

Dear Mayor and City Council,

Re: CBUF recommends the City Council adopt the recommended landscaped median in the 9th Street Improvement Plan as a first phase. CBUF further recommends that as a second phase a full length landscaped median be adopted as a City Council goal.

Recently the 9th Street Advisory Committee met and reviewed the proposed 9th Street Improvement Plan as prepared by Ali Bonakdar and his staff at the Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO).

The Commission for Civic Beautification and Urban Forestry (CBUF) was represented on the committee by Frank Mauldin, and at our last CBUF meeting he reported on the draft landscaping plan. He expressed concern the plan did not provide sufficient benefits for beautification and traffic calming and that the plan should provide a full length landscaped median with properly engineered median openings for side streets and business access. The Plan also recommended driveway consolidations to improve the traffic efficiency.

After discussion CBUF agreed to endorse the full length landscaped median as a future goal of the City Council.

In the future a full length median will give multiple benefits beyond beautification. First, it will provide a mid-crossing refuge for pedestrians crossing this wide street. At present from Polk Street to Conifer there are only five protected traffic signal crossings, yet many pedestrians find it necessary to cross at other locations. Second, the full length median could also allow the present center turning lane to be decreased in width allowing the bicycle lanes to be increased in width from five feet to anywhere from six to eight feet.

Should the City Council approve the goal of a full length median design it will greatly enhance the attractiveness of the street and will calm traffic, as many cities have experienced. Also it will encourage more destination pedestrians and bicyclists to use 9th Street thus achieving an important City sustainability goal.

Regarding the possible concerns of businesses along 9th Street that additional landscaping will negatively affect their business, it has been shown in other cities that beautification and traffic calming will only serve to enhance their business. The information presented to the last 9th Street Advisory Committee by Ali Bonakdar confirms this result.

CBUF's mission is to promote beautification of the city. However, we realize beautification of 9th Street will not be a small undertaking, as you well know. However consider the city beautiful movement promoted at the 1893 Worlds' Fair in Chicago. The fair's chief planner and architect Daniel Burnham said: "Make no small plans, they have no power to stir peoples' souls."

Sincerely,
Helen Ellis, Chair CBUF

Linn-Benton

COMMUNITY COLLEGE

October 30, 2009

Mr. Ali Bonakdar
Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
301 SW 4th Street #140
Corvallis, OR 97333

RE: 9th Street Improvement Plan

Dear Mr. Bonakdar:

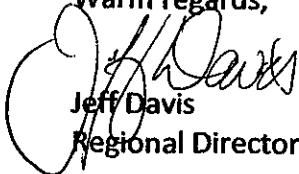
Thank you for providing information to local businesses about the proposed 9th Street Improvement Plan. As representative of Linn-Benton Community College in Benton County and Director of the Benton Center, we share an interest in balancing the commercial viability of our neighborhood with the livability that makes this location so important to our instructional mission. The ease of access to our location from 9th Street is especially significant given the high volume of instruction provided here, and it is important that this access not be decreased.

Based on our reading of the proposed plan as it relates to the portions impacting 9th Street between Polk and Buchanan streets, we submit the following concerns:

- During periods of peak traffic, we regularly observe as many as 5-7 vehicles queued in the southbound center turn lane preparing to enter Polk from 9th Street. The improvement plan as written would prevent this from occurring while often halting traffic in the left through lane, which in turn will decrease traffic flow and may increase the likelihood of accidents.
- The pedestrian cross-walk at 9th and Polk is well situated for the high volume of pedestrian traffic that originates from the southwest of our location. Many of our students are dually enrolled at Oregon State University in the Degree Partnership Program and many reside in living groups located between our two institutions. Moving the cross-walk northward would disadvantage these students, some of whom may be inclined to continue crossing in the same location without controls.

