

Public Outreach

The development of the 9th Street Improvement Plan included extensive public outreach efforts for the following purposes:

1. To communicate the purpose and objectives of the project
2. To recruit public's assistance with identification of 9th Street's issues and deficiencies
3. To gain public input into the development of improvement strategies for the Plan

An open house meeting was held on March 4, 2009 at the Cheldelin Middle School, off of 9th Street. The purpose of the open house meeting was to ask the public to identify transportation and land use issues of 9th Street and to provide input into the 9th Street Improvement Plan. The meeting was set up to function as a two-way conduit for the exchange of information between the public and the project sponsors. In addition to the staff, members of the PAC were participating in receiving comments from the public and responding to their questions. The Open House meeting included:

- Display of the project area.
- The purpose of the project.
- Maps, tables, posters and photos that displayed the highlights of the Inventory of the Existing Conditions.
- Handouts and other material on the Inventory of Existing Conditions.
- Several means of providing public comments. These included:
 - Comment sheets that were handed in to the public upon arrival
 - Sticker notes that could be placed on the maps, tables and posters
 - CAMPO's website URL for the review of the projects and its related material and sending emails (the MPO's website and the webpage on 9th Street Improvement Plan have been open to the public for providing comments throughout the year.)
 - Telephone calls and the 'snail mail'. (the office address, phone numbers and webpage was displayed and business cards were made available)
 - Verbal delivery of input to the staff and members of PAC.
- Adequate public notices were given to the public about the Open House Meeting. These were:
 - Newspaper Advertisements. The event was advertised in the Corvallis Gazette Times on Sunday, March 1st and on Monday, March 2nd, 2009

- Direct Mail. All business owners and property owners along 9th Street were identified and more than 800 postcards were directly mailed to them on the Open House meeting.
- Internet. The MPO Website and the 9th Street Webpage included a marquee announcement of the Open House.
- The Garfield Park Neighborhood Association distributed the notice to all its members.

Issues and Needed Improvements

This section provides a summary of the issues identified and the improvements suggested by the public. A complete list of comments received from the public is provided as Appendix D.

Issues Identified by the Public:

What is working on 9th Street?

The public was requested to identify those aspects 9th Street that are working well. Approximately fifteen comments indicated 9th Street works fairly well for vehicles, bikes and bus movements.

What is not working on 9th Street?

The public was requested to identify those aspects of 9th Street that are not working and require improvements. The following was identified:

A. Issues Related to the Study Area as Whole

1. Unfriendly to biking and pedestrian crossing as it is primarily an auto oriented arterial
2. Lack of trees, landscaping and visual aesthetics
3. Overwhelming electric wires and poles
4. Too commercially developed and too many commercial signs

A. Issues Related to Specific Locations

1. Congestion at 9th and Circle Blvd
2. PM congestion at 9th Street and Conifer, turning left
3. Pedestrians crossing between Bed Bath & Beyond and TJ Max?
4. Visual obstruction at NW quadrant of 9th and Buchanan
5. Visual obstruction by bushes in front of Taco Bell

What do you suggest?

The public was requested to make suggestion for the improvement of 9th Street.

1. Improve pedestrian safety (crosswalks/flashing lights/cobblestones/bridges).
2. Improve bike lanes by enhancing their maintenance
3. Install additional transit shelters
4. Plant trees and develop landscaping (aesthetics)
5. Fold in residential developments to improve appearance and create calm
6. Install a raised median planted (a smaller number of suggestions were concerned about the obstruction effect of a planted median)
7. Reduce/consolidate access points (a smaller number of suggestions were concerned about the effect of reducing access to businesses)
8. Follow the principles of “Smart Growth” (mixed use, high density, parking in the rear, small stores)
9. The façades of the front row developments on the Corvallis Market Center should be facing the street
10. Create a break for pedestrians crossing between the Garfield and Circle lights

11. Divert some of the 9th Street traffic onto Hwy 99W
12. Return on street parking to the area around Conifer
13. No right-turn on red at Circle Blvd intersection
14. Divert most of bicycling to Buchanan Pathway/10th Street Bikeway
15. Extend Buchan Pathway, along Hwy 99W, to the Cannery Building on 9th Street
16. Connect the Bike path to the Riverfront bike path

Appendix D

Complete List of Comments

The following is a complete list of comments received through the various means of communication made available to the public. Efforts have been made to reflect the comments as provided by the public.

Response Card Comments

What do you think is working well in how 9th Street is operating?

- Center turn lanes are essential
- Travels smoothly except at Circle and 9th – Traffic
- Traffic flows, lights are mostly timed, access on & off is easy
- Fewer accidents at 9th & Conifer
- No turning from 99W to 9th on Conifer or a stop before turning
- Fewer accidents at 9th & Conifer since no limited turns from 99W
- Generally works as expected, congestion ok except 9th & Circle
- Pavement could stand repair
- Seem to be enough bus stops
- There are bike lanes which are adequate – better than no lanes at all
- For drivers, I think 9th Street works very well
- Generally, traffic moves well
- I like access I have to many parts of town
- Once you get used to using the street, it is easy to get around
- 9th Street works well as an unfriendly car centric linear commercial zone that discourages bikes and pedestrians
- Some civic beautification would help, but increasing the residential component in a few roads would begin to change the use pattern
- Works well as a highway – thoroughfare

What do you think isn't working well in how 9th Street is operating?

