



Grant Park

Neighborhood Association

P.O. Box 13102, Portland, OR 97213

Spring 2025



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Neighborhood Association

Stronger Together: How Building Community Can Create Real Change

By Deanna Indie Roberts. Indie is from Meridian, Mississippi and works in Portland at the Ronald McDonald House as a Programs Coordinator.

It seems like every day, there is more breaking news and tragedy occurring. This can feel overwhelming, and for many, it can feel like there is nothing we can do to fix everything that is broken. In today's world, rapid change and division can leave us feeling uncertain about the future. From political unrest to economic instability to social justice crises, there are so many issues today that can leave us feeling powerless.

However, there is something we can do. History has shown us time and time again that collective action can make a difference, and that difference begins with building communities of people who believe in and help each other. Communities make up a foundation where we can build toward progress and hope together. I may not be able to stop wars, but I can make sure my neighbor has a warm meal after an illness. I may not be able to fix immigration laws, but I can make sure the people on my street do not go without what they need when they are in need. I can make a difference where I see a need.

I am from Mississippi, and I have enjoyed my time in the Grant Park neighborhood because it reminds me of the kind of community I knew at home. It makes the world feel less scary when I know the people on my block, when I know we are looking out for each other. Building connections right on my street made me believe this kind of change is possible.

Communities can help make us feel less alone and contribute to a sense of belonging. When individuals come together around shared values and goals, they can create meaningful change in many ways. One example is the pooling of resources and skills to help communities become more self-sufficient. While it can seem impossible, taking small steps to reach out to others and organize small, positive changes for our own neighborhoods can add up to the hope and change our world needs.

While the world may feel unstable, the power to create change lies in our ability to build strong, connected communities. By fostering unity, supporting each other, and taking collective action, we can navigate these unsettling times and create a more just, equitable, and hopeful future.

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

- **March 11, 2025** (Annual Meeting)
- **May 13, 2025**
- **September 9, 2025**
- **November 11, 2025**
- **January 13, 2026**
- **March 10, 2026**

LOCATION:

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

EXECUTIVE BOARD:

President:

Molly Hamill

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Vacant

Secretary:

Vacant

Treasurer:

David Richardson

Land Use Chair:

Neon Brooks

Newsletter Editor:

Stacey Tipp

At Large:

*Jill De Rosa, Ari Grubner,
Tess Ipsen, Bikram Vaidya,
Miro Wesener, Jake Wicks*

Contact the Board at:

general@grantpark-na.org



Grant Park

Neighborhood Association



SUBSCRIBE

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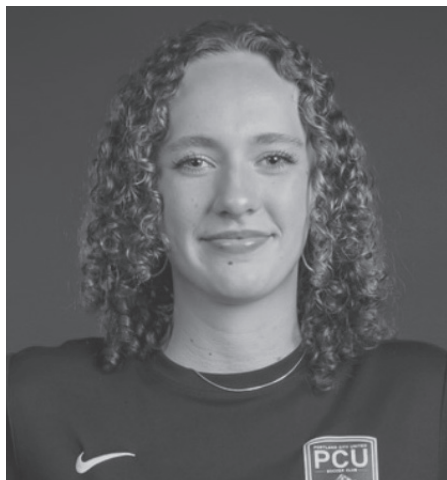


Board Updates

By Stacey Tipp

The board of the neighborhood association has again seen some changes. Our Treasurer (and former Secretary) Kara Caselas has resigned from the board. Kara will be succeeded as board Treasurer by David Richardson, who was profiled in our Winter 2024 issue. Vice President Ramona Perrault, who also served as the chair of our livability committee, has also resigned. Also leaving the board is our website manager and technology committee chair, Mary Artz. We would like to thank Kara, Ramona, and Mary so much for their hard work and friendship over the past several years. You will be sorely missed.

We also have a new at-large member, Tess Ipsen, profiled below. We have been trying to recruit a school representative for many years now and were delighted when Tess joined the board at our last board meeting.

