



Grant Park

Neighbors Association

P.O. Box 13102, Portland, OR 97213

Fall 2026

Congratulations Summer Essay Contest Winners!

In the Summer 2026 issue of this newsletter, the Grant Park Neighbors Association (GPNA), partnering with our sponsor, COOPER Design Build, announced a summer essay contest for incoming 4th and 5th graders who live in or attend school in Grant Park. The theme of the contest was "Why I Love Grant Park." We can now proudly announce our winners! Congratulations to the first-place prize winner, Alicia Cruz G., who receives \$100 cash, the second-place prize winner, Sailor Sheppard, who receives \$50, and the third-place prize winner, Julie Evers, who receives \$25 cash. We would also like to thank the contest judges, GPNA Board members David Richardson, Jill De Rosa, and Steve Haines. We are delighted to reprint the winning entries in this issue and hope you enjoy reading them as much as we did. The essays are unedited and printed as received.

First Place: Reason why I think Grant Park is spectacular

By Alicia Cruz G.

Hi, my name is Alicia, Ali for short, I have lived in Portland Oregon my entire life and I have been going to Grant Park for as long as I can remember, and it is amazing, here are some reasons why.

It is a great spot to play with my friends, like 2 months ago, we played capture the flag and how we got tagged was getting sprayed by a water gun and it was very exhilarating. Also, there is a pool that me and my sister love to go to in the summer and most of my friends go there and it puts a smile on my face!!! Something else that my entire family likes is that it is really close to my house, so it is a nice walk and/or bike ride, me and my family really like to walk so it's the perfect excuse.

When Hollyrood (the school) used to be for kindergarteners and first graders I was there as a kindergartener, it was an awesome school (and playground :). Also, when I was in preschool (I went to small wonders) and we went there to play for recess and it was extremely fun!

When I was a little kid, like 4 years old (and my sister was 7), I used to love it when the sprinklers came on next to the Beverly Cleary statues, and I would love to play in it. One of my favorite memories at Grant is when I was sitting on the dog statue and pretending I was riding it like a real dog. The park is also very pleasing to look at. It is very beautiful and lovely in the spring time. I think it is very nice how Grant has places to play sports like Track and Field, soccer, basketball, swimming and tennis.

I also like that we have so many memories at Grant, part of my life was at Grant Park. I bet a lot of people would be very sad if it went away. My school (Beverly Cleary) has a thing there once a year called the Fun Run and it is really fun and me and my friends are very grateful that Grant lets our school do it on their track or else we would either do it in a place far away that we can not walk to, (because how I said earlier me and my family loves to walk) or have to do it around the school which is not very pleasing.

In conclusion these are the reasons why Grant Park is one of my favorite parks and always has been and always will be.

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UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- September 8, 2026
- November 10, 2026
- January 12, 2027
- March 9, 2027

LOCATION:

Meetings start at 7:00 pm and end at or before 9:00 pm. We are now holding hybrid meetings. The in-person meeting location is Grant Park Church. To obtain the agenda and the Zoom meeting link, go to the meetings page on our website, grantpark-na.org.

MEETINGS:

GPNA holds elections at the Annual Meeting in March. Necessary special or emergency meetings may be scheduled at any time. Meetings are open to the public. If you need special accommodation, please contact a Board member.

GPNA

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Contact the Board at:

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Second Place: My Home

By Sailor Sheppard

My name is Sailor Sheppard and I have the privilege of living right next to Grant park. Whenever I look at it, it feels like an extension of my home. So many wonderful things are inside of Grant park, such as a public pool, a playground, and even Grant high school, where I will go when I'm older. I feel connected to the park in a way that can only be described as love and happiness. Whenever I'm feeling down, I'll look out the window and see a happy family, and it makes me smile. Sometimes I will see a friend playing in the field and I will run out to join them. Grant Park makes it so much easier to have pets because you can take them for a walk or bring them to the dog park. Grant Park has such a safe community that feels like one big family.

