

Sept. 8, 2017

To: Mayor Ted Wheeler;
Commissioners Nick Fish, Amanda Fritz, Dan Saltzman & Chloe Eudaly;
Officer Rob Foster

RE: Street racing Overlook



Dear Mayor Wheeler, et al.,

Residents of the Overlook Neighborhood in North Portland request that you take immediate steps to eliminate street racing that occurs on Swan Island and surrounding streets. These activities are dangerous to residents and travelers as well as disruptive to the neighborhood.

Swan Island, N Going Street and N Greeley Avenue all have seen a troubling increase in the incidence of street racing during the past few months. They race up and down streets in excess of the posted speed limits, rev engines and spin tires and tag property. The noise, smoke and exhaust travel far into the neighborhood, disrupting what should otherwise be peaceful evenings and weekends.

Residents, workers and business owners all worry about their safety and property damage. How long until a pedestrian or bike rider is struck by a reckless street racer? Even if such a tragedy never occurs, health concerns are particularly acute for residents who have respiratory issues and are forced to breathe acrid fumes of burning rubber and excessive vehicle exhaust. This comes on top of the already compromised air in North Portland that remains after the Legislature refused to regulate old, dirty diesel trucks.

SM Anderson Co., a business in Overlook, was forced to hire armed security guards to patrol in the evening over the Labor Day weekend to prevent vandalism and other damage to their property. It should never have come to that. City law enforcement should have intervened to prevent such illegal and dangerous activities long ago.

Some residents have sought assistance through the police non-emergency line, but they have received little response and no effective response.

Members of the Overlook Neighborhood Association therefore voted overwhelmingly to reach out to you in the hopes that some action can be taken to discourage street racing. Additional patrols, arrests and prosecution of violators, installing traffic calming devices, and collaborating with the neighborhood on other measures all have low cost but potentially tremendous benefits.

Please do not delay any longer addressing this public safety danger in the Overlook Neighborhood. If you have any questions or wish to discuss opportunities to collaborate on ending street racing, please contact me at chair@overlookneighborhood.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Christian J. Trejbal".

Christian Trejbal
Overlook Neighborhood Association, Chair