Our conclusion is that pedestrian and automobile accessibility for our location is satisfactory as things are now. We would support a plan that addresses aesthetics on 9th Street without inhibiting access or threatening pedestrian safety. We look forward to additional opportunities to provide public comment regarding the proposed improvement plans.

Warm regards,



Jeff Davis
Regional Director for Benton County

C: President Rita Cavin, Board of Education

Benton Center

757 NW Polk Avenue
Corvallis, OR 97330

(541) 757-8944
Fax: (541) 757-9537

<http://www.linnbenton.edu>

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CORVALLIS DISABILITY SERVICES
OCWCOG

MEMO

Page 1 of 3

NO _____

To Corvallis Area Metro Planning Organization
STREET 301 SW 4th St Suite 140
CITY, STATE Corvallis, Or. 97333

FROM **MEHLHAF'S INC.**
300 S.W. MADISON AVE.
CORAVLLIS, OR 97333
PHONE / FAX 541-757-8070

ATTN: _____

DATE 10/23/09

SUBJECT 9th St Improvement Plan

ACCT # _____

I am writing to you to express my concerns about the proposed 9th St. improvement plan. Having been a long time Corvallis resident of 62 years and a very frequent user of nearly all the business along 9th St. I am concerned about the plan for a landscaped median on 9th St. I believe that a median would not have a calming effect but would have just the total opposite effect in making roads and more dangerous to access businesses on the opposite side of the street than you are traveling on and cause customers to take more dangerous ways to access these businesses. Let me give you some examples of a trip to 9th St I made the other day. I turned onto 9th St from Clark Blvd. heading south. I got into the center lane behind two other cars waiting to get into Splash Splash Auto Beer. If the center lane wasn't there and a median was you would have had a line up of cars on the left lane trying to cross 9th that would be in the flow of traffic and be impeding other drivers. As I waited another car pulled in behind me so are now 4 cars in line. I emerged out of the car wash there is room for 2 cars outside before going onto the street. Myself and the 2 cars in front

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MEMO

Page 2 of 3

NO _____

To Corvallis Area Metro Planning Org.

STREET _____

CITY, STATE _____

FROM **MEHLHAF'S INC.**

300 S.W. MADISON AVE.

CORAVLLIS, OR 97333

PHONE / FAX 541-757-8070

ATTN: _____

DATE 10/23/89

SUBJECT _____

ACCT # _____

of me all wanted to turn left and head South on 9th
thru across the flow of traffic. We all exited and got
in the vacant center lane and then merged with the
South flow of traffic. This would not have been possible
with a median device. I next encountered a semi truck
parked in the center lane as loading of freight for Bel Botta &
Beyond on A-1. He said that the way the drive way
was installed (by city design I'm sure) that it was
virtually impossible for him to get his truck into
and out of the parking lot - thus unloading in the center
lane which seems to work out well. There are several
business along 9th St that get freight in large
containers and amounts that putting a median in
the middle of 9th St would make much more difficult
and dangerous and I would suspect near impossible in
some areas and situations. I have talked to several of
the 9th St business owners and have found very little
support for the median plan. In all my years I have
always find 9th St to be a automobile friendly street - but
one that doesn't get much pedestrian traffic. Thus I think
we need to continue to keep this ~~throughfare~~ throughfare
unobstructed from the likes of a median.

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MEMO

Page 3 of 3

NO _____

To Corvallis Area Metro Planning Org.

STREET _____

CITY, STATE _____

FROM **MEHLHAF'S INC.**

300 S.W. MADISON AVE.

CORAVLLIS, OR 97333

PHONE / FAX 541-757-8070

ATTN: _____

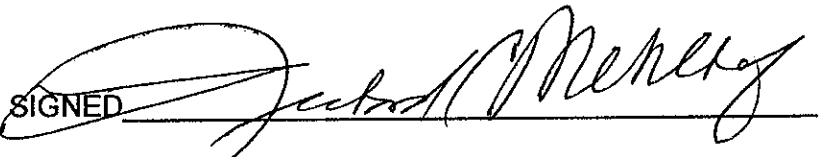
DATE 10/23/09

SUBJECT _____

ACCT # _____

I also wonder who and when the median will be taken care of, at this point I don't feel the city has the resources to care for another landscaping project and getting volunteers to do the work is not very satisfactory from what I seen around town. In these and still several other concerns I am totally against putting a median on 9th St

