a visible area of travel through an intersection


 Bike through the intersection on the green dashed lines


 Look out for people biking when turning right or left

BIKE SIGNAL

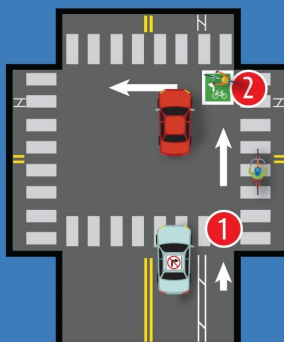


Bicycle signals are designed to separate bicyclists from the driving lane and give them priority in high-conflict areas. When the bike signal turns green, people biking cross the intersection first.

 Look both ways and then ride across the intersection when the bike signal light turns green

 Wait until the traffic signal turns green for drivers and then look out for people biking and walking before moving or turning

TWO-STAGE LEFT TURN BOX



Two-stage left turn boxes are designed to give bicyclists a safe way to turn left through an intersection


 1. Cross straight through the intersection with the green light and wait in the green box

 2. Wait for the next signal to change and then cross with the green light
NO RIGHT TURN ON RED

SHARROWS



Sharrows are road markings used to indicate a shared lane for people riding bikes and drivers. The road markings help alert drivers to the potential presence of people riding bikes.

 Position yourself in line with the sharrow markings and ride in the direction the arrow is pointing

 Keep an eye out for people riding bikes. Drive slowly and provide at least 3 feet of space when passing

Continue on page 14.

Free Leaf Disposal

By City of Vancouver

Wondering what to do with all those leaves this year? To help residents take care of the fallen leaves, City of Vancouver Solid Waste Services is again offering fall leaf coupons for free disposal at designated drop-off sites.

Vancouver and Clark County residents can redeem the free leaf disposal coupons anytime from **October 1 through December 31**. Please note that this coupon is for LEAVES ONLY and is intended for residential use, not for use by businesses.

Proper removal and disposal of leaves from our yards and street gutters will help prevent pools of standing water and localized street flooding. Please DO NOT rake or blow leaves into the street where they can block storm drain catch basins.

This year's designated free leaves disposal sites are: H & H Wood Recyclers, McFarlane's Bark, Triangle Resources and West Van Materials Recovery Center. See coupons for details.

FREE Leaf Disposal Coupon

Prevent street flooding — NEVER blow or place leaves in the street.

Vancouver & Clark County Residents Only

Valid: October 1 - December 31, 2022



SEE DISPOSAL DROP-OFF LOCATIONS AND HOURS ON BACK



NOTE: Present this coupon at a participating drop-off location for up to 5 cubic yards of LEAVES ONLY - no bags. No trimmings, yard debris or mixed loads.

Complete the following information:

Name: _____

Street Address: _____ Zip: _____

City of Vancouver residents: Funding for this program is provided through your garbage rates.
Clark County residents: Funding for this program is provided through Clark County Public Works.



The City of Vancouver supports the Neighborhood Associations in their effort to share vital information with residents in order to create a more informed public. However, the information provided and the opinions and views expressed in Neighborhood Association newsletters or other documents do not necessarily represent the position of the City of Vancouver, nor does the City determine whether the information published is accurate or appropriate. Printed by the City of Vancouver Office of Neighborhoods.

Volunteer Opportunities

Here's a list of easy and fun ways you can volunteer in our neighborhood. Each volunteer activity is simple and easy to do. Please contact Jim Mains at Jim@JimMains.com if you would like to sign up for one or more activities.

Newsletter writers and delivery

We are in need of newsletter writers and walkers to deliver the newsletter. If you enjoy writing or walking, we would love to hear from you! Share a neighborhood story, review a local restaurant, highlight an event or tell us why you love the Northwest Neighborhood. Send us your story or contact Jim Mains for more information.



Nextdoor.com is a free and private social network for neighborhoods, where neighbors can ask questions, get to know one another, and exchange local advice and recommendations.

The Northwest Neighborhood was one of the first neighborhood in Vancouver to use Nextdoor.com and have the most households signed up.

Sign up today and join the conversation! Connect with your neighbors.

Sign up, visit: www.nextdoor.com/join/ZRQVNU or nextdoor.com

The NW Neighborhood is not affiliated with Nextdoor.com nor profits from any use or promotion of the social network.