When you live by a park like Grant Park, you can play any sport you want and be able to practice anytime because there are tennis courts, a basketball court, and a football field. An experience I've had in Grant Park was when I was sitting in my backyard and I looked over the fence and saw my two friends waving at me. I ran out to join them and we ended up having a fun picnic in the park. It's small things like this that make me so grateful that I live next to Grant Park. I moved into my house in 2022 and ever since I remind myself to be thankful for the privilege that my family gets to have. The community that I get to be a part of is so special because there are so many people including friends, family, neighbors, and so many other nice people. Grant Park will always be my home.

Third Place: My Favorite part of Grant Park

By Julie Evers

My favorite thing about Grant Park is the swimming pool. The first reason is because of the size, the second one is because of all of the things they offer, and the third is about the staff and the location. My first reason is the size. Why I like it so much is because it has two pools. One of the pools is a deep-end that you can dive and do flips and stuff like that in. And the other pool has a very shallow side where you can play in with toddlers and kids like that. The other side is pure for kids, they have a slide and it is not very deep. So all ages can go to the pool. Now about all of the things they offer. First they offer snacks like slushies, popcorn, they also give out pool-noodles and benches to sit or lay on. Second they do lap swim in the deep-end and adult swim if adults want to dive without the kids. And last they provide swim lessons in after hours and instead of having to buy a day pass every day you can buy a month pass. And last is about the staff and the location. First about the staff they always help you, there is always a lifeguard on duty and they are always super welcoming. And now about the location, the location is great because if you live close to the park it is maybe a 10 to 15 minute walk. And there is a parking lot nearby so if you don't want to walk you can always take the car. And now those were the reasons why our grant park pool is so great. Because the things they offer and the size just makes it an amazing out-standing pool.

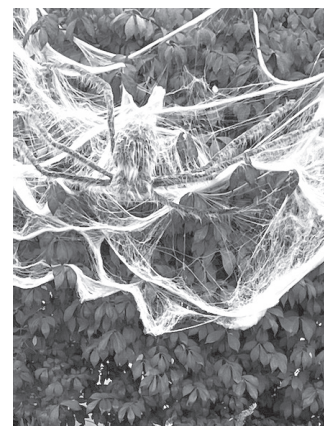
Remember Our Feathered Friends at Halloween

By Carolyn Latierra

This article was originally published in the Fall 2024 issue of this newsletter. With Halloween fast approaching, we thought our feathered friends would appreciate us running it again.

The Grant Park neighborhood certainly puts on a spooky display at Halloween. How lucky we are to live in a neighborhood that puts so much effort into decorating and making fabulous seasonal displays for us all to enjoy. But with Halloween just around the corner, do consider the hazard posed to birds by those fibrous fake spiderwebs that drape and dangle.

According to the American Bird Conservancy, these webs can act like a net trapping and potentially injuring unsuspecting birds. The solution is to keep these webs up against a surface where they are less likely to entangle flying birds, or even better, display the webs on the inside of your window rather than the outside. Our feathered friends will thank you for your consideration.



Contributing to this Newsletter

For information on letters to the editor and how to submit an article to this newsletter, as well as newsletter advertising and advertising rates, please go to: grantpark-na.org/newsletters

What Does an Aging-in-Place Remodel Include?

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Many homeowners love where they live and don't see themselves moving. However, they understand that their home's current layout and features may not suit their needs in the future. Most often, aging-in-place remodels start in the bathroom with no-threshold showers, shower seats, grab bars, and lower vanity heights that can accommodate a wheelchair if needed.

In the rest of the house, we often widen doorways and halls and remove walls to make room for mobility devices. We can even install elevators in multi-level homes. By making thoughtful changes now, you can adapt your home to support your changing needs for years to come.