Sincerely

SIGNED 

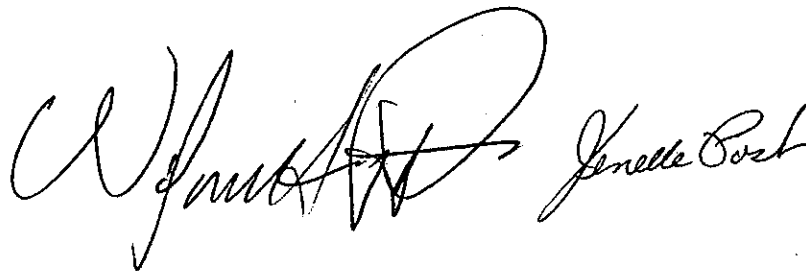
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October 29, 2009

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mr. Ali Bonakdar, AICP
Director, CAMPO
301 SW 4th Street #140
Corvallis, Oregon 97333

FROM: Mr. and Mrs. Wil Post
Splish Splash Express
1811 NW 9th Street
P.O. BOX 1656
Corvallis, Oregon 97339

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenelle Post", is written over the typed name in the "FROM" field.

RE: 9TH STREET IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Mrs. Post and I would like to thank you for your professional presentations and the courteous manner with which you greeted me during my visits to your office. We would have preferred to have been involved earlier in the development of the 9th Street Improvement Plan. Mr. Randy Jones did inform us that a plan was in the process of being developed during this past summer. It was our expectation that the business owners along 9th Street would have had an opportunity to participate before a published plan was launched.

In our view, the major objection to the presented plan is that our business at 1811 N.W. 9th will be crippled. The "Plan" calls for a traffic divider to begin at the SPLISH SPLASH EXPRESS sign and continue North in front of Key Bank. If this is, in fact, accomplished it will eliminate south bound traffic from using the present center lane to stack several cars that want to enter the car wash. On a recent busy day, forty-four percent of our business came from the north. This pattern is typical. It should be noted that we are the only business of this type in the vicinity. Because there is no parallel street to the east of 9th Street, it is impossible for vehicles to go "around the block." I am certain our patrons would find this objectionable. Splish Splash Express would like to be able to stack three cars in the turn lane for our customers' use.

On a general note, it is important to the car wash business that access be as quick and as effort free as possible. Our business charges are in small increments and, therefore; volume is important. Because we live in Oregon, and are also at the mercy of weather, it is even more critical that smooth operations be in place for that sunny day. Healthy businesses are vital to Corvallis and we choose to be counted in that number. We are also able to say, that to the best of our knowledge, our customers have been accident free during these past twenty plus years from ingress and egress events. Safety as a problem has not been an issue.

We, like many businesses along 9th Street, receive deliveries from large trucks. Our soap and other supplies come by the barrel in trucks driven by drivers who are not experienced Corvallis delivery people. Traffic dividers create serious impediments to a number of businesses including ours. It is easy to note the trucks unloading in the turn lanes at Bed Bath and Beyond and those in a holding pattern for Spaeth. Turn lanes that are given up for dividers and plantings-- including trees-- seem to me to be a poor exchange for good business health. As a city, there appears to be difficulty in keeping our plantings in top form. Because of budget problems, the opposite would be more accurate.

Our choice would be to essentially eliminate the traffic dividers. This would help the Plaza Nine patrons be able to exit left and avoid being forced into the congestion at Spruce Street or Circle. We, however, believe that there is a need for a well placed self activated cross walk for pedestrian use, possibly close to Ruby Tuesday and Spruce Street.