- At 9th & Buchanan, NW side of intersection, traveling east, large power volts above ground – obstructs view of traffic coming south bound
- Needs visual improvements
- I am so saddened to see 9th converted to be a haven for chain stores
- The Carl's Jr. downtown is beautiful, flower baskets, stores with attractive signs
- 9th Street is just ugly and unpleasant to drive, walk or cycle down
- Visually unappealing
- Too few trees
- Unattractive signage
- Center lane
- We have no street parking at a private residence, bicycle lanes on both sides of the street took away our resident parking
- Taking away pov parking in residential areas

- Too much congestion at 9th & Circle
- The left hand turn lane is very dangerous, cars going in opposite directions turning left have to really be careful
- If medians are installed, there must be turn lanes to get to the businesses
- It seems that everything about 9th was built to accommodate cars, for pedestrians and bicyclists it is dangerous to traverse and to cross. So dangerous and unwelcoming that, even though I live a block away, I feel like I have to drive to any 9th Street destination. There may not be a solution or perhaps it just has to be designed to benefit vehicular traffic and forget about the rest; but, there should at least be a way to cross 9th (and 99W)
- Pedestrians need to be wary at intersections (esp. at turns by cars)
- Some driveways could be consolidated which neglect businesses (off street)
- Conifer/9th/99 @ certain times of day (e.g. 3:30 pm) is a big hang-up, esp. for left turns
- 61% of accidents caused by drivers not yielding right of way or following too closely. Could drivers pay more attention? (Perhaps not if they are watching for signs – stores, streets, etc.)
- Even the current intense traffic access is failing. Eliminating some access points would help, but adding trees and other amenities would help make the street more appealing
- Not pedestrian friendly – not bicycle friendly
- Too many signs – can't see them with speed of traffic. When I first moved to Corvallis I could not find businesses along 9th street because I could not drive & watch traffic and at the same time look for an address or a sign.
- It is turning into the “Lancaster Drive” (see Salem) of Corvallis
- It is not pedestrian or bicycle friendly
- Bike lane has a lot of debris
- There are few street trees
- Take out traffic circle & Grant / 10th

Please feel free to share any specific suggestions –

- Raised landscaped median
- No traffic circles
- No median plantings
- Need pedestrian lighting, cross walks (like on 3rd street)
- Do not close/restrict any more entrances/exits from/to 9th street
- Use some of the state median property between Conifer & Elk to return vehicle parking on side of 9th street
- No traffic circles
- Talk with Albany planners – they solve problems & make them beautiful
- Pedestrian lights/as south 3rd street
- We can't forget this is a commercial section of town
- It isn't going to look like downtown, some beautification though, would be nice
- Why are the new buildings being built with the back of the store facing 9th? Not very attractive
- Get rid of many access points / drive ways?
- No right turns on red @ Circle and other interchanges?

- Close 9th and Conifer to vehicles? Make this a pedestrian only access? (I love the idea of no left turns from Conifer to 99W)
- Promote greenery of street
- Paint bike lanes orange, especially at busy intersections like Circle & 9th
- Bridge crossing?
- Please factor in trees planted all along 9th street
- Encourage mixed use residential to bring pedestrians
- Have landscape / planter strips in center lane w/ trees – the scale of 9th street is too vast and not of a pedestrian scale. More trees would help & help to slow traffic
- Cobblestone like pavers at crosswalks also help the scale
- Encourage density of buildings on a site w/ parking in back. The vast openness of parking lots is not pretty
- Design standards for buildings & signage crafted to limit the look of chain restaurants & big box stores etc...smaller scale
- Consolidate access onto 9th street

Comments Posted at Stations

9th Street from a Pedestrian's View:

What challenges do pedestrians face on 9th Street? What is working well?

- Pedestrian overpass? (esp. @ Circle)
- More cross walks, like S 3rd street
- Death from crossing – safe or legal, no crossing option available between Garfield and Circle
- “Hollywood” sidewalks that place peds. Next to traffic
- More pedestrian activated lights further north
- Most of 9th is visually unpleasant
- Trees are good
- Not much is working well on crossing 9th street
- 9th should be geared towards shopping, Pedestrians.....there is not much sightseeing to do on 9th street
- Need islands to make crossing safer
- Need more trees
- Not pleasant place to walk
- I walk quite a bit for exercise and transportation
- I always do my best to avoid walking down 9th because it has become a visual nightmare – chain stores, parking lots etc
- Nothing visually appealing

9th Street from a Bicyclist's View:

What challenges do bicyclists face on 9th Street? What is working well?

