



Grant Park

Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 13102, Portland, OR 97213

To: Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty; Chris Warner, PBOT Director; Scott Cohen, PBOT Program Coordinator; Carlos Hernandez PBOT Traffic Engineer

Re: Pedestrian Safety on NE 33rd Avenue^[1]_{SEP}

Date: Approved by the Board of Directors, October 12, 2021

Dear Commissioner Hardesty and PBOT staff,

Pedestrian safety along NE 33rd Avenue has been a major concern within our neighborhood for many years. Following two crashes between children and cars at the intersection of 33rd and at US Grant Place in 2020 (including one involving a four-year-old who was dragged several yards by a car), PBOT commissioned a traffic study of the NE 33rd from NE Knott St. to NE Broadway within the Grant Park Neighborhood. Our neighborhood association strongly supports the proposed near-term traffic improvements that resulted from this study and look forward to their implementation, as well as more permanent safety measures in the Spring of 2022.

The proposed changes include:

- Remove 20 feet of parking from all corners leading to both intersections at NE 33rd Ave and NE Hancock St and NE 33rd Ave and NE US Grant PI to improve visibility.
- Install bike boxes at NE US Grant PI at NE 33rd and restrict right turns on red from NE US Grant PI to NE 33rd Ave to reduce turn conflicts for people walking and bicycling.
- Prohibit all left turns and through movements at NE Hancock and NE 33rd to eliminate the majority of turning conflicts. This would be accomplished by extending plastic tuff curb into the intersection as an immediate response and explore concrete islands in the future. NE Hancock St would become right turn in and out only at NE 33rd Ave.
- Approach ODOT with the possibility of moving the northbound merge lane just south of Broadway, understanding that it could potentially disrupt the I-84 eastbound off ramp.

We believe these changes will greatly improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists traveling through these intersections, including hundreds of elementary, middle, and high school students traveling to and from Beverly Cleary School and Grant High School, and utilizers of the Tillamook Avenue Greenway. However, we note two further safety issues that are not mentioned in the engineering report.

The first issue is a Signal box affixed to the light pole on the Southeast corner of NE 33rd and US Grant Place. This signal box significantly obstructs the view of the crosswalk on the East side of US

Grant Place to drivers headed northbound on NE 33rd, and endangers pedestrians, especially children, who may be in the crosswalk when drivers attempt to turn right without stopping. **GPNA strongly recommends that PBOT relocate this signal box.**

The second issue is that while the assessment was supposed to evaluate the NE 33rd corridor from NE Broadway to NE Knott St, no mention was made of the two crossings to the North of US Grant Place, at NE Thompson and NE Brazee, both of which directly abut Grant Park. These crossings are of critical importance to the neighborhood, especially for Kindergarten and First Grade children walking to the Hollyrood Campus of Beverly Cleary School (in the Northeast corner of the park), families with young children visiting the playground in the Northwest corner of the park, and Grant High School students. We are particularly concerned about the crossings at NE Thompson, where at least two child versus car collisions have occurred in recent years. **We ask PBOT to consider a pedestrian-activated signalized crossing for this intersection.**

It is extremely common to hear stories of near-miss incidents involving children on this stretch of 33rd ave. I have heard from at least one family that they have given up on biking to school because of frightening experiences on this street. We appreciate the time and effort PBOT is taking to address these issues and ask you to consider these additional improvements to help ensure the safety and walkability of our community.

Sincerely,

Ron Laster, President
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