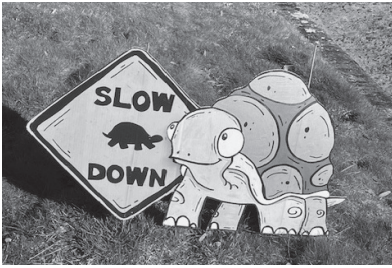


Meet Grant High School Rep, Tess Ipsen

Hi everyone! My name is Tess and I am a Junior at Grant High School, graduating 2026. Soccer is my biggest passion, and I play for both Portland City United and the Grant Women's Varsity team as a center back. In spring, I run for the Grant track team as a sprinter. When not playing sports, I am constantly baking treats to give to friends and family. After graduating, I hope to pursue a major in pre-medicine while participating in club soccer. I am super excited to join GPNA as a Grant student representative. Aside from being able to update the board on current school events, I hope to improve neighborhood life for high schoolers, advocate for the resources of student athletes, and help create events that bring the Grant community together. I'm looking forward to working with the lovely members of the board and the entire neighborhood!

Help Improve Safety on a Hazardous Section of NE Knott St.

By Susan Weedall, Grant Park Neighbor and Member of the Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) Land Use Committee



If you were busy over the holidays, you may have missed our call to action to address the unsafe traffic conditions on NE Knott St. between NE 26th and NE 33rd.

Our alert is repeated below. The Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) is keeping a record of how many of our residents report safety concerns, and PBOT uses that data to help prioritize projects. The Alameda neighborhood includes the north side of this stretch of Knott St. The Alameda Neighborhood Association is working collaboratively with the GPNA on this issue and has agreed to publish our action alert in the March 2025 issue of AlamedaPDX, Alameda’s neighborhood newsletter.

URGENT: Help Make NE Knott Street Safer for Everyone

The Issue

A dangerous stretch of NE Knott Street between NE 26th and NE 33rd Avenues needs our immediate attention.

Current safety concerns include:

- Excessive speeding
- Drivers failing to yield to pedestrians and cyclists
- Multiple reported crashes at side street intersections
- Illegal left turns from northbound NE 33rd onto Knott
- No traffic calming measures or protected crossings for nine blocks

Potential Solutions in Progress

PBOT is considering:

1. Installing speed bumps from NE 21 to NE 33rd (proposed for 2025-2027)
2. Adding marked crosswalks
3. Getting suggestions from residents

TAKE ACTION NOW

Your voice matters! Here’s how you can help make these safety improvements happen:

Contact PBOT:

- Call PBOT’s 503-823-SAFE hotline or 311
- Report your safety concerns
- Share specific suggestions (e.g., protected crosswalks)
- Describe any incidents you’ve witnessed

continued next page



Grant Park Church

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*while supplies last

Safety on NE Knott, continued

Key Points to Mention:

- Speeding concerns on NE Knott
- Difficulties crossing safely on foot, bike, or by car
- Support for proposed speed bumps
- Need for protected crosswalks
- Personal experiences with safety issues

Why It Matters

PBOT relies heavily on community input when prioritizing projects. While changes take time, documented

community concerns directly influence which projects move forward.

The Grant Park Neighborhood Association continues to advocate for these improvements, but resident participation is crucial for success. Together we can work to make Knott St. safer for everyone. And, of course, if you're a driver who uses Knott St., remember that it's part of a neighborhood where families, schoolkids, seniors, pets, and wildlife live. Please drive carefully and watch your speed: 20 (MPH) is definitely plenty.

Host Families Needed!

By ACES*

Do you want to make the world a more empathetic place? Now's your chance! Open your home- and your heart- to international high school or college students attending PSU, Pacific International Academy on the University of Portland campus, or other local colleges and universities. Hosting is a great way to share cultures and build international friendships. Everyone should do it at least once! Orientation, 24/7 support, and a hosting stipend are provided. Bring the world home at acescollegehomestay.org!

*ACES - American Cultural Exchange Service, is a nonprofit dedicated to connecting international students with host families in the Portland Metro area.

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 the newsletters page on our website:

www.grantpark-na.org

Better Care for Your Young Trees

By Carolyn Latierra, Neighbor and Volunteer with Friends of Trees

The ice storm of last winter caused significant damage to our city trees, especially the marvelous old large ones. The problems included blocked streets, damaged houses, and crushed cars. Seemingly in response to those losses many caring neighbors planted young street trees.

