

Near-term Corner Improvement Priorities for NW Parking District Stakeholder Advisory Committee Review

July 9, 2025

Background

This document outlines how PBOT Transportation Planning staff reviewed and prioritized near-term corner improvements, including curb ramps, curb extensions, and possibly pedestrian scale lighting. PBOT has been collaborating with BES to add curb extensions and other improvements with significant cost savings by combining with [BES' Lower NW Sewer Capacity Project](#). PBOT has allocated funding for this PBOT and BES partnership, including a 2023 project development effort known as the [NW 21st & 23rd Intersection Enhancement Project \(IEP\)](#). Additional funding has been allocated for the design and construction of curb extensions and pedestrian scale lighting over several years. The BES Lower NW Sewer Capacity Project has since been delayed and PBOT is now recommending near-term improvements within the BES Lower NW project area.

What corners and intersections were considered for near-term improvements?

- NW 21st/23rd intersections between Johnson and Flanders
- Temporary curb extension locations in the BES Lower NW Project Area
- Other intersections in the BES Lower NW Project Area
- 23rd & Kearney was given special consideration based on SAC feedback and because it lies just outside of the BES project area and is outside of the streetcar project area

Criteria

- **NW 21st/23rd Intersection Enhancement Project (IEP) Locations:** NW 21st and 23rd have been prioritized by the community and the SAC for the BES project leverage opportunity and PBOT has already done analysis and public outreach related to 21st and 23rd avenues. NW 23rd Avenue has newer ADA ramps while NW 21st Avenue has no curb ramps at all in several locations.

- **No ADA ramps:** PBOT staff focused on corners with no curb cut on at least one leg of the corner. Corners and ramps that were older and substandard were not flagged with “no ramp” in the accompanying spreadsheet. Our goal was to find the most challenging corners for accessibility to upgrade those near-term and realize the benefits of improved accessibility for pedestrians ahead of the BES project. This prioritization criteria eliminated 23rd Ave intersections from the priority list.
- **Street classification:** Higher priority based on street design, pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic street classifications.

Tier 1 projects meet both of those criteria. PBOT staff included Tier 2 corners that are not IEP intersections, but have missing ADA ramps in case funding allows for further work beyond Tier 1.

Some corners with missing ADA ramps were not recommended in Tiers 1 and 2 due to large trees located in the space where a ramp would be constructed, expensive signal work or lower street classification. In addition, 18th and 19th avenue intersections of Flanders are not recommended due to the need for more project development and the replacement of Zicla platforms (temporary bus platforms).

Additional Context

Lighting

PBOT staff recommended pedestrian-scale lighting in the final IEP recommendations at all the Tier 1 corner locations. The recommended placement of the lighting (on the main street vs. the side streets) was selected to best illuminate pedestrian crossings, marked or not.

ADA Ramps and CREEC Settlement

Due to the Civil Rights Education and Enforcement Center (CREEC) Settlement, PBOT has a commitment to complete 1,500 ADA ramps per year for 12 years (2018-2030). These are built through a combination of capital projects and maintenance work. For example, [NW 24th Ave is being repaved and corners will be upgraded to ADA standards](#). PBOT Maintenance does not typically build curb extensions unless right-of-way is constrained or additional funds are added to a maintenance project to add curb extensions. PBOT will likely wait on paving streets in the upcoming BES Lower NW project area because the streets will be cut open for the sewer and stormwater work.

Opportunity to “test” IEP

With some near-term intersection improvements, PBOT will have the opportunity to test the IEP recommendations out ahead of the larger BES project. With this near-term work,

PBOT will learn more about costs, risks, BES coordination, and other challenges and opportunities specific to the area.

Questions for the NW Parking District SAC

1. Within the Tier 1 priorities, which intersections and corners are highest priority?
2. Does the committee prefer to add pedestrian scale lighting, add conduit only for future lighting, or build curb extensions only for 21st Ave corners and 23rd & Kearney?
3. How does the committee recommend balancing a lower number of high cost projects vs. more low cost projects? Is it more important to build out these near-term intersections as fully with pedestrian amenities as possible, including lighting? Or is it better to get ramps and curb extensions built sooner and look to adding more in the future?