

FROM The Getting There Together Coalition, GTT



DATE: September 6th, 2022

RE: USDOT Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) 2022 Grant Application:  
NE/SE 122<sup>nd</sup> Avenue, Portland, OR

Dear Safe Streets for All Review Team:

I am writing with strong support for the City of Portland's Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Implementation Grant application that will enable safety improvements on NE/SE 122<sup>nd</sup> Avenue. Currently, high travel speeds, a mix of transportation modes, and auto-oriented design on this wide arterial street contribute to traffic safety issues that disproportionality impact vulnerable road users.

The street is one of the busiest and most important corridors in East Portland. Over six miles in length, 122<sup>nd</sup> Avenue serves as a critical backbone for many neighborhood centers in district. It provides important travel connections to essential jobs, services, and other community destinations. Additionally, many underserved communities live and work nearby, as the street intersects one of the most racially and ethnically diverse areas in the city and the state.

122<sup>nd</sup> Avenue is designated as a "high crash corridor" for pedestrians and people biking or driving, meaning it is on the top-30 list of corridors in Portland with the highest number of severe crashes. Many intersections also have high crash rates. Substandard infrastructure for non-auto modes—like narrow bike lanes that conflict with turn lanes at major signalized intersections, narrow and substandard sidewalks, and pedestrian crossings that are too far apart—creates a difficult and stressful environment for people walking, biking, rolling, or accessing transit.

Specifically, we see that many transit stops do not have benches or other amenities, which makes 122<sup>nd</sup> less usable/comfortable/functional for those that use transit, bike, or roll in the avenue. It is crucial to invest in improving transit stops to attract more people to utilize public transit. In addition to the maintenance and upkeep of stops, the trip to set spaces must feel comfortable for pedestrians. 122<sup>nd</sup> is less attractive to pedestrians because there is limited vegetation and trees. Moreover, the distinct lack of shade is worsened by the size of the pedestrian boundaries. The average distance between pedestrian crossing improvements, i.e., signals or pedestrian islands, on 122<sup>nd</sup> is 935 feet (about 4 blocks) and it sustains a car-centered and hostile environment. Between 2015-2021, 16 people lost their lives to

transportation violence on 122nd. Six were pedestrians, one person was biking, and nine were people driving. 122nd must provide safety and convenience to the diverse population that it serves.

GTT fully supports the proposed safety improvements that will improve conditions for pedestrians, and people biking and taking the bus, and that will reduce high vehicle speeds. The improvements will help to address the current issues on 122<sup>nd</sup> Avenue and increase safety for all modes, especially vulnerable road users in a high-equity area of Portland.

For these reasons, I ask that you approve this application.

Sincerely,

Ariadna Falcon Gonzalez, on behalf of the Getting There Together Coalition