As to the issue of making 9th Street "pedestrian friendly"-- perhaps this needs to be examined in detail. Most of the people walking on the streets in "down town" Corvallis are counted as pedestrians. They are there because they drove to the area and are parked as close to where they want to shop as possible. These people are visible because they are walking on a sidewalk next to traffic and in front of stores. Often the same people may be found later at Bi Mart where they may be overlooked as pedestrians. These same people on the same trip are parked in a convenient lot walking as uncounted pedestrians to the entrance of the store. Recently, I asked the first ten "down town" pedestrians I encountered how they arrived in this part of town and nine said they drove [the other one came on the bus]. Should we count anyone walking into a business a pedestrian?

Ninth Street is a business area primarily accessed by vehicular travel. As the owner of Splish Splash Express, we request the removal from your plan of the traffic divider located in front of Splish Splash Express.

Thank you.

copies:

Randy Jones
Steve Rogers

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Town & Country Realty

420 NW 2nd Street
Corvallis, OR 97330

Phone: 541-757-1505
Fax: 541-766-2996

info@cbchambercoalition.com
www.cbchambercoalition.com

To Whom It May Concern:

The Corvallis-Benton Chamber Coalition represents approximately 40 businesses that are located on 9th Street in Corvallis. Upon reviewing the proposals to be presented to City Council by CAMPO, we have made contact with each business to gain feedback. In addition, our Government Affairs Committee has conducted research with other cities that have implemented these medians, as well as how current medians placed within Benton County and how they have affected our members as well.

After speaking with our membership, we found that 70% of our 9th Street members are opposed to these medians being placed, as they are presented in your proposal. The majority of the remaining 30% were neutral as the placement did not affect their businesses entrance or exit directly. After speaking with each business, there was not one business that was in favor of these medians. Below are the main concerns of our 9th Street members.

- Impact on left hand turns in/out of driveways located on the West side of 9th Street
- Medians will create a dangerous situation for pedestrians crossing Street 9th Street with proposed landscaped medians
- Proposed Median (located near Shari's) would create issues with entering/exiting driveways and impede traffic where there is not currently a traffic issue
- As proposed, the plan does not increase traffic safety nor improve efficiency of traffic flow
- Businesses would like to see investment in crosswalks to ensure the safety of pedestrians
- The 9th street businesses are in favor of landscaping
- Support for efforts to improve the aesthetics of 9th Street in a way that doesn't decrease traffic flow or customer access to businesses
- Strong concerns that medians will deter drivers from shopping at businesses when the entry/exit is more difficult due to medians
- Placement of medians could create a need to turn around and come back to certain businesses, which will in turn deter drivers from stopping at the business

I ask that you consider this information from the businesses that will be impacted by these proposed changes.

Best Regards,

Erin Wiedeman
Business Advocate
On behalf of the Corvallis-Benton Government Affairs Committee

Letter: Remember how raised barriers for traffic safety worked out before (July 28)

How many of you recall when Circle Boulevard was built, that it had raised barriers between the east/west lanes from Ninth to 29th streets for traffic control?

Still there? No. Need I say more?

Judy McCann, Corvallis

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As I see it: Ninth Street medians would be safety oases (July 13)

By FRANK MAULDIN
As I see it

Your July 7 editorial, "Ninth Street Medians: An Idea Worth Shelving," demonstrated a severe lack of information about the many benefits of landscaped medians for Corvallis.

The editors said it was hard to imagine how landscaped medians could be responsive to transportation needs other than the vague reason that it would make the street "prettier." I find it easy to imagine how landscaped medians provide many more benefits and was surprised at the editors' lack of imagination and vision to see them.