NW Neighborhood Association

President: Jim Mains
Jim@JimMains.com
Phone: (360) 513-8529

Vice President: Ben McCarty

Treasurer: Bryan Dainty

Copy Editor: Erik Robinson

City of Vancouver

Office of Neighborhoods
Judi Bailey (360) 487-8608
judi.bailey@cityofvancouver.us

NWNA City Liaison
Dean Perez (360) 619-4123
Dean.Perez@cityofvancouver.us

Neighborhood Police Officer
VPDNPOD1@cityofvancouver.us

Police West Precinct (360) 487-7355
Westside Fire Station (360) 487-7302



Celebrate the Opening of **Fire Station 11**



Saturday, Oct. 22
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

9606 NE 130th Ave., Vancouver, WA

Join Vancouver Fire and Clark County Fire District 5
to celebrate the opening of your new Fire Station.

Refreshments provided—families welcome!



Learn more at
cityofvancouver.us/station11



Crime Prevention Reminders

By City of Vancouver

The Vancouver Police Department is committed to crime prevention. Auto theft is one of the most reported property crimes in our community. Let's get our numbers down through prevention!

TIPS:

- Take your keys. One of five vehicles stolen had the keys in them.
- Lock Your Car. Almost half of all vehicles stolen are left unlocked.
- Don't 'Hide' A Second Set of Keys In Your Car. Most auto thieves where where to look for 'hidden' keys and don't keep a spare set inside your car.
- Don't Leave Your Car Running Unattended. Don't make it easy for a thief!
- Don't Leave Valuables In Your Car. Auto prowling can often lead to auto theft.
- Use A Theft Deterrent. Steering wheel locking devices and alarms provide deterrents against thefts. There are affordable ways to make your car harder to steal.

For additional auto theft prevention tips from the Washington Auto Theft Prevention Authority visit WATPA at: www.waautotheftpreventionauthority.org.



Got block foam? Recycle it today!

Vancouver and Clark County residents can now recycle block foam year-round.

Central Transfer & Recycling Center
11034 NE 117th Ave.
6 am - 6 pm, Mon - Fri
8 am - 4 pm, Sat & Sun

GOOD TIPS: Take your block foam on a weekday to avoid the weekend rush. Follow the 'recycling' signs.

CITY OF Vancouver WASHINGTON

Dept. of Public Works
www.cityofvancouver.us/RecycleRight

Nothing Heavenly About It

By Erik Robinson

(This story was originally published in the Northwest Neighborhood Newsletter in the fall of 2018.)

To Susan Sanders, the Chinese tree of heaven is anything but heavenly.

Sanders, a certified master gardener and tree steward in the Carter Park neighborhood, chairs the city of Vancouver's Urban Forestry Commission. When she joined the commission in 2012, she was eager to set to work encouraging the city to do all it could to build its urban canopy of trees. She knew other members of the commission embodied the same passion for all the positive attributes of a healthy urban forest.

"You're supposed to like trees," she said, "not hate trees."

She makes an exception for the tree of heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*). With its telltale cluster of tea-green leaves and explosive growth, once you've identified one it's hard not begin to see them everywhere. They thrive in the kind of places people tend to ignore: along freeway medians, next to alleyways, straddling the no-man's land between properties.

Fortunately, the Northwest neighborhood has averted the full-blown invasion visible in Carter Park near downtown.

Right now, the problem in our neighborhood is relatively slight. But it doesn't take much to spot the initial scouts. Look along Lincoln Avenue, as you head north from 39th Street. Here and there, a tree pokes up behind a fence. In another location, just south of 43rd, a Shaquille O'Neal-size thicket sprouts along the roadside.

A tree's a tree, right?

Sanders acknowledges the point, but argues there are plenty of native trees that provide all the same benefits of wild-life habitat, shade and natural water filtration without the problems created by trees of heaven. The tree of heaven, along with the equally invasive black locust, can quickly run roughshod over a neighborhood.

"You'll see them throughout the city in pockets, most often in alleyways," said Charles Ray, urban forester for the city of Vancouver. "The Northwest neighborhood doesn't have a lot of alleyways."

So we've caught a break, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't be vigilant.

From the standpoint of evolutionary biology, the tree of heaven thrives in newly disturbed landscapes. In this respect, Ray said it's similar to the Northwest native red alder, which spreads rapidly in young forests after land is cleared either by natural causes like wildfire or manmade disturbances such as logging. Over time, the red alder is overtaken and crowded out by Douglas fir, western hemlock and other trees common in Northwest old growth forests.

The tree of heaven has no natural competitor, at least in North America and especially in urban environments.