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UPDATE: Weekly Pop-up Neighborhood Drug Paraphernalia Give-Away Continues

By Demaris Martinez and Antonia Lawler, Concerned Neighbors

Multnomah County Commissioners unanimously passed an ordinance “Establishing Safe School Zones” in alignment with other child safety and well-being guardrails already in place. The ordinance bans mobile syringe distribution within 1,000 feet of K-12 schools and is an effort to keep kids surrounded by age-appropriate experiences while still supporting the benefits of harm reduction. It goes into effect Aug 24th, 2026, but has a sunset date of Jan 1st, 2028, and is intended only as a bridge with the hopes that the State legislature will take over with a statewide bill. Reporting of violations of the ordinance is complaint-driven via the Multnomah County Website (search “Syringe Service Restrictions Near Schools”). While the ordinance itself is a glimmer of much-needed regulation for responsible harm reduction practices, it changes nothing in our neighborhood at large outside of the 1,000-foot school zone. The mobile 45-minute needle give-away provided by Portland People's Outreach Project (PPOP) operating under Portland Health Action Team (PHAT) is continuing every Sunday near the Trader Joe's in NE. In addition to syringes, their drug-related handouts include pipes, drug-cookers, and tourniquets and continue to attract drug users, drug sales, discarded drug paraphernalia and other unfortunate situations throughout the week. The ordinance itself is in response to one of

PPOP's other weekly locations that was next to a school. They were pressured to move after months of organized community outcry and activism. PPOP's willingness to relocate appears to be one-off as they have been asked for several years to relocate from their current NE location. Although their activity directly relates to the use of harmful illicit substances, their actions and lack of oversight are completely legal under current law.

With the positive legislative momentum from the County's ordinance, a bill is being drafted in the Oregon Senate by Senator Reynolds. It reflects this current ordinance, but in the same ways, would not change PPOP's activity in our neighborhood. However, if the Senate included licensed preschools or child-centered locations, oversight of practices, an exchange model, mandatory services etc. it would indeed make a difference in our community. Pushback is anticipated from those who unsuccessfully tried to convince the County Board that there should be no limitations whatsoever to mobile services, even when children are involved. Please share your bill ideas or support by reaching out to our Senator Khan Pham: [Sen. KhanhPham@oregonlegislature.gov](mailto:Sen.KhanhPham@oregonlegislature.gov)

Inner Eastside for All Zoning Timeline Pushed to Winter 2028

By Eldo Varghese, Grant Park Neighbors Association Land Use Chair

After months of anticipation, the City of Portland released its Inner Eastside for All zoning report on July 30. The report was prepared by the Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS), in coordination with the Portland Bureau of Transportation and the Bureau of Environmental Services.

The Portland City Council required the City Administrator to outline the next process for implementation of the new zoning changes (for details, see the frontpage article in the Summer 2026 issue of this newsletter*). This report was commissioned by the city council to include any legal and regulatory barriers for an expedited timeline, since the state requires substantial evidence and analysis to support any local municipality zoning changes. The report outlines infrastructure and transportation needs, a draft public engagement plan, economic and tax impacts, and a proposed implementation timeline.

Compared to the original Inner Eastside for All proposal, the report requires extending the timeline necessary for the proposal to become law. The city's proposed timeline has moved from summer 2027 to winter 2028, primarily because of legal requirements around community engagement and public feedback.

Infrastructure and Transportation

The report proposes addressing infrastructure needs through phased zoning changes and incremental growth, paired with adequate funding and investment. It also recommends alternatives to simply expanding infrastructure, for example, using stormwater management strategies rather than relying solely on increased sewer capacity. The transportation strategy includes parking management, incentives for non-driving transportation, greenway network improvements, transit investments, safety improvements on busy corridors, and Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) strategies.

Affordability and Tax Impacts

The report does not include a full analysis on housing affordability, but it provides a possible methodology for conducting one in the future. Its tax analysis projects significant potential revenue growth. The report concludes that, "over 20 years, the net increase in net tax revenue may be upwards of \$500 million (in 2026 dollars), or 13 percent above unit projections under existing zoning."

The report now sets the framework for the next phase of the project, with detailed zoning proposals, required analysis, and community engagement continuing toward the proposed winter 2028 timeline.

**All past issues of this newsletter are available on the newsletters page of our website, www.grantpark-na.org*

Letter to the Editor

Dear Grant Park Neighbors Association and Neighbors,

On April 15th, the Portland City Council approved a resolution to expedite planning for a new Inner Eastside zoning map, from 12th through 60th from NE Fremont to SE Powell. Many Grant Park homeowners and neighbors felt blindsided and alienated by the council's fast track "Inner Eastside for All" Resolution.