First, there are only five traffic signals between Polk Avenue and Elks Drive that give protection for pedestrian and bicycle crossings. Many pedestrians and bicyclists risk their life crossing five lanes between heavy traffic, with many vehicles exceeding the posted speed limit. A median will provide a mid-street refuge for crossings, making them much safer, and a safer street for pedestrians is a benefit for Corvallis.

Second, medians are a proven method for calming traffic. Motorists perceive the traffic lanes are narrower and respond by slowing down and not making as many dangerous lane changes. Slower and calmer traffic reduces accidents and makes it far safer for pedestrians crossing the street and for bicycles using legal bike lanes.

Third, the editors apparently do not understand the careful planning work and public input that went into completing the Ninth Street Plan by Ali Bonakdar and his staff at the Corvallis Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (CAMPO).

I believe the CAMPO staff would not have proposed landscaped medians if they had the potential of damaging business accesses, thereby reducing clientele, laying off employees and hurting Corvallis' economy. Give these talented planners some credit. They proposed the landscaped medians as a benefit, not a risky, radical adventure with the potential to harm the local economy. Additionally, CAMPO staff hosted an open house after the draft plan was completed. Corvallis citizens who attended responded favorably to the landscaping plan, including the landscaped medians.

Fourth, Bonakdar and his staff did not simply assume the landscaped medians would not harm Ninth Street businesses. They researched the experience of other cities and their businesses after landscaped medians were built. They found businesses in these cities were benefited by the medians, not harmed. Since medians calm traffic and tend to slow motorists down, it's easy to visualize a greater tendency for motorists to notice business signs, driveways and parking areas.

Bonakdar proposed medians between Polk and Circle because the connecting streets and driveway configurations offered the opportunity without damaging access. However, he proposed that because of the concentration of businesses and driveways between Circle and Elk, no landscaped medians should be built there.

The editors expressed their opinion that Corvallis shouldn't even think about a landscaped median plan if there is no money to build it. But there is hope for funding this plan. It's been rumored that President Obama will propose a second jobs stimulus plan later in the year. Corvallis would likely compete well, because the construction project would create jobs and — with landscaped medians — be green and sustainable by substantially enhancing opportunities for bicycling and walking to store destinations, thereby reducing vehicle trips.

In closing, I agree with Randy Jones that walking or bicycling along Ninth Street will never be the same as hiking in McDonald Forest. But don't forget, Randy: You will never find a latte, hamburger or insurance salesman in McDonald Forest. Ninth Street offers the future possibility of these and more for the destination walker and cyclist. We need a Ninth Street with calm traffic, beautiful landscaping and lots of people. The benefits will accrue to everyone, and that is why I believe Ninth Street medians are an idea worth building as soon as possible.

Frank Mauldin of Corvallis is a retired director of the Salem public works department and a member of the Ninth Street Advisory Committee.



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OPINION

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Medians not the answer for booming Ninth Street

I know for a fact I am not the only one who is so excited to hear about Trader Joe's coming to Corvallis, to join the other new businesses like TJ Maxx, Michael's, Dress Barn and others. Add to that rumors of another market coming in at the corner of Ninth and Circle in the Rite Aid building about to be vacated, and you have another thing to be excited about. Now hopefully the area near Office Max will finally develop and Ninth will be a booming shopping area.

My concern is regarding another recent article about Ninth Street possibly getting medians to beautify the area. While I agree that some beautification is needed, medians are not the answer. Getting in and out of businesses on Ninth is difficult enough as it is without having to weave around medians. What is needed are safer crossing areas for pedestrians, something similar to the crossing controls placed on South Third Street.

But if there are funds available for beautification, why not use the funds to improve the sidewalks and make walking up and down Ninth Street more enjoyable? I have walked this street a few times and can get a fair amount of shopping done, with shops like Bed Bath & Beyond and others. However, the sidewalks are bumpy and dangerous in areas and not the least bit attractive. So spend the money making Ninth an area where people can enjoy a stroll while shopping.

