

Eighth and 10th avenues is tentatively scheduled to open to two-way traffic later this year. The plan to reopen Broadway between Oak and Willamette streets wouldn't be implemented until 1989 or 1990, according to a draft of the plan.

Many of the commissioners expressed apprehension over reopening the streets, especially Willamette Street.

"Opening (Broadway) would ruin pedestrian orientation," said Planning Commission President Gerry Gaydos. Another member of the planning commission, John VanLandingham, argued against putting plans for opening the streets on a timetable. Such a move would "suggest to the people that that's the direction we're leaning," VanLandingham said.

"The faster we move, the more they'll feel railroaded," he

said. Many people see the mall as their favorite park, and VanLandingham fears sudden development would upset the public.

"You can have a hearing on every part of the street," Schwartz said of other commissioners' desire to wait on the issue.

The two-hour meeting convened after the commissioners agreed not to forward the proposed reopening of Broadway to the City Council — and to subject the matter to more study. The commissioners also agreed to clarify the language defining the length of time needed for a proper designing process.

The two commissions will meet again May 26 to review the renewal plans, and further prepare the recommendations they will make to the City Council in July.



Photo by Andy Cripe

Construction work on the Downtown Mall continues despite problems with access to businesses.

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Members of the medical community have challenged this scheduling, testifying they perceive minimal harm in carefully monitored use of MDMA to treat psychotic patients.

Psychiatrists who administered MDMA to patients before it became illegal contend the drug produces less distortion of sensory perception and fewer unpleasant emotional reactions than traditional psychedelics.

However, researchers and therapists await the results of formal research before assessing MDMA's therapeutic usefulness.

According to Dan Johnson, assessment specialist with Sacred Heart's Adolescent Recovery Program (SHARP), alcohol, marijuana and methamphetamines ("crank," "crystal meth" and speed) are

the three leading substances of abuse for the adolescents he counsels, who are between the ages 12 and 19.

He said he has only come across one case of MDA abuse, but has seen nothing involving Ecstasy.

"I don't think it's real rampant up here in the Lane County area," Johnson said.

Dr. James Jackson, director of the University Student Health Center, also reported a rarity of medical cases involving Ecstasy. He said he suspects students who use the drug haven't reached the point where they think they need help.

But two other students who have taken Ecstasy — one for several years and the other a newcomer to the drug — said use is relatively high in Eugene.

"Kim" and "Stephanie" buy through the same two dealers, although Kim said she could

easily get the drug from any one of four sources.

"It's really kind of scary to buy it because you never know what exactly you're getting. It always looks different," Kim said. There's no doubt, however, it's made in local labs, she added.

"How else could it be so accessible?" she said.

Stephanie first tried Ecstasy about a month ago and has since done it once again. She said she liked the drug, but it didn't make her feel too different than her usual mood.

"It made me feel less inhibited, the same way a lot of drugs do. Physically I felt a little more energy, but emotionally I was more relaxed," Stephanie said.

The second time she did it, she wasn't very aware of the transition from straight to high, she said.

"It creeps up on you, then 'Boom,' you're high," Kim said, who estimates she's taken Ecstasy more than 20 times in the three years since she first tried it.

Kim said Ecstasy has its bad points as well, including a tendency to produce a "drug hangover," especially when she drinks alcohol while high on it.

Ecstasy is actually an analogue of the 1960s and '70s counterculture "love-drug" MDA. Both are synthetic derivatives of amphetamine.

MDMA often is referred to as a "designer" drug, a substance tailor-made for specific uses by chemically altering a controlled substance. While the psychoactive properties are retained, the molecular structure is changed just enough to avoid prosecution under the Controlled Substances Act.

In 1970, MDA was placed on Schedule I of the act, prompting the decline of its use. MDMA appeared on the streets shortly after, its use rising sharply in the past few years, according to a 1986 report in the Journal of Drug Education.

According to the report, MDMA is popular for three basic reasons:

- MDMA's side effects are less troublesome than those of MDA;
- MDMA has a greater perceived euphoric and

therapeutic use;

• and the illegality of MDA probably drew users to MDMA.

The report also stated that MDMA is incorrectly considered an aphrodisiac among college students, some of the drug's most devout users.

The drug yields a dramatic drop in defense mechanisms while increasing empathy for others, the report found.

It also cited research maintaining both MDA and MDMA enhance the pleasure of touching but interferes with erections in men and inhibits orgasms for both sexes.

Troy priced the drug at about \$40 to \$80 per gram; usually about \$60. One gram breaks down into six to 10 doses, each dose about 100 to 150 milligrams. He can sell one dose for \$10, he said.

A crystalline form, it can be snorted or diluted in water and injected intravenously. But most users take it orally, which produces the longest, smoothest high with the least amount of stimulant effects, the Journal of Drug Education reported.

Besides the intoxicating effects, medical research indicates different doses of the drug usually cause fatigue and possible insomnia after the "coming down."

Other amphetamine-like symptoms MDMA produces include dilated pupils, a dry mouth, tension in the lower jaw and a tendency to grind the teeth.

Other studies are examining the possibility that MDMA causes brain damage, especially disrupting nerve systems that regulate sleep, mood and sexual activity. MDMA critics, especially condemning its therapeutic use, claim the drug is associated with rare psychological problems, and say the potential for dependency and abusive patterns must be considered.

Additionally, a few deaths have been attributed to MDMA, but the deaths were later found to be related to a variety of drug abuses, and the validity of MDMA as a factor in the deaths was seriously questioned.



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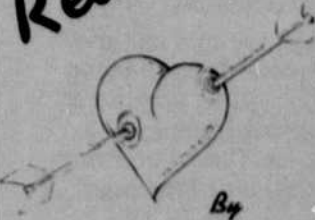
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