

I'm a service dog handler, a tech professional in the data science field by day, and a master's degree student by evening. I spend a lot of time walking around my community and Portland, and recently invested in an e-bike to take advantage of the bike lane improvements in North Portland.

When signing up for grad school, I considered what options were available to me to get to and from class without the use of a car and the hassle of parking downtown. Unfortunately, there were no feasible options that would safely get me from my home, where I work, to class and back in a timely fashion. I work from 8-5pm, and classes start at 6 pm, not wrapping up after 10 pm.

Taking the MAX light rail would be convenient if that were nearby, but extending it to St. Johns would be expensive, take a lot of time, and be at great cost to the much-needed housing along the hypothetical extended line. Biking with a service dog, with laptops and books in tow, would make the commute to class well over an hour, tacking on at least 2 hours to the commute.

I want our legislators to prioritize utilizing the federal funds available by supporting the Frog Ferry pilot project. A ferry would allow me to leave my car at home, reduce traffic's wear and tear on roads and bridges, reduce my carbon emissions, open lanes for emergency vehicles, free up parking downtown for our tourists, and provide a fun way to see the iconic Portland views from the water for when I have guests visiting from out of state like my parents and friends. No one wants to waste their tourism or commute time stuck behind a large semi-truck, we need ways to allow folks to get around and get along outside of the freeway infrastructure.