
Councilor Mitch Green

Portland City Council, District 4

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Councilors prioritize sidewalks for Districts 1 and 4 in adopted resolution for the Sidewalk Improvement and Paving Program (SIPP)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Portland, OR – Portland City Council adopted the Sidewalk Improvement and Paving Program (SIPP) resolution yesterday to direct the Bureau of Transportation to construct and maintain sidewalks and alternative pathways while addressing pavement maintenance deficiencies for safety and accessibility.

SIPP was developed to elevate the prioritization and delivery of sidewalks in Districts 1 and 4 which co-sponsors Loretta Smith, Mitch Green, Olivia Clark, and Eric Zimmerman stated in their resolution to ensure more equitable access to vital pedestrian pathways, enhanced climate resilience, and increased safer road conditions.

Chief co-sponsor Councilor Loretta Smith has been a fierce champion for SIPP since its introduction to the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee.

“I launched the Sidewalk Improvement and Paving Program with Councilor Green, Councilor Clark, and Councilor Zimmerman as a practical way to address some of those inequalities at the ground level.”



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Green, chief co-sponsor, was vocal about the importance of keeping the focus of the resolution to Districts 1 and 4 during the discussion about a possible amendment to remove the district specificity.

“How long should southwest Portland wait for sidewalks? Is it 50 years? Is it 100 years? Is it longer? If we don’t put very clear language that says we need to prioritize these neighborhoods now because there has been a lack of investment, we may likely never get there.”

PBOT Director Millicent Williams provided more context that expanded on Smith’s opening statements regarding the long-term impacts of the City’s annexation history and historic underinvestment in east and southwest Portland on the sidewalk and street network. She also confirmed that the passage of SIPP would not prohibit or exclude sidewalk improvements in other districts.

Green highlighted the intersection of equity, safety, and climate as the need for investing in active transportation to reduce traffic injuries and fatalities, congestion, and barriers to transit.

“The urgency for improvements for active transportation in District 4 has never been higher. Having a nimble approach to broadening the definition of sidewalks would help meet the need of residents.” Green suggested paths and protected bike lanes as alternatives to concrete sidewalks in areas where typical sidewalks may not be context appropriate or constructable.

SIPP has heard plenty of support from Portlanders across the city. District 4 residents like Marita Ingalsbe from southwest testified in favor of the SIPP resolution with a clever catchphrase that referenced the Southwest in Motion Plan. “It’s time to SIPP and SWIM.” Ingalsbe brought photos of her neighborhood streets without shoulders or sidewalks to make her point about the poor conditions for pedestrians in District 4. “I’m in support of this project. I would like to support this Sidewalk and Paving Improvement Program and SWIM improvements.”

Green and his staff are developing the ordinance that outlines the financial plan for funding SIPP using \$200 million in bonds which is most appropriate for capital projects like sidewalks. Green has discouraged the use of the Portland Clean Energy Fund to fund SIPP and generated support for using bonds as the primary source. Councilors have also discussed PBOT applying for federal and state grants which are unlikely to fund a project of this scale soon.

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