As the weather warmed, many of you placed green tree bags around your trees. These bags are valuable in providing a long, slow, soaking drink of water through the warm months, two to three months through the hot weather. But the bags are only meant to be used during the first year or two after planting and are not meant to be kept on year-round. The lingering encasement around the trunk, especially if the bags are left on through the rainy season and winter, leads to a moist, dark, low-oxygen environment that damages bark and can cause fungal growth on the tree trunk (see below).



Photo by Eileen Stark

Walking in the neighborhood I have seen far too many trees, including well established, quite large trees, with bags still on them. I encourage you to give your young trees freedom to thrive out of their tree bags.

Another issue regarding young trees relates to providing them with supports for a period after planting. Your young trees can benefit from some gentle support, to help them grow straight up and to avoid damage from windstorms. However, just as with the irrigation bags, mistakes can be made.

One error is to invade the early root system with support poles placed too close to the trunk. Support poles should be placed 18 to 24 inches from the tree. Another problem is using abrasive materials to lash the tree to the stakes. The tree's bark can easily be damaged by hard, unforgiving materials. Garden twine made from natural fibers is appropriate to gently bind the tree to a support pole. Man-made materials are also okay to use if they are wide enough to prevent abrading and have a bit of "give." An old pair of women's tights is excellent for this purpose!

Photo above right shows a poor little tree with extensive bark damage from the unyielding hard plastic material.

Also, the bamboo support pole is placed far too close to the trunk and will damage the tree's roots when removed.

Like green watering bags, appropriate, careful supports can help your young trees thrive. But remember to plant stakes at an appropriate distance from the trunk, to use non-abrasive, gentle materials, and to carefully remove the supports when the trees no longer need them.



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Be a Part of Our Community

Attend an upcoming Grant Park Neighborhood Association meeting:

- March 11, 2025 (Annual Meeting)
- May 13, 2025
- September 9, 2025
- November 11, 2025
- January 13, 2026
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Grant Bowl Updates from the Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA)

By Neon Brooks, GPNA Land Use Chair

In December, the City of Portland held a pre-application meeting to discuss the proposal from Portland Public Schools (PPS) to install lighting at the Grant Bowl, a project financed by community fundraising by the Grant Bowl Community Coalition (GBCC). At the pre-application meeting, PPS and GBCC were informed that a traffic impact study would have to be included in the application.

A traffic impact and parking study have now been completed, and we have been informed by the GBCC that the Type III land use application will likely be submitted by early March. After a 21-day application completeness check, the public comment period for this proposal will open. The public comment period will last for 35 days, concluding in a public hearing. The full land use process is 76 days long; if the proposal is approved, construction could commence as soon as late May. If you would like to be kept informed of this land use process, please sign up for GPNA's email newsletter at <http://grantpark-na.org/contact-us/>

Through community meetings and engagement over the last year and a half, GPNA has built a consensus position

that passed the board unanimously on September 10th and that has broad support from those we have spoken to in the neighborhood. This position supports the lighting project, with specific mitigations on topics including hours of use, noise, garbage and maintenance, large events, parking, and responsiveness to neighborhood concerns. This position was the result of sustained neighborhood outreach and community meetings, and can be found at the top of the "News and Events" page on our website: <http://grantpark-na.org/news-events/> We have been told that the land use proposal is highly responsive to our consensus position, and we look forward to reviewing the proposal in the weeks to come.

This issue of the GPNA newsletter features two additional articles provided by community members on the topic of Grant Bowl lighting and other potential future projects. GPNA is interested in hearing and working with all perspectives within the neighborhood on this and other land use issues. The opinions expressed in these articles belong to their respective authors, and do not represent the position of GPNA.

Grant Bowl Coalition Moves Closer to Field Lights Installation, Announces Major Donation and \$50,000 Matching Campaign

By Stephanie Antipov, Emily Ballou, Trent Carpenter, Gretchen Cole, Jaina Kapranos, Virginia La Forte, Kim McGair, and Miro Wesener

The Grant Bowl Community Coalition (GBCC), a community group that includes Grant High School parents and neighbors, has taken significant steps forward in its mission to install field lights at the Grant Bowl. The coalition expects to submit a Type III Land Use Application to the City of Portland by early March, a crucial step to move the project forward. A public hearing on the proposal will take place later this spring, giving community members a chance to voice their support and learn more about the project.

