

Ordinance: Business owners disagree over law's effect on them and the area

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Dogs and skateboards were barred from the street in mid-August, although the police granted a two-week grace period. Violators of the new law received their first tickets on Sept. 1, Hanson said.

However, some opponents argue the ban simply moved the problem down a few blocks.

"There's a lot more to be done," said Bobby Lee, councilman-elect for Eugene's Ward Three, which includes the West University area. "It was a knee-jerk kind of decision."

Lee said he has suggested widening 13th Avenue by knock-

West University is in the middle of everything... There needs to be a long-term, comprehensive solution.

— Bobby Lee
Ward Three councilman-elect

ing out one side to permit greater pedestrian traffic, erecting an apartment building with shops and underground parking, and putting in a courtyard.

"West University is in the middle of everything," he said. "But it's also blocked in. There needs to be a long-term, comprehensive solution."

Michael Lamont, the owner of the Bijou Art Cinemas, said the ban is too broad for the problem it is meant to address.

"If people are being obnoxious, they should be dealt with individually," he said. "If there are jerks, you need to deal with the jerks, not a whole group of people."

Other business owners said the ban has helped business by creating a better environment for commerce and by removing obstacles

that interfered with customers.

"It gets very congested and dangerous," said Maurizio Papro, the owner of the Excelsior Cafe. "People who come down here are not comfortable. You need to have the opportunity to walk freely."

The ban has been successful from a business standpoint, said Richard Greene, the owner of Rainbow Optics. People loitering in front of his store caused a noticeable decline in customers, he said.

"That problem disappeared overnight," he said. "It's working. That's why it pushed the problem down there."

However, dog owners and skateboarders said the ban was not needed and affected more people than necessary.

"This is like the main street," said dog-owner Kidd Lokee. "It's a real hassle. We're not hurting anyone."

Dog owners and skateboarders also said business would suffer from the ban.

"I can't walk up there anymore," said dog-owner Dan Wilson. "That's going to take away from business, because when my dog is not welcome, I'm not welcome."

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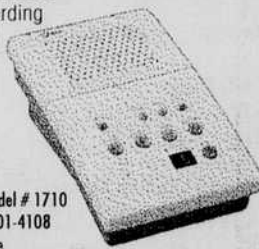
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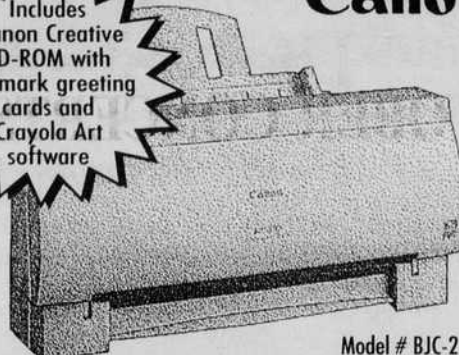
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