Aly Welkley, Corvallis

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(4) Comments



andyg July 10, 2009 11:34AM PST

Um... aren't the "crossing controls" you like on south Third exactly what is envisioned for the "medians" on north Ninth? At least, we've been calling the ones on Third "medians"...



Pippi July 10, 2009 3:16PM PST

The only thing "booming" is unemployment. Meanwhile, beautiful sidewalks don't matter much if the landscape is dominated by an impenetrable five-lane swath of high-speed insanity.



Barefoot July 11, 2009 8:40AM PST

> by an impenetrable five-lane swath of high-speed insanity.

It is already five lanes, and high speed? not so much. The proposed median, if any impact on speed, will more like slow traffic as drivers turning left will need to slow to get into turn pockets while in the left lane.



corvallisoreugene July 12, 2009 1:39AM PST

Last I checked the speed limit on 9th street is only 35 mph. Hardly "High speed insanity"....

Comments 1 to 4 of 4

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- Letter: 'Dogs in aisles only' guideline at farmers market workable (July 15)
- Letter: Medians on Ninth Street are a good idea, worth defending (July 15)
- Editorial: Sotomayor hearings merely a prelude (July 14)
- Letter (July 14): Jackson editorial was dehumanizing, unacceptable
- Letter (July 14): Trader Joe's 'quirky' label is unfair, inaccurate
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OPINION

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Ninth Street medians are a foolish idea

I just want to add how ridiculous I think the Idea of putting medians on Ninth Street is.

Traffic would be terribly hindered by having less room to move into a turn lane. There are far too many businesses that would be affected adversely when drivers can't get in or out. Spending money just to be spending it is nonsense. (Just like the roundabout where we had a two-way stop intersection.) This is a foolish idea that needs to be put to rest.

On another topic, why do people want to take their dogs to events with large crowds? I have never understood why you would do this to your pet. If you want to take your dog for a walk, do it. Do you really think your dog is having a good time with people tripping on its leash or stepping on its toes? Do your pet a favor and leave it home where it's comfortable! Yes, I have a dog, and I would never take it to something where hundreds of people are trying to walk around in an area with limited room.

So, please no medians, and folks, do your pets a favor and let them stay home where it's cool and safe!

Sandra Schomberg, Corvallis

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VH July 10, 2009 10:49AM PST
How about unbundling your letter?



Pippi July 10, 2009 11:07AM PST
You're right, Sandra. Medians won't work. They provide an insufficient impediment to motor vehicle use in an age of global warming and multiple other problems from our addiction to fossil fuel.

What we really need are SPEED BUMPS on Ninth Street. I suggest that they be placed at 50-meter intervals from Harrison to Walnut. That would make driving much less convenient, at long last.

Ninth Street speed bumps would show that the Corvallis commitment to "sustainability" is more than just a bunch of greenwashing propaganda.



Lyman July 10, 2009 10:09PM PST
Moderator's note: Off-topic



Pippi July 11, 2009 1:05PM PST
Moderator's note: Off-topic



Barefoot July 11, 2009 3:58PM PST
Moderator's note: Off-topic



VH July 11, 2009 4:36PM PST
"They provide an insufficient impediment to motor vehicle use in an age of global warming and multiple other problems from our addiction to fossil fuel."

Somehow I don't think that this was the impetus for the medians...just a guess.

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Letter: Medians on Ninth Street are a good idea, worth defending (July 15)

In regards to the proposed medians on Ninth Street: I guess I'll go ahead and be the first victim of editorial bashing while I offer an alternate view.

It's ironic that some folks claim "It's already dangerous enough; why add a median?" Restricting left-hand turns onto a five-lane (counting the paved median) section eliminates a significant number of dangerous and sometimes impatient maneuvers. How many times have you come face-to-face with another driver making an opposite move in the "suicide lane"?

