



Tilikum Crossing: *Bridge of the People*

Portland, OR

Tri-County Metropolitan
Transportation District of Oregon

Top: Aerial view of Tilikum Crossing. Photo by TriMet.

Bottom: Transit facilities at one end of Tilikum Crossing. Photo by TriMet.

The largest car-free bridge in the country, Tilikum Crossing carries trains, buses, streetcars, cyclists, and pedestrians over the Willamette River.

CONTEXT

- Completed in 2015.
- Northwest.
- Urban setting.
- \$137 million.

CAR-FREE, MULTIMODAL BRIDGE

- The largest car-free transit bridge in the U.S.
- Bridge links to and extends the city's network of bicycle and pedestrian paths and enhances the public transit system.

WHAT WAS THE PROJECT DRIVER?

Tilikum Crossing, *Bridge of the People*, was designed and constructed as a car-free transit bridge to alleviate congestion in Portland's transit and roadway systems, expand and **improve transit service** lines, and make getting around Portland and the surrounding region easier by foot or bike. The project has added much needed capacity to the region's public transportation system, with increased mobility between residential neighborhoods, college campuses, and economic centers.

At approximately 1,720 feet long, Tilikum Crossing is the country's largest car-free transit

bridge. It provides improved connections to existing transportation infrastructure such as the Darleen Hooley Pedestrian Bridge, the Eastside Esplanade, and the 21-mile Springwater Corridor trail. Tilikum Crossing includes a 14-foot multiuse path on each side of the bridge that provides linkages to the 300+ mile network of bike paths spread throughout the Portland region.

The bridge features a dedicated right-of-way for the MAX Orange Line, a 7.3-mile light rail line that opened in September 2015 and runs from downtown Portland to Northern Clackamas County. Portland Streetcars share the same tracks as the light rail and provide a circulator route around the downtown. These same lanes are shared with two bus lines and will include a planned Bus Rapid Transit line.

The name of the bridge was chosen with great care. “Tilikum” is Chinook Wawa, an international language used by first Oregonians, and means “people,” “tribe,” and “relatives,” and was chosen because it creates a link to the region’s rich cultural history and native inhabitants.



A view of Tilikum Crossing at night with its lights on. Photo by TriMet.

HOW DID THIS CONNECT THE COMMUNITY?

Tilikum Crossing is an important part of the plan to connect the South Waterfront with the emerging economy of the Central East Side. Pedestrians and cyclists using Tilikum Crossing have their own lanes and viewpoints, with special bike traffic signals to facilitate the transition on and off the bridge. Cyclists and

pedestrians can also access adjacent greenways and bicycle routes.

WHAT WERE THE BENEFITS?



INVEST

Tilikum Crossing has greatly expanded **access to transit** options and **improved transit service** performance. The dedicated lanes have decreased travel times for the bridge’s 23,000 daily users. Congestion has also been eased on other routes, resulting in improved travel times across the region. Furthermore, the bridge provides a more direct route for buses and trains over the Willamette River.



An electronic sign counts the cyclists on Tilikum Crossing. Photo by TriMet.

Project partners expect Tilikum Crossing to be a catalyst for jobs, housing, and local business on both sides of the bridge. The bridge also provides a sense of place using **Context Sensitive Solutions**, with local artists commissioned to design the aesthetic night-time lighting of the bridge—178 LED lights change colors based on the river’s speed, height, and temperature.

Two basalt carvings and a large bronze medallion—gifts from the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde—are incorporated nearby as part of TriMet’s Public Art Program. The east bank has a “sonic dish” art installation that amplifies the sounds of the river.

For more information: <https://trimet.org/tilikum/>