

Amanda Fritz

Portland City Commissioner



General approach. Portland's Climate Action Plan demands we drastically reduce driving from current levels. The Portland Plan aims to create 20-minute neighborhoods in Portland, places where people can get around quickly and easily by walking or biking (with 70% of commute trips in 2035 by foot, transit, or bike). Right now only 27% of commute trips are on foot, transit, or bike. Why do you think more Portlanders do not walk, bike, or take transit for transportation, and what will you do to help Portland meet its goals and become an even better city to walk, bike and ride transit?

Too many areas of Portland lack sidewalks, paved streets, bus shelters, and safe bike lanes. Buses are great getting in and out of downtown at rush hour, but very inconvenient/nonexistent at other times or to get to and from areas outside of downtown.

I voted for the Bicycle Master Plan with its projected price tag of \$600 million, for spending \$20 million of sewer money to provide surface stormwater treatment facilities that also serve to slow traffic and make streets safer for pedestrians and cyclists, and for multiple pedestrian and bicycle improvements including the 52nd Avenue bike project, sidewalks on 122nd and SW Vermont, and Sunday Parkways. I worked with Transportation to ensure sidewalks are constructed or a bond paid when sidewalks are required with new development. While I am not a cyclist, I understand that building bicycling infrastructure benefits all of us. I will continue to support funding for basic infrastructure for active transportation facilities and transit.

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Fair funding share. One of every four Portland residents (about 150,000 people) is too young, old, infirm or poor to drive. Would you support a city policy to dedicate at least that percentage (25%) of PBOT's budget for walking, biking, and access to transit projects?

I have been advocating for more pedestrian safety improvements for 20 years, however I do not believe this is a realistic standard. Much of the Transportation capitol budget goes for paving. Paving benefits bicyclists and it also is critical for freight. Freight does not factor into a straight percentage of non-drivers, but is critical for the economic health of Portland and our region.

I do believe we need a political commitment to fund more sidewalk and bike infrastructure. For example, we should make funding Safe Routes to Schools and the Bicycle Master Plan priorities as we move out of the recession.

Contributing to transit's success. Transit is the backbone of our regional transportation system. The Federal Transit Administration considers a 3-mile radius around transit stops to be the catchment area for linking walking and biking to transit. While the city does not run the transit system, it provides access to transit, some of the sidewalks at transit stops, subsidizes the streetcar, and helps pay for transit youth passes. Which investments would you prioritize to support the transit system?

My focus has been and will continue to be on providing sidewalks, safe pedestrian crossings, and street lighting. While the City has picked up the cost of transit passes for high school students in Portland Public Schools, this is a School District responsibility, not the City's. That said, I advocated for continuing the City's school bus pass assistance when it became clear District 1J would not allocate funding for this basic service.

I will work with many individuals and groups in the community to press for changes in transit funding. TriMet needs additional funding other than fares and the payroll tax, both of which are undependable revenue sources in economic downturns. I am a devoted TriMet user, and have been for 25 years.

Critical pedestrian investments. For most of the last decade, the Portland Bureau of Transportation has spent about \$50,000 a year on new sidewalks, which has done little to meet long-standing needs in historically underfunded areas. Engineering requirements, right-of-way shortages, and other factors mean sidewalks are expensive to build (though compared to highway interchanges, they're very cheap). How can we create more safe space for people to walk in difficult budget times?

First, it is important to note that the Council in the past 3 years allocated far more than \$50k/year for sidewalks. We targeted ARRA stimulus money for sidewalks where most needed in SW and East Portland, and we allocated \$16m in new gas tax money for this purpose. I supported all these strategies. I have been advocating for sidewalks in SW and East Portland for 20 years, and I will continue to do so. I now realize other areas of the City have sidewalk deficiencies, too. To provide sidewalks, we should:

- a. Investigate having the Bureau of Environmental Services pay for the stormwater management component of sidewalk and street construction.
- b. Review City standards to determine whether they are an unattainable barrier that keep any improvements from being undertaken, particularly in locations where infrastructure is particularly weak. Even narrow bike lanes or sidewalks are better than no bike lanes or sidewalks.
- c. Investigate the pros and cons of alternative construction standards and building materials. For instance, building boardwalk walkways using plastic wood, as in the walkways at Mount Rushmore and Oregon's Painted Hills.
- d. Calculate the total cost to build sidewalks on Major Transit Streets that don't have them, ask the neighborhood coalitions to set priorities for installation in their areas, then set a schedule and stick to it – whether it takes 10 years, 50 years, or 100 years to work through the list. If we don't start and keep chipping away at it, we will never get sidewalks where they are needed.