Medians tend to slow vehicular traffic and can create a needed respite for the crossing pedestrian. I don't suspect the median would be continuous, and planned turns can be focused to the safer signalized intersections. And for business, I would rather travel an extra block or two for a safe egress than to deal with conflicting and unpredictable traffic movements. Those are what would ultimately drive me to a different business location.

One last thing: As with Philomath and its recent improvements, contrary to what some would have had you believe, I have looked hard and have yet to see a single tumbleweed blowing through town. Now, go ahead - bash away - I can take it.

Steve Dockins, Philomath

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- Letter: Departure of 'Obama lemmings' was an encouraging sign (July 15)
- Letter: 'Dogs in aisles only' guideline at farmers market workable (July 15)
- Letter: Medians on Ninth Street are a good idea, worth defending (July 15)
- Editorial: Sotomayor hearings merely a prelude (July 14)
- Letter (July 14): Jackson editorial was dehumanizing, unacceptable
- Letter (July 14): Trader Joe's 'quirky' label is unfair, inaccurate
- Letter (July 14): Consider ban on dogs at farmers market
- Letter (July 14): Cap and trade bill is a bad bet for U.S.
- Letter (July 14): Speed bumps on Circle create safety issues
- Letter (July 14): Cuban trade embargo is not a blockade
- Editorial: Take a presidential hint, and recharge yourself (July 13)
- Letter (July 13): Government-run insurance a formula for failure

Browse Archives

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- Tuesday, July 14
- Monday, July 13
- Sunday, July 12
- Saturday, July 11
- Friday, July 10
- Thursday, July 9
- Wednesday, July 8
- Tuesday, July 7
- Monday, July 6
- Sunday, July 5

Letter: Traffic medians would benefit Ninth Street and all of Corvallis (July 16)

A Ninth Street business owner says medians will have a negative impact on business. I think the opposite is true.

Actually, some of us now avoid Ninth Street because of the chaos and danger of its traffic, where some cars drive half a block — or more — in the turn lanes. Bikes and pedestrians dash across between intersections. I live near north Ninth Street, but I choose to do my business and shopping downtown, traveling by Tenth or Fourth/Third Streets. I'd rather use the downtown post office than fight the craziness to get to the substation.

Well-designed medians bring safety and sanity to the flow of traffic in a busy area. I hope the plan will be developed. And would it be so bad if the area were more attractive?

Judith Edelstein, Corvallis

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Letter: More data needed on Ninth St. safety to decide median issue (July 20)

Frank Mauldin's July 13 "As I see it" column article on the desirability of putting landscaped medians on Ninth Street emphasizes that they would make it safer for pedestrians and bicyclists. Nowhere, however, did he make a case that Ninth Street is inherently unsafe as currently set up, nor did he even infer it.

So I went to CAMPO's Web site, clicked on Ninth Street Improvement Plan, and read what was provided. Nothing there states that it is unsafe either.

I learned that over a five-year period, along the 2.2 miles being discussed, there were 14 crashes involving a motor vehicle and a bicycle (one every 130 days) and four involving a motor vehicle and a pedestrian (one every 456 days). There were 198 crashes of other kinds.

Are those numbers high, low or about average for 2.2 miles of a high-traffic street in a city like Corvallis? How do they compare to similar streets with medians? Without medians? On Ninth Street,

6.5 percent of crashes include bicycles and 1.9 percent pedestrians. Is that a lot higher percentage than on Harrison Boulevard or Kings Boulevard or others?

Is one accident involving pedestrians every 456 days abnormally high, or do other busy city streets — with or without medians — experience similar rates of incidence?

I don't know the answers to any of those questions, as absolutely no comparative data was presented. Before I would buy into this concept and spend a lot of taxpayer money on it, I would certainly want some concrete proof that there is a real need for it.

John Brenan, Corvallis

Letter: Crosswalks needed on Ninth Street; medians are not (July 20)

The recently released recommendation by CAMPO for beautification of Ninth Street by installing numerous landscaped median strips generated a Gazette-Times editorial in opposition and subsequent letters to the editor in support.

