

From: [Howard Hall](#)
To: [citycouncil](#); [CityRecorder](#)
Cc: [Rachel Alexander](#); [Crosby, Cherrill](#)
Subject: INCLUSION OF REPAIR OF THE CHURCH STREET BRIDGE RAILINGS IN THE PROPOSED BOND: HONORING OUR CIVIL ENGINEER TRADITIONS
Date: Monday, June 13, 2022 5:28:28 PM

Dear Mayor Bennett, Mayor-elect Hoy, Members of Council,

It has come to the attention of individuals in South Central Salem, to the leadership of SCAN, and to folks in Gaiety Hill/BPP NHD, that repair of the railings of the Church Street Bridge (1929) has been dropped from the proposed City Infrastructure Bond.

To enhance support for the bond, I encourage you to restore the repair of the railings of this bridge into the measure.

This is one of the most significant public structures in Salem, and associated with R. A. Furrow and Conde McCullough, a world class engineering team in the annals of civil engineering. R. A. Furrow and Conde McCullough were the resident engineer and designer of the famed Yaquina Bay Bridge (1934-37), the Young.s Bay Bridge in Astoria (1921) and Willamette River Bridge at Oregon City-West Linn (1921). All are celebrated.

Conde McCullough is considered one of the structural engineering geniuses of the 20th century. He lived on SE Church Street, walked along Pringle Creek with Mayor Thomas Livesley. The engineering genius lived in Salem from 1919 to 1946 after founding the civil engineering department at Oregon State University. His designs include over 600 bridges in Oregon and key bridges on the Pan American Highway in Central America.

R. A. Furrow, in addition to his work on the Church Street Bridge and Yaquina Bay Bridges, is the civil engineer credited with rebuilding the public infrastructure of the City of Astoria the Great Fire of December 8, 1922 that destroyed 30 blocks in Astoria and 2500 people lost their homes. Furrow installed one of the first underground utilities systems in the Pacific Northwest.

It borders almost on irresponsibility to seek a major infrastructure bond measure from the citizenry and not include repair of the Church Street Bridge railings, which have been and are crumbling.

Knowledgeable city staff are keenly aware that the balustrade railings are disintegrating, and need upgrades for public safety.

The Church Street Bridge is an integral part of Pringle Park experience, the Pringle Linear Trail, a feature of the Gaiety Hill/Bush's Pasture National Historic District, a gateway to downtown and to Bush's Pasture Park, and to a renowned children's play area on the campus of Salem Health. Two major employers are at the entry of the bridge, SAIF and the hospital. The bridge has been acknowledged as a significant historic structure since 1986, and is frequently photographed for the City's annual Historic Landmarks Commission annual landmark photo competition.

SE Church Street is also a bicycling connection from downtown and South Central Salem to

Pringle Park, the Pringle Community Center, to work, to Bush's Pasture and Deepwood. The bridge is wide, the terrain is ideal for bicycling and the sidewalk on the east side of street (600-700 block) has been intentionally designed for pedestrians and bicycles.

Stylistically, there is no comparative public structure in the City: grand cascading steps into a municipal park, 8 ornate street lamp posts reminiscent of Paris or Chicago, wide walking sidewalks, low arched girders bush-hammered for textual quality, Roman arch balustrade railings, piers with fluted insets, and an overlook balcony into Pringle Creek.

This is a landmark structure. Absence of the repair of the crumbling railings of the bridge in the bond will not help support for the measure. Ignoring such an obvious needed repair undermines confidence in the Council.

I encourage your reconsideration, and ask please for the repair of the railings to be included into the bond measure.

Thank you.

Sincerely yours,

Jon Christenson MURP
City resident