- e. Make developers install the adjacent sidewalk on Major Arterials, or pay into a fund to build sidewalks on the nearest Major Arterial where there are no connecting sidewalks adjacent to the development on neighborhood streets.
- f. Widen shoulders with asphalt or graded gravel where people need to walk safely and we can't afford decent improvements at this time.





Funding shortfalls and innovation. PBOT has a \$16 million budget shortfall for 2012, and ODOT is dramatically short of funds, and falling behind on maintenance responsibilities. Meanwhile, we still lack complete networks of safe ways to get around without a car. Many economists and transportation advocates are excited about the idea of using pricing signals to improve our transportation system. Congestion pricing, demand-responsive parking rates, street maintenance fees, and internalizing the externalized costs and benefits of transportation modes (for example, the CDC estimates \$1000 in annual health care savings from every active person) are especially promising. What would you do to bring in more money for our transportation needs? Do you support parking taxes, street fees, or demand-responsive parking rates?

Now is not the time to raise fees or taxes. We have record levels of foreclosures and unemployment, and although the transportation needs are great, many Portlanders simply cannot afford to pay more.

I will support consideration of additional revenue sources once the economy begins to improve. If we are successful in reaching our 70% goal by 2035, our gas tax revenues will be drastically reduced. We must find ways to recover the declining revenues caused by the drop in gas usage. The need isn't declining, just the revenues. I ask for your endorsement so I am on the Council to keep my promise.

Choices and public perception. Critics of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects mistakenly contend cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users don't pay their fair share in road taxes and other user fees. How would you make the case for allocating funds and limited street space for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects?

As I have in my first three years, I will continue to vote for allocating funds and street space for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects. I delayed the vote on the \$20 million for surface stormwater projects, in an attempt to "make the case". I answered hundreds of emails, phone calls, and in-person questions on this issue, and I believe I helped inform those citizens willing to listen.

See <http://www.portlandonline.com/fritz/index.cfm?c=49233&a=291397>

We cannot wait for public opinion to agree on the Right Thing, on many issues. With funding for pedestrian, bicycle and transit projects, like funding for the new Office of Equity and Human Rights, I don't vote based on popular opinion, or on the views and interests of affluent stakeholders who might potentially give large campaign contributions. I vote for what I believe is in the best interests of Portland and Portlanders, and for the long term public good. Since I was elected using Public Campaign Financing, I am beholden to all Portland taxpayers and ratepayers, rather than to political groups or affluent donors. I will continue to vote in the best interests of Portlanders present and future, in my second term.

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Cross-department collaboration. There is significant concern about the silos between departments in the city – an issue that has been noted by candidates for years. A recent partnership between the Bureaus of Environmental Services and Transportation to get traffic safety benefits through smart sewer investments became very controversial. What would you have done differently? Where the goals of PBOT overlap with the goals of various other departments (for example, sustainability, equity, public safety, parks, water), what would you do to improve collaboration to most efficiently use our resources?

I would have allowed more time for citizens to review the proposal before the Council hearing, and I would not have messaged it as “\$20 million for bicycle improvements.” The project was and is sound. The public engagement and PR was sorely lacking, and I am still paying the price in terms of citizens who remain steamed that they think the Council spent sewer money on bike paths. We didn’t. That would have been illegal.

I have worked hard to collaborate with the Commissioners in charge of infrastructure and utility bureaus, even though I am not assigned to a development bureau. I have established constructive relationships with Commissioners Fish and Saltzman, the two Council members who will be serving in 2013. Both endorse me for re-election. I am the community engagement expert on the Council. I help my colleagues with public process, when they invite or allow my participation. I worked with Commissioner Fish on the bike paths in Forest Park issue, and with Commissioner Saltzman on the partnership between the Bureau of Environmental Services and the Office of Healthy Working Rivers. No Council member has previously chosen to embed a bureau inside another – I did so to save ratepayers money, and to make sure Rivers and Environmental Services works together. I’m coordinating the Council’s response on the Superfund, primarily with Commissioner Saltzman and Mayor Adams. I worked with the entire Council to coordinate the downtown Sidewalk Management Plan, one of the signature projects of my first term. If you’re looking for a candidate with proven success challenging silos and getting other members of

Council to work together, look at my record and support my re-election.





