



City of Seattle

Gregory J. Nickels, Mayor

Seattle Transportation

Grace Crunican, Director

December 12, 2006

Governor Christine Gregoire
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

Mayor Greg Nickels
City of Seattle
PO Box 94749
Seattle, WA 98124-4749

Dear Governor Gregoire and Mayor Nickels:

The Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board would like to add our voice to those concerned about the recent vehicle-pedestrian accidents in Seattle. Three people were hit while within marked crosswalks, resulting in one death. These accidents have deservedly received wide publicity. We know that many in the City of Seattle offices knew Tatsuo Nakata, who was killed while walking within a crosswalk in West Seattle. We send our condolences to his friends and co-workers and grieve at the loss of an outstanding young citizen.

Because of these accidents, public attention has turned to the glaring lack of consequences for hitting and even killing a pedestrian who is legally crossing the street, as seen in many letters to the editor, including one from Councilwoman Jean Godden, and this recent Seattle Times article:

http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/localnews/2003460642_bumper04.html.

Our attitude apparently is that pedestrians are responsible for noticing and avoiding oncoming cars. What effect will this have on deterrence and enforcement?

Many drivers are simply unaware that it is a Washington State law that all intersections and T-intersections are unmarked crosswalks (see <http://www.wa.gov/wtsc/law.html>) and drivers are obligated to stop when pedestrians are in or near their lane. This information is in the Washington State Driver's Guide, but is not well emphasized and is easily forgotten after taking the drivers license test, because we do not receive reinforcing messages through enforcement of the law and public safety campaigns. Breaking this law should come with fitting, but serious punishment.

Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board

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The Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board shall advise the City Council, the Mayor, and all departments and offices of the City on matters related to pedestrians and the impacts which actions by the City may have upon the pedestrian environment; and shall have the opportunity to contribute to all aspects of the City's planning processes insofar as they may relate to pedestrian safety and access.

City Council Resolution
28791



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We are not asking for vindictive action against the drivers in these particular accidents. Rather, we'd like the State of Washington and the City of Seattle to take this opportunity to renew our commitment to pedestrian safety with action rather than just words. We suggest:

- An immediate, high-profile campaign to raise drivers' awareness of crosswalk laws and ensure that everyone knows they are state laws.
- An immediate education for pedestrians.
- An immediate education for enforcement officers.
- Enforce “no parking” at intersections.
- A change in the Washington State Driver’s Training Manual that addresses pedestrian and bicycles as shared mobility.

The Seattle Pedestrian Board would be happy to help the State of Washington and the City of Seattle on this much needed campaign.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christine Tachibana". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Christine" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Tachibana".

Christine Tachibana, Secretary
Seattle Pedestrian Advisory Board

CC: Chief R. Gil Kerlikowske, City of Seattle Police Department
Grace Crunican, Director, City of Seattle Department of Transportation
City of Seattle Council