While we recognize and sympathize with the need for housing in Portland, the proposed transition from RM1 (low-scale multi-dwelling) or Single-Dwelling zones to RM4 or RX (high-density/central residential) is a significant jump with many potential negative consequences. There have to be other more scaled-down options to increase housing in Portland that don't involve putting up to 5-story apartment buildings in this beautiful, residential, walkable neighborhood.

The proposed rezoning between 28th and 33rd Avenue, alone, would leave approximately 90 small to mid-size homes on Schuyler, Hancock and Tillamook vulnerable to purchase by developers who, given the proposed rezoning parameters, could outbid any new family seeking to move into a house.

Transitioning from the current low-density zoning to the proposed high-density development brings several distinct shifts across the neighborhood. Scaling building heights from today's modest 30–35 feet up to 65–100+ feet significantly cuts down on natural sunlight and compromises yard privacy for existing residents. Pushing away from required on-site parking down to zero required spots threatens to spill vehicle overflow onto residential side streets, while replacing permeable gardens and lawns with heavy concrete lot coverage increases both local stormwater runoff and the urban heat island effect. Finally, shifting the typical profile from long-term family households to shorter-term, more transient tenancy runs the risk of eroding overall neighborhood cohesion and long-term stability.

Three separate meetings with our District 2 City Council Members (Dan Ryan, Elana Pirtle-Guiney, and Sameer Kanal) were held this summer to clarify the process, hear their views, and express our concerns. Several Grant Park neighbors, separate from the neighborhood association itself, have pulled together to address this rezoning proposal. For more information, go to savenepdx.com

Sincerely,
Michael Murphy
39-year resident of NE Hancock Street

Editor's Note: The opinions expressed in this letter belong to the author. They do not represent the opinions of the Grant Park Neighbors Association which at the time of this writing has not taken a position on the rezoning plan.

Protect Yourself and Your Family During Wildfire Season

By Debra Haines, Grant Park Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET) Member

READY, SET, GO! Ready = Prepare. Set = Pack and Position. Go = Leave Immediately. These are Oregon's three evacuation levels during wildfire season. Wildfires in the Pacific Northwest have changed. Fires are becoming larger, faster moving, and less predictable. As I'm writing this article dozens of large wildfires are burning across Oregon and Washington. The sheer number and size of the fires have led to widespread evacuation orders, highway closures, and significant smoke impacts throughout the region.

Grant Park is primarily an urban neighborhood, so our greatest wildfire-related risks are not usually flames reaching our homes. Instead, we are more likely to experience hazardous smoke, temporary power outages, falling branches during wind events, and traffic congestion if a rapid evacuation becomes necessary.

One of the best ways to protect your family during extended smoke events is to create a clean air room using a HEPA air purifier. Keep windows and doors closed as much as possible. Don't have a HEPA filter? Use the QR code below right to learn how to build an inexpensive and effective box-fan air filter.

Take a few minutes to label your home's gas, water, and electrical shutoffs, and make sure everyone in your household knows where they are and when and how to shut them down safely.

Prepare now for power outages. Keep a fully charged power bank for your phones, a headlamp or hands-free flashlight with extra batteries, and a battery-powered or hand-crank NOAA Weather Radio. When cell service, power, and the internet fail, a NOAA weather radio can become your lifeline.

Although evacuations are uncommon in our neighborhood, it pays to be ready. During periods of extreme fire weather, keep your vehicle's gas tank full or your electric vehicle well charged. Plan at least two evacuation routes and keep a paper road map in your vehicle in case GPS or cell service is unavailable.

Every member of your household including pets should have a 72-hour Go Bag. Include medications, important documents, copies of identification and insurance cards, high-calorie snacks, chargers, a hands-free flashlight, toiletries, extra clothing, sturdy shoes, and at least one N95 mask per person. And finally...water. Pack plenty of it. Then add a little more.

Sign up today for emergency notifications through PublicAlerts.org. Download the FEMA app for official emergency alerts and local updates. Other excellent apps include WatchDuty for wildfire information, OregonAir for Oregon-specific air quality monitoring, and AirNow for official smoke and Air Quality Index (AQI) information.