Traffic safety. Traffic-related crashes are the top cause of death and injury for Oregonians aged 1 to 34. In 2011, 319 Oregonians were killed in traffic crashes, including 15 cyclists. Pedestrian injuries and deaths are a serious problem in Oregon, with one serious injury a day and one death a week. In 2010, 18 pedestrians died in Portland. Traffic speed is the leading factor in crashes (even above alcohol), and one of the largest contributors to whether a crash is fatal. Is safety the highest priority of the transportation system? If so (or if not) what policy and implications does that have, especially when it comes to slowing cars and protecting vulnerable roadway users? What specific policies and projects would you support to improve safety?

Yes, safety is the highest priority for the transportation system, and for the city and each person in it. I am a retired Registered Nurse. Safety is the most basic foundation of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, along with food and water.

I supported allocating \$2m in federal flexible Regional Transportation funds to basic pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure improvements, instead of the choice of the rest of the Council to spend that \$2m on a downtown bike rental program. Those of us who prioritize safety will do so every time, even when sexier projects are proposed.

Changes in posted speed limits have not slowed traffic speeds in my neighborhood and elsewhere. Structural speed controls such as bumps/tables (and/or potholes/unimproved streets), notifications such as radar informational speed signs, and enforcement work best to slow traffic. Curb extensions are a very effective method of shortening the crossing for pedestrians, allowing more space for surface stormwater management and streetscape beautification, and slowing traffic, and we need more at busy intersections. I have participated in school crossing patrols and in Pedestrian Actions with Willamette Pedestrian Coalition.

CRC highway mega-project. There has been a huge amount of pressure to build the most expensive public works project in the region's history, the five-mile long highway project known as the Columbia River Crossing. Despite being a multi-billion dollar project, bicycle and pedestrian facilities involved are substandard, including an under-highway mile-long path that is mostly only minimum-width and a five-block corkscrew detour into Vancouver, all for a facility designed to serve the next 100 years. The project is diverting billions of dollars from other regional priorities to build an expansion that won't solve congestion. What are your views on the mega-project? What, if anything, will you do to stop funding for this mega-project until it becomes consistent with our biking, pedestrian, and climate goals, as well as our budgetary priorities? Would you work to stop the City of Portland from lobbying for funding for it at the state and federal levels?

I spoke out and voted against the CRC in 2009. The decisions are made by the Mayor and the Project Coordinating Council. I was outvoted, and there isn't a majority on the Council to challenge the positive lobbying for the funding at the federal level. So no, I won't continue to beat a dead horse at the Council level.

As I said four years ago, I support building a bridge, or bridges, that can be funded. The solutions must be sustainable and affordable. I cast the lone No vote on Council on the original proposal, which eventually was rejected as being too big and costly. I am concerned that even the latest scaled down version cannot be funded at the federal, state, and local level. We need the good jobs from bridge-building, and the improved movement of freight, and we need them now. I believe we should build arterial bridges for local traffic, fix or replace the rail bridge, and further downsize the CRC. If my approach had been pursued from the beginning, I believe Union construction workers would currently be building the bridge, rather than spending one million dollars per month on overhead costs, with no measurable progress. I agree with Congressman DeFazio that as planned, the bridge will never receive adequate

federal funding. My friends in the labor unions believe they can get federal, state, and local funding.

I have tended to focus on local issues where I have made a real difference, such as working with Transportation staff to stop waivers of installing sidewalks with new development. Community groups and individuals are doing a fine job of raising concerns about the CRC. I am the only major candidate for Position # 1 who has not stated unequivocal support for the CRC in its current configuration. I realize this isn't the answer you were looking for, however I suggest it's more in line with your position than my opponent's.

Transportation equity. While light rail and streetcar efforts have generally managed to find funding over the past two decades, bus investments have been cut. At the same time, transportation costs are often more than 20% of a household's budget, and many households are too poor to drive to meet all of their daily needs. How would you ensure low-income communities receive equitable investments to improve their access to transportation? How should the Office of Equity influence transportation decisions?

