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## Fees could fund street repairs

### Sam Adams seeks input on ways to pay for needed fixes

By Jim Redden 

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Portlanders could be asked to tax themselves to fix city streets, sidewalks and bridges as early as this November.

That's one idea Commissioner Sam Adams will discuss during five neighborhood transportation town hall meetings over the next two weeks, beginning tonight in Southwest Portland.

"Our streets and sidewalks cannot handle the kind and number of vehicles that are on the roads these days," said Adams, who oversees the Portland Office of Transportation. "Unless we raise more money to fix them, the problems will only grow worse."

After meeting with department officials and transportation interest groups for months, Adams has drawn up a list of potential funding sources to discuss at the meetings.

They range from a local gas tax to a sophisticated Street Safety Maintenance Fee that residents and businesses would pay on their water and sewer bills.

Although the City Council could enact one or more of these taxes, Adams said he is leaning toward asking voters to approve them at the November 2007 or May 2008 election.

Adams plans to outline the problems facing PDOT at each meeting. They include an existing \$422 million maintenance backlog that is growing by \$9 million a year. Problems include dozens of high-accident intersections, 127 miles of unpaved streets and 60 miles of existing streets without sidewalks.

Meetings have been scheduled in all parts of town. Some of the time will be spent discussing issues unique to each area, ranging from a lack of sidewalks in Southwest to freeway congestion in Northeast Portland.

All meetings are from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The schedule is: Southwest, tonight, Multnomah Center, 7688 S.W. Capitol Highway; Southeast, Wednesday, St. Philip Neri Church, 2408 S.E. 16th Ave.; North and Northeast, June 26, King Neighborhood Facility, 4815 N.E. Seventh Ave.; Northwest, June 27, Friendly House, 1737 N.W. 26th Ave.; and Central Northeast and West, Monday, July 2, Firehouse No. 12, 4414 N.E. 87th Ave.