This QR code takes you to an online tutorial from the Oregon Health Authority that shows you how to build a box-fan air filter.



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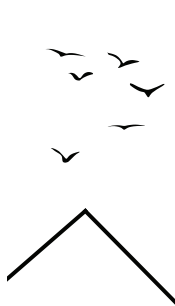


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For the Good of the Order: Mind the Signs

By Pamela Plimpton, Grant Park resident since 1980 and professor of English, emerita

As a faculty member at a small university, I always enjoyed the last item listed on our faculty meeting agendas: “For the good of the order.” After the other agenda items had been covered, the meeting would close with an invitation for anyone to offer up something to the faculty community “for the good of the order.” These announcements reminded all of the faculty that despite our differences of opinion on how to navigate the processes involved in teaching in a liberal arts institution, we all had the same goal: educating our students. It is in that same spirit that I relate an experience I had and some observations I’ve made that I hope will contribute toward the good of the order of the Grant Park neighborhood and its immediate neighbors.

As I walked by the tennis courts in Grant Park, I saw a youth about thirteen or fourteen years old riding his skateboard inside the fenced off tennis court. There is a sign outside the door leading onto the court that states, “No Skateboarding” among other prohibited activities. I sighed. Should I say something to this young man? I looked up to see a single woman with her tennis racket slung over her shoulder standing outside the gate at the other end of the court. She was watching the young man warily. I had already passed the gate nearest me, but when I saw the woman, I turned around and went inside the court. I kept my distance from the skateboarder, and, raising my voice I called:

“Excuse me! There is no skateboarding on the tennis courts!” There was no response from the young man. He kept skateboarding; his longish blond hair partially covered his face. I called to him again: “The sign says ‘No Skateboarding’. It ruins the surface of the courts,” I offered. This time he replied, saying calmly,

“I’m not going to be here very long. I’m just waiting for my friends.”

“How long you’re going to be here isn’t the point,” I responded. “The problem is that skateboarding on the court surface ruins it.” The young man kept skateboarding. Then I heard a voice behind me,

“Get off the **** court!” I turned around to see a man about six feet tall, probably in his mid-thirties, about half my age. “Get off the court!” he yelled again, walking up to stand beside me inside the court. “Look,” he continued, “I was a skateboarder too. It’s cool, but when you skate in places you aren’t supposed to, it gives skateboarding a bad rap. Now get off the court!” The young man finally stopped skating, flipped his skateboard up, and walked past us off of the court, but not without saying, “I’ll just come back here tomorrow.”

I thanked the man for his support, and we went our separate ways. When I told my husband about the incident, he remarked he wasn’t surprised that the skateboarder had paid no attention to the sign posted that prohibited skateboarding on the tennis courts. “Why would we expect a teenager to read and follow the directions given on a sign, when he probably sees adults ignoring signs every day? Every day I see people ignoring the speed limit. They speed through the neighborhood streets; they don’t come to a full stop at a stop sign. There are probably plenty of other examples I can’t think of. Children and teenagers witness their parents and other adults ignoring posted signs every day.”

I had to admit he was right. The speeding had gotten so bad on our street--a greenway for bikes--that following a monitored speed check of several months, the city installed speed bumps. That’s a lot of tax dollars to spend just to get people to slow down and do what they should be doing anyway if they would just read the signs and follow the directions. It benefits all of us, not just economically, but communally, to do what is best--for the good of the order.

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Portland Gas Leaf Blower Phase-Out

By Tamara Olcott, Quiet Clean PDX

The Portland City Council unanimously voted in 2024 to phase out gas leaf blowers in order to improve public health and the quality of life in Portland for landscape workers and residents.



“Effective January 1, 2026, no owner may allow the operation of a gasoline leaf blower on the owner’s property from January 1 to September 30. It is a violation for any owner to fail to comply with this Chapter.”

Currently, the ban is for 9 months of the year. The year-round ban on gas leaf blowers begins in 2028. For more information on the gas leaf blower ordinance, please visit www.portland.gov/glb. To report a gas leaf blower use violation, use the on-line complaint form (<https://www.portland.gov/ppd/noise/noise-concerns>) or call 311, the City Helpline. Unless a hearing is convened, which is unlikely, your complaint can be anonymous.