I have begun discussions with OPAL and OLCV to address this issue. The Office of Equity and Human Rights will weigh in, but it's too soon to say exactly how. We are currently in the process of hiring the Director, who will lead a community process establishing priorities and a preliminary work plan. We know the problems and challenges, we are only beginning to look at solutions. I will do so with the community and City staff working in partnership. I believe if I am not re-elected, the Office of Equity and Human Rights will likely be dissolved, or at very least directionless since the two Council champions would be gone. My defeat would squander three years' work building trusting relationships with communities of color and communities with disabilities. The Office of Equity is my project, and I am running for another term to see it begin to effect real changes and improvements. Remember its focus is on race and also on ability/disability, the latter being a crucial element of transportation equity. I established the Portland Commission on Disability in 2009, and I am its champion and chief collaborator.

I live in deep SW Portland, in the neighborhood with the only Title 1 (low income) school on the west side. Transportation inequities experienced in outer NE and SE Portland are mirrored in my neighborhood. I don't just talk about transportation equity as an academic construct, I experience it daily, and I've been working on correcting disparities for the past twenty years.

We must move beyond the expectation that adjacent homeowners can and should pay for improvements in front of their homes. This is an important equity issue because it particularly impacts those with limited financial means.



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Economic development. Portland State University research has found stores adjacent to bike corrals (on street bike parking) have experienced increased foot traffic. Travel Oregon has used bikes as a significant theme in their advertising for tourists and attracting the creative class. Do you see investments in biking, walking, and taking transit as effective and efficient tools for economic development? If so, how forcefully and publicly will you make this case?

Yes. I am on the Visitor Development Fund Board, which works with Travel Portland to attract conventions and other visitors to Portland, and to market Portland. Our light rail system helps attract conventions to Portland. Green industries/sustainable development is one of the target clusters for economic development which the 2009–11 Council adopted in collaboration with the Portland Development Commission. Outdoor apparel is another. It is clear that walking, biking and using transit as a marketable cluster is part of what makes Portland livable and special. I have been vocal and I will continue to speak up in support of this concept. I meet with many visitors each year, with Travel Portland, the Consulates, Sister Cities, and PSU visitor programs. I will continue to do so.

Past accomplishments. Do you have any specific accomplishments improving biking, walking and transit in Oregon or other places?

I worked on the first street improvement in Portland that incorporated a stormwater swale in the right-of-way, as a neighborhood activist. As a Commissioner, see the list in Question 1. Citizens in outer SE Portland credit me with getting sidewalks built on SE 122nd/Ramona, by working directly with transportation staff. It didn't get headlines, but it gave me great satisfaction to have helped neighbors get the improvements they expected, and at the same time improved the process for all future building permits.

Campaign viability. What makes you a viable candidate?

I'm the incumbent. I've done what I promised to do when seeking election, in spending taxpayers money wisely and being the community's voice in City Hall.

I have attended 971 community events in three years – I haven't stopped working 80 hour weeks since my 2008 campaign. People all over Portland know me, and appreciate what I do and the way I do it. Constituents tell me they disagree with my decision on one issue or another, then they continue to communicate and tell me they agree on another matter.

I won in 2008 and ran in 2006 using Public Campaign Financing. Prior to this campaign, I never took more than \$5 from anyone in campaign contributions, and citizens know I am grateful to every taxpayer and ratepayer in funding my win in every precinct citywide in 2008. This year, I am facing a challenger who has raised over \$150,000 from affluent people. Yet I am still limiting my contributions to \$50/person/year, so that when I win, Portlanders will continue to be able to trust that my votes aren't influenced by stakeholders who gave megabucks in the election.

Some say the mismatch in fundraising makes my campaign not viable. I trust the people of Portland, especially in this season where more and more Portlanders are realizing the negative influence of money in politics, corporations as people, and politicians who care more about getting elected than sticking to their values. If not accepting large campaign donations means I lose the election despite my exemplary record achieving results Portlanders care about, then I am willing to lose rather than betray the principles Portlanders elected me to serve. But I'd rather win and continue to work for you.

Anything to add?

Despite any perceptions to the contrary, I strongly support the needs of the cycling community, and recognize cycling as an important strategy in meeting Portland's Climate Action Plan, as well as a healthy method of exercise which many enjoy. If I have been identified as focusing too much on cyclist behavior, it is only because safety is of such importance to me, for motorists, pedestrians and cyclists. Similarly, my opposition to the Bike Sharing Program comes because we must fund basic services first. In this case, basic service means improving our transportation infrastructure.

Thank you for your diligence as volunteers. Community activism and being a pedestrian advocate helped me grow into the person you've come to know on the City Council. Please endorse my campaign for re-election and keep a community voice in City Hall. More information, and join me, at www.Amanda2012.com