I'd like to join the fray by rehashing an exchange of letters with the Public Works Department earlier this year that relate to the subject.

My letter addressed traffic congestion and the lack of pedestrian safety between Buchanan Avenue and Circle Boulevard, where there are only two pedestrian crosswalks for a span of nearly a mile.

The department's April reply, relative to the crosswalks, noted that "CAMPO and the project steering committee are considering inclusion of 2-3 pedestrian crossings." There was no mention of landscaped medians, or I would have countered in my May letter to the department director against landscaping a pedestrian crossing island. Such plantings are bound to obstruct a clear view of and distract a driver's attention from the pedestrian whose safety is of primary concern.

Ninth Street DOES NOT need landscaped medians; it DOES need additional pedestrian crossings midway between those existing ones at Buchanan, Grant, Garfield, Circle and Walnut.

They should be equipped with pedestrian-activated stop lights. Kansas City, Mo., had effective signal lights at intermediate crossings in the 1950s that cycled through yellow to red when activated, but normally flashed green to alert drivers to the existence of crosswalks. +

Mike Wolf, Corvallis

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Letter: Medians on Ninth Street might ease chaotic traffic issue (July 21)

Now that the idea of making Ninth Street more hospitable to pedestrians has been roundly ridiculed, let me raise a new question: Do business owners along this street really believe that the current traffic plan is conducive to shopping by car?

As a rural resident who lives north of Corvallis, Ninth Street is convenient for me in terms of location. However, the traffic flow is such a mess that either I avoid it in favor of downtown, or else I limit my business to a few strategically planned stops, avoiding left turns so far as possible.

Others have commented on the hazards of the "suicide lane" in the middle of this five-lane street. It's the closest thing that I've seen in Oregon, to compare to the all-lanes free-for-all that one finds in Third World cities. I've witnessed several fender-benders and many close calls, including one pickup driver last year who veered over the sidewalk into the Bi-Mart parking lot in order to avoid a collision.

Whether the answer is more traffic lights or adding medians, something needs to be done to calm the traffic on Ninth Street. Doing so will be an advantage for local businesses.

Joel Geier, Corvallis

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Letter July 22: Consider how median strips look, work elsewhere in Corvallis

For those advocating median strips on Ninth Street, take a minute to look at 29th and Grant streets. Do you like what you see?

Lois F. Read

Corvallis

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Letter July 23: Ninth Street medians won't fix spacey drivers, walkers, cyclists

Medians are unnecessary. I've been driving on Ninth Street for 18 years and have not seen any chaos and only normal problems getting into any business.

The problem is poor drivers and pedestrians and bikers who don't pay attention to traffic. Medians will worsen the problem because there will be less room to maneuver, less places to get on and off Ninth Street and added distractions for all who use the road.

What needs to happen is having everyone be more aware of themselves and others on the road, but this will never happen. There will always be those who just don't get it and it's up to those of us who do to keep traffic moving well and prevent access issues and accidents.

I find the term "suicide-lane" amusing. I see more problems with people coming into traffic from the sides. People just need to use the center lane properly to get on and off Ninth St, minimizing the amount available will slow things down, cause congestion and lead to irritation and more accidents.

Mike Williams

Corvallis

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Letter: City needs to keep up existing traffic islands, not make new ones (Aug. 3)

How can the city think about constructing islands on Ninth Street when they can't maintain the existing ones? The traffic circle on Tenth Street has been in shambles for years. Abbott and Costello must have constructed the island on circle in front of Richey's. I've never seen a cheaper grade of paver. There's not one island in the city that hasn't gone to weeds/forest or in the process of doing so. This includes other city property that hasn't seen a green thumb in decades.

It's inexcusable when we visit a city

11 miles to the north that maintains its public property as if the Queen of England has just arrived for tea.

Robert Gutierrez, Corvallis

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