In an exciting development, the GBCC which began fundraising efforts for the permitting, lighting and installation last fall, is thrilled to announce a major donation from Grant Park neighbors, the Evans family, who have pledged \$50,000 toward the project. But the generosity doesn't stop there—the Evans family has also issued a challenge to the community: if an additional \$50,000 is raised through community donations by April 15, 2025, they will contribute another \$50,000, bringing their total donation to \$100,000 and the overall Evans family fundraising effort to \$150,000! Donations can be made at



grantbowlcoalition.org or email grantbowlcoalition@gmail.com

Combined with additional numerous and generous contributions from individuals and families committed to upgrading the Grant Bowl's infrastructure, the GBCC is well on their way to crossing the halfway point of their \$500,000 fundraising effort. "We are deeply grateful for the generosity of the Evans family and everyone who has contributed to this cause," said Miro Wesener, a member of the GBCC and an at-large board member of the Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA). Miro, who is also a Grant parent and Grant Women's Soccer Team Manager continues, "It's truly inspiring to see how much this means to Grant students and neighbors. This remarkable show of support highlights the deep commitment from the community to make this project a reality."

For years, Grant students have had to travel miles away to fields including Delta Park and Marshall High School to host their home games due to the lack of field

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lighting, regularly missing valuable class time due to early dismissals. The installation of field lights will eliminate this issue, ensuring that games can be played in the evenings at their home field. “The installation of field lights at the Grant Bowl will be a game-changer for our students and athletes. It will create more opportunities for participation, build community spirit, and give our kids a safer, more accessible place to play and compete,” said Trent Carpenter, Grant Park resident, Grant High School parent, and former president of Grant Youth Football.

Beyond benefiting the student-athletes, field lights will allow for additional track access to the surrounding community, making the Grant Bowl a more inclusive and social space for all. “This project is really a gift from the community to the City of Portland and Portland Public Schools,” said Virginia La Forte, a GBCC representative and Grant parent who has lived in the area for 15 years. “At its core, this project is really a relationship builder. We can’t wait for Grant teams to see their friends and neighbors at the Grant Bowl in the evenings, cheering them on under ‘Friday Night Lights.’ In this day and age, opportunities for in-person social interaction are crucial for teens. This isn’t just for Grant teams. It’s for the entire student body.”

As a preliminary step for the Land Use approval process, the GBCC funded a required Traffic Impact Study (TIS), as well as a Parking Study, which was not required by the city. The TIS concluded that surrounding intersections operate well under city operating standards during peak afternoon hours and can easily accommodate evening home games. In addition, parking capacity in the evenings is in the “optimal” range, reaching only 45% capacity during a typical Friday night home basketball game at Grant High School.

With the matching challenge in place, all donations (big or small) will make a difference in meeting this challenge and unlocking the additional \$50,000 match. Contributions can be made at grantbowlcoalition.org where you can also sign up for regular email updates. You can also email grantbowlcoalition@gmail.com for additional ways to facilitate your donation including employer matching programs.

With continued community involvement and generosity, the vision of an upgraded, fully accessible Grant Bowl will soon become a reality!

The Debate Over Grant Bowl Lighting: A Community Concern

By Jacob Wicks, Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) Board Member at Large and Grant Park Neighbor

Grant Bowl is a cherished space, serving as both a recreational area for the neighborhood and an athletic facility for Portland’s largest high school. While there is widespread agreement among student-athletes, neighbors, and park-goers that proper lighting would improve the space, the question remains: how, when, and for whom should it be implemented?

At the center of this discussion is the Grant Bowl Community Coalition (GBCC), a group advocating for lights as soon as possible as a step toward full implementation of the Grant Bowl Master Plan. However, they are not the only voice in this narrative, just the loudest. Which has worried some Grant Park residents as they feel this group does not represent the voices and concerns of the community. There are worries that increased usage from additional lighting will impact the surrounding area without proper mitigation, raising questions about noise, safety, and environmental effects.