- The bike path (along 99W) that terminates at Buchanan needs to continue on the abandoned rail line to The Cannery (now Borders & Avery Square).
- I am terrified to ride my bike along 9th street
- I'd like to see protected designated bicycle lanes to accommodate increasing number of cyclists that includes my children
- The bike path parallels 9th on 99 - improve & move cyclists to the path
- Lane going south needs to be widened – Lanes need to be cleaned more often
- How do you connect to bike path along riverfront?
- Enhance traffic laws
- Being visible to traffic
- Dodging driveways
- Traffic that is concentrating on car traffic & not looking for bikes
- Negotiating from east side to west side of street
- Enforce traffic laws
- Follow direction of traffic
- Lighting on bicycles

9th Street from a Driver's View:

What challenges do drivers face on 9th Street? What is working well?

- Investigate ways to move more traffic on to Hwy 99 where it parallels 9th street (Conifer to Cornell)
- No left turns out of driveways
- No left turn onto Spruce for N bound traffic
- Consolidate multiple drives or re-locate existing drives
- Add traffic light between Garfield and circle to open 'traffic gaps' for driveway traffic
- Not enough ped crossing
- Special crossing to new mall
- Slow speed to 30 mph
- Ped crossing – cars making right hand turn onto circle don't look and see pedestrians crossing
- Oftentimes see handicapped people having difficult time
- Bushes by Taco Bell cause blind spots
- 9th Street needs a center landscaped median
- Left turn lane an issue (cars entering from opposite directions is a concern)...put medians in? How will business owners feel about that?
- Don't allow landscaping that blocks view
- Safety issue – people crossing from Bed Bath & Beyond to TJ Maxx – ped & cars
- People run across the street
- Maintaining access for property owners is critical but should accommodate traffic safety also
- Turning out of driveways & crossing both lanes & center turn lane to turn left (against the flow of closest traffic lane) - watching for ped, bike & traffic while doing this
- Amount of traffic creates very little 'gap' between cars (a traffic light timing issue)

- Traffic wasteland for crossing pedestrians between the lights of Garfield and Circle
- Maintaining access for property owners is critical but should accommodate traffic safety also
- There's a nasty traffic jam in the north bound lane at Circle & 9th
- I believe that planting trees would calm drivers on an otherwise unpleasant street
- Please plant trees
- Center landscape islands with trees to bring down the scale to a pedestrian scale & beautify 9th street

9th Street from a Land Use and Development View:

How do parking lots and driveways affect traffic flow?

- Too many properties with multiple driveways
- Need to consolidate, share, reduce, rearrange
- There is a nasty traffic jam at the intersection of 9th & Circle, traveling north at Bi-Mart
- Way too many driveways, need to consolidate
- Establish a few areas of residential along the length of 9th so that it becomes less of a linear commercial gut
- Make 9th all commercial with better access for businesses, fewer drive access means less business, we are losing quite a few businesses now

9th Street from a Land Use and Development View:

How do development patterns impact 9th Street?

- Work harder to convince prop. owners to bring landscaping up to current standards req'd by new development
- Reduce strip mall look/mentality
- The development pattern – linear comm. produces a street that is entirely car centric
- Pedestrians and bikes are not encouraged by the traffic and aesthetic (bad) conditions
- I would like to see an effort made to beautify 9th street. That could be in the form of a sign ordinance, limiting or establishing guidelines. Also, please plant trees and perennials as much as possible. This would improve air quality and aesthetics.
- Please make 9th street pedestrian, bicycle & human friendly – more trees provide shade (Global Warming) and help with traffic calming, thanks!

9th Street from a Mass Transit View:

Does Transit Meet Needs Along 9th Street? Why and/or why not?

- Adequate service but Spartan facilities
- Hey guys, it rains 5 months of the year here, needs adequate bus schedule
- Bicyclists must be included in any plan/solution, they will increase not decrease
- 9th is a main route through Corvallis & where most commerce takes place (and should)
- All forms of transportation should be accommodated
- I've been in business on 9th street for 15 years and can't ever remember a customer coming by bus

- Smaller signs to reduce the visual pollution & keep in mind the lighting to reduce light pollution (lights pointing down – no big neon lights like auto zone)

Concerns Expressed through Phone Calls and Email

- A raised median would cause vehicles to travel longer and use intersecting streets to turn around.
- Improve the hazardously misaligned intersection of Polk Avenues and 9th Street
- Enhance the substandard bikeway on 9th Street by widening to 6 feet width and regular upkeep
- Cross walking is difficult
- Precarious situation for bicycles at intersections of Conifer with 9th Street and Hwy 99W
- Extend the Buchanan Pathway across Hwy 99W and 9th Street to NW neighborhoods
- Unsafe biking conditions on 9th Street

Other Comments, Insights, Concerns

- Purpose of Study should include a fourth objective: To work with current property owners to enhance their business/property & not lose patronage or access while creating a safer, more effective 9th street traffic pattern.