

# Whereas

*Whereas,* Flanders Crossing, a pedestrian and bicycle bridge spanning Interstate 405, connects two iconic Portland neighborhoods – the Pearl District and the Northwest District – by reconstructing the historic street grid in Northwest Portland via NW Flanders Street; and

*Whereas,* the name Flanders Crossing honors the historic Flanders name, celebrates the Alphabet District’s east-west street grid, and eases wayfinding for travelers in the area; and

*Whereas,* Ned Flanders, a beloved cartoon character in modern cultural history and created by Portland native and Lincoln High School graduate Matt Groening, has been featured on the ground-breaking The Simpsons TV show since its premiere in 1989 and is named after NW Flanders Street in Portland, Oregon; and

*Whereas,* Ned Flanders has been a quintessential emblem of good neighborliness for over 30 years, keeping his cool and trying his best to be a good neighbor even when confronted with his rather difficult neighbors, the Simpsons; and

*Whereas,* Ned Flanders is always willing to give a warm “hi-diddly-ho” to his “neighborinos” and is more likely than not to respond to a request with a hearty “okily-dokily!”. He is willing to do this even for the Simpson family, with whom he shares little in common in terms of political philosophy, religious belief, or overall temperament; and

*Whereas,* at a time when people seem more divided than ever along political or cultural lines, and less and less willing to even talk to their neighbors with whom they may disagree, we believe Ned Flanders is a symbol of the kind of neighborly connection we should strive for in Portland; and

*Whereas,* just as Flanders Crossing connects two neighborhoods together across a physical divide, the bridge serves as a symbol of bringing neighbors together across whatever divides them; and

*Whereas,* despite many unofficial Simpsons-related Portland locations, there has yet to be an official honor of the show and characters that have referenced our city for decades; and

*Whereas,* the Portland metro area has had a thriving comics and animation scene for decades and is home to comic book companies like Dark Horse Comics, Oni Press, Image Comics, and Microcosm Publishing, as well as animation studios like Will Vinton Studios, Laika Studios, Hinge Studios, and Shadowmachine; and

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*Whereas*, by naming the Flanders Bridge after Ned Flanders, we will not only be honoring the cultural phenomenon that is *The Simpsons*, but also the creative spirit that has animated Portlanders for so long and will continue to do so long into the future.

*Now, therefore*, I, Ted Wheeler, Mayor of the City of Portland, Oregon, the “City of Roses,” do hereby proclaim Flanders Crossing to be henceforth named

## *Ned Flanders Crossing*

In Portland and encourage all residents and visitors to walk, roll, and stroll to visit one of our city’s new, iconic bridges.