The fast-growing tree can reach over 80 feet in height. Try to cut it, and it will respond by redirecting energy into the roots and shooting up clusters of fresh sprouts from the stump. Once they become established, mature trees of heaven will throw out pods that contain thousands of tiny seeds. Its extensive root system is not only notorious for damaging foundations and sewer pipes, it leaches a chemical into the soil that inhibits the growth of other plants.

"They really take over," said Sunrise O'Mahoney, executive director of the nonprofit Vancouver Watersheds Alliance. "They don't allow anything else to grow around them so that creates a monoculture."

As if all this wasn't bad enough, the tree's bizarrely rapid cellular growth results in weak wood that frequently blows over in storms.

Continue on Page 13.

Tree of Heaven Continues.

From Page 12

It's gotten to the point that the city of Vancouver is partnering with the Watersheds Alliance to provide a grant to help property owners remove the trees. O'Mahoney said the city looks for at least three properties to band together on the grant to spread the community benefit as widely as possible. That's because removing a single mature tree of heaven can cost between \$1,000 and \$3,000.

She acknowledged that some may view it as counterintuitive for an environmental organization to fixate on removing trees, especially in a city striving to boost its urban canopy, which is now below 20 percent.

However, she said, the tree of heaven precludes other native trees and shrubs from thriving.

"To put it bluntly," she said, "they are really taking over."

Sanders is doing her part to keep the invasion at bay. Since moving to the Carter Park neighborhood a decade ago, she estimates she's helped to remove at least 10 trees of heaven. She and other tree experts see this as addition by subtraction by clearing space for longer-living and less-damaging native trees and shrubs.

"The phrase we use is, 'Right tree, right place,'" she said.

For more information:

Learn more about invasive trees and assistance programs by visiting vancouverwatersheds.org or cityofvancouver.us/urbanforestry. Note that even though the tree of heaven is considered a noxious weed in Washington, a permit may be required to remove it. Check with the city first.

Treatment and Control:

Digging: Take care to remove the entire plant, including all roots and fragments, as these will likely regrow.

Chemicals: Herbicides are the most effective method of eliminating nuisance trees. Fall is usually the best time of year to apply chemical herbicides, ideally by squirting into a hole drilled into the stump. Always use caution when applying chemicals, and carefully follow product label directions.

Contact: If you're not sure if your tree is invasive or if you need a removal permit, contact the city of Vancouver at urbanforestry@cityofvancouver.us or by calling 360-487-8308.



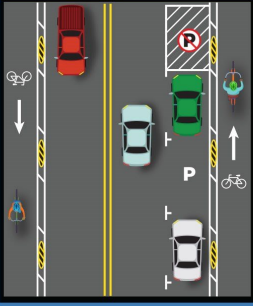
Traveling Safely In Our Community Continued

The way we move is changing quickly, with many new options for how you may choose to get around.



As part of the Complete Street Program, the City of Vancouver has installed new bicycle improvements throughout the community to provide safe, accessible streets for all users, ages, and abilities, regardless of how you choose to travel.

These illustrations show what people riding bikes, walking, and driving vehicles should do when encountering new bicycle improvements throughout the city.

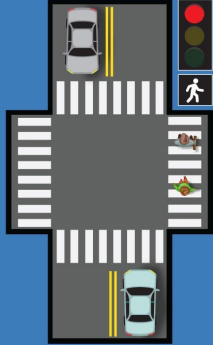
PARKING PROTECTED BIKE LANE






Parking-protected bike lanes include bike lanes by the curbs, with buffer areas on the driving lane sides. There is a parking lane between the bike lane buffer and the driving lane on one or more sides of the street.

-  Take care when entering and exiting the bike lanes, and use caution when crossing intersections
-  Use caution when exiting the parking space and crossing the bike lane to access the curb


LEADING PEDESTRIAN INTERVAL





A leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) is part of the traffic signal that allows people walking to cross the street before people driving and biking get the green light

-  Look both ways and then cross the street when the walking person light turns white
-  Wait until the signal turns green and then look out for people biking and walking before moving or turning
-  Cross the street in line with the bike lane when the light turns green, look out for people walking when moving or turning

PROTECTED INTERSECTION



Protected intersections include "refuges" at each corner where people walking and biking can wait to cross the street when people driving have the right-of-way

-  Wait in the refuge for your turn to cross the street once clear
-  Look out for people biking and walking when crossing the intersection