Thank you for helping to achieve a quieter, cleaner, and healthier Portland.

NE Knott Street Speed Cushion Installation Delay

By Susan Weedall, Member, Grant Park Land Use Committee

I would rather be celebrating the completion of traffic calming measures on NE Knott St. Instead, I am writing to let readership know that the speed cushion installation process for NE Knott between NE 21st and NE 34th Avenues has again been delayed and is now projected to be installed in mid-September.

Why the delay? The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) was originally scheduled to build the speed cushions using their Maintenance and Operations crew sometime during this past spring or summer. Toward the end of July, Maintenance and Operations let PBOT Project Coordinator Ashley Lopez know they did not have capacity to complete the Knott St. project this season. Ms. Lopez then established the procurement process to refer the work to an outside contractor. As of press time, the contractor is projecting a start time for construction in mid-September. Ashley also let me know that construction will occur as long as temps stay above 60, and the pavement stays dry. The construction window usually stops around mid-October. Let’s all hope for optimal weather to get this done!

When the project does happen, property owners along NE Knott will be getting a paper notice at least 48 hours before construction with additional details and contact information. Contractors will be shutting down Knott one block at a time in order to safely construct the speed cushions. Construction hours will be between 9 am and 3 pm. PBOT will need to remove street parking in the area of work, along with the street closure, to complete the construction. The entire project should take 3-5 business days.

Questions? Please contact the Grant Park Land Use Committee at gp.landuse@gmail.com



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Beverly Cleary Fountain Turned Off Indefinitely

By Stacey Tipp

One of the most fun things to do on a hot day in Grant Park is to visit the much-loved fountain at the Beverly Cleary Sculpture Garden. Located right by the children's playground, the fountain is a treasured part of our prized park and has entertained the youngest park visitors and their families for years. Sadly, this summer, despite some swelteringly hot days, the fountain was turned off and has a sign posted stating that it will be closed indefinitely.

Upon learning of the fountain closure, the Grant Park Neighbors Association (GPNA) made a concerted effort to get the fountain turned back on. Through word of mouth and a campaign on Nextdoor, it encouraged (and still encourages!) neighbors to use the 311 Parks Maintenance Reporting Form to give Parks their thoughts on the closure. Go to <https://www.portland.gov/parks/report>

The GPNA also enlisted the help of District 2 Councilor Dan Ryan, a former Parks Commissioner, writing a letter stating the case for the water to be turned back on. GPNA also sought advice and help from PPS School Board Member and community advocate, Virginia La Forte, as well as raising the issue with our coalition, the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods.

What we have found out from the Parks Department is this: apparently, the fountain was turned off by Parks at the direction of the Oregon Health Authority (OHA). The OHA ordered the fountain turned off because it does not meet minimum public health and safety standards at this time. The kids playing in the fountain is a problem because they've been using a decorative fountain for non-decorative purposes, and non-decorative splash pads and interactive fountains have very serious regulations regarding water recirculation, treatment, filtering, etc. Making the full upgrades necessary for the fountain to meet state code for being designated as interactive vs. decorative will cost thousands of dollars. This obviously won't be happening because of the existing \$747 million unfunded Parks maintenance backlog.

However, there does seem to be a solution (!). The water can be turned back on if a sign is placed at the fountain stating that it is decorative only and not designed for swimming/ wading/ingesting, and discouraging kids from playing in the fountain. At the time of this writing, the Parks Dept. is apparently working on this signage solution, but the water remains off.



This is all a bit confusing to say the least. For starters, you can't actually swim in the Beverly Cleary fountain unless you're a frog or a ladybug! Also, if the water is turned back on, are park rangers going to be harassing and ticketing toddlers if they try to play in the water? All very perplexing and discouraging indeed! Please help keep up community pressure on Parks to turn the water back on. Even if this Summer is a complete bust, the kids surely should have their fountain back for next year.



Susan K. Shepperd, Graphic Design

Graphic design by a human for humans

www.sksdesign.net