To GBCC’s credit, they have worked hard, in conjunction with the GPNA, to address these concerns with varying degrees of success. Unfortunately, the primary safety concern, traffic, continues to be a primary point of contention between GBCC and the community at large. Traffic safety is an extremely important issue for the Grant Park community and has been for some time. While there have been hard fought victories, such as improvements for 33rd Ave at US. Grant Place and Hancock St, traffic safety

concerns persist. This is especially true for US Grant PI, where in 2021 the Portland Bureau of Transportation decided that there were so many cars using the street that they had to reroute the bike greenway two blocks south. Yet, little to no traffic mitigation was done in conjunction with the Grant High School modernization which was completed in 2019 or the Upper Athletic field modernization completed in 2022. These enhancements included a new 1,700-seat gym, 900-seat auditorium, and a renovated upper field which can be lit until 9:30 pm. Meanwhile the student population at the school increased by 45% in the past 10 years, going from 1,481 in 2015 to 2,149 in 2025. Yet, Portland Public Schools (PPS) still downplay their responsibility for the evident overburden on surrounding residential streets that has exacerbated the issue of traffic safety as evident in increased conflict between pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. Now, the ask is for an amenity that will increase traffic during hours of dusk and dark without meaningful mitigation. That is simply not acceptable.

PPS is currently grappling with severe funding challenges, leading to the postponement or downsizing of essential safety and modernization projects. With potential staff reductions looming and many school buildings—such as Beverly Cleary School, which serves 553 children aged 5 to 14 in an unreinforced masonry structure

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The Debate Over Grant Bowl Lighting, continued

highly vulnerable to seismic risks—facing critical safety concerns, is now the right time to prioritize stadium lights and seating? These upgrades are part of a \$79 million request for athletic enhancements in an upcoming bond measure, raising questions about whether such spending should take precedence over urgent safety needs. Furthermore, why are Grant Bowl enhancements included in the bond when the PPS board's Fall 2024 agreement stipulated that the GBCC would fund the lights through donations?

As this conversation continues, it is essential that all voices are heard and that any decisions reflect the needs of the entire community, not just one group. Thoughtful planning and responsible allocation of resources will

ensure that Grant Bowl remains a safe, welcoming, and sustainable space for all.

The views and opinions expressed in this op-ed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the official policy or position of any institution, organization, or governing body including the Grant Park Neighborhood Association. The information presented is based on available data and the author's interpretation, and readers are encouraged to conduct their own research and engage in informed discussions.

If you see any traffic concerns, anywhere in Portland, you are encouraged to call 503-823-7233 (SAFE) or email safe@portlandoregon.gov

GRANT PARK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

ON BEHALF OF



WE'RE COLLECTING

Date: Saturday, April 5, 2025

Time: 9AM - 12PM

Location: Grant Park Church Parking Lot
2728 NE 34th Avenue, Portland 97212



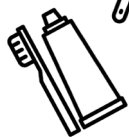
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Will The Gordon's Building Go to Auction on March 31st?

By Neon Brooks, Grant Park Neighborhood Association (GPNA) Land Use Chair

The former Gordon's Fireplace Shop at 3312 NE Broadway has been a thorn in the neighborhood's side and an embarrassment to the city for nearly a decade. Since I joined the GPNA in 2016, hopes that the building would be developed into shops or much-needed housing have surfaced and resurfaced, only to be dashed again and again.

After averting a city foreclosure in September, the property was foreclosed on by the lender and it went to a court-appointed receiver for sale in October. Accordingly, the property was set to be sold at auction in late January. However, the Willamette Week has reported that one of the building's owners, Tom Boyce, filed objections to the auction, causing it to be rescheduled for March 31st-April 2nd. The auction is listed on the real estate site Ten-X (<https://tinyurl.com/gordonsfireplace>) with a starting bid of \$225,000, although the minimum bid could change; Boyce has invested over \$2.7 million in the property and Willamette Week reporter Nigel Jaquis has told GPNA that Boyce is legally owed a hearing to argue for a higher minimum price.

The photos on the auction site show the building to be in surprisingly good shape on the inside; while we understand the building likely needs some seismic work, it has real potential to be an asset to the community. The GPNA encourages neighbors to spread the word about the auction opportunity: a local owner who is committed to the community could do a lot of good with this property, should the sale come to fruition.