

Opinion

What is growth?

Government officials speak of growth a lot. But what does that mean to the residents of Keizer? How are we to define growth?

Some say that growth means more jobs within our city borders. Some say growth means expanding our city limits and adding more housing and commercial hubs.

It is important that city leaders explain what they mean by growth specifically and assure that their constituents understand exactly what the push for growth is all about.

If the push for growth is mostly about attaining jobs for Keizer residents, what kind of jobs and where will they be? In an robust economic climate there are people working more than one job. Part-time work and service jobs, important to the overall economy, don't support a family of three or more. In those cases, the spouse is forced to find employment to sustain the household which adds childcare costs to already overtaxed budgets.

It is nice to recruit eateries with their part-time shifts but if asked we suspect most Keizerites would rather see full-time jobs with good wages that can be reached by foot, bus or a short car trip. What are some fields that can be recruited? Topping the list is anything in the medical field—clinics, laboratories, medical transcription office, to name a few. Those industries may not be as sexy as a popular restaurant or a gaming arcade, but they are the businesses whose future is assured.

Many will say there is no room in Keizer for such developments which is why the Urban Growth Boundary needs to be expanded as soon as possible. There are plots of land that can be obtained. Much of Cherry Avenue is zoned commercial/industrial; us-



ing incentives such as lowering system development charges, the city can work with a developer and medical business to purchase land on Cherry, raze what's there and build a sparkling new building. The caveat for any of that is dictating the types of jobs and wages offered.

There is land in Keizer Station and on land where a power plant was once considered. Though the city of Keizer doesn't want to be in real estate business, it should consider the long-term benefits of buying land and then selling it to the types of industries that will bring the jobs we want.

Aside from jobs some may consider tangible growth, such as new subdivisions and commercial buildings. Growth to them may mean gleaming new buildings including mixed used, multi-story developments along River Road. When others think of growth they may be envisioning an expanded Urban Growth Boundary, annexed by Keizer followed by the construction of hundreds of new rooftops stretching from the Country Glen neighborhood to Perkins or Quinaby Road.

Before the discussion of Keizer's growth gets along too far the city leaders need to figure out what growth means to the people who already live here. It would be a shame to get far down the development road only to realize people were talking about different types of growth.

—LAZ

our opinion



After election, time to regroup

I'm going to venture a guess that whomever is reading this now is very thankful that the election is over, mostly because we can safely watch television again. Wow—there were a lot of ads on TV. I join you in giving thanks for the barrage being over.

Now that the election is over here in Oregon we also have much to give thanks for. Our vote by mail system is fantastic and though the voter turnout was not as great as I would have liked, it was very good. Here in Keizer, I welcome back our mayor: Cathy Clark and congratulate two new city councilors: Elizabeth Reddick Smith and Dan Kohler. I look forward to working with all of them over the next two years.

In the Oregon Legislature, we have a fairly historic situation. There are 38 House Democrats and 22 House Republicans. That means a "supermajority" in the House and with 18 Senate Democrats and 12

Senate Republicans, the same for the upper chamber.

The biggest issue right now is who will lead those groups? The House Democrats have already elected their leadership with only a couple of minor changes to the team. The House Republicans have not chosen their leadership team nor have the Senate Republicans. Meanwhile the Senate Democrats will be meeting the weekend before this column comes out. Will the Senate Democrats remain in the sort of mode they've maintained for many years? More of a moderate, bipartisan approach, keeping Senate President Peter Courtney in place? Or will the more left-leaning newer members sway the "old guard" that a move to the "left" is what Oregon wants?

With the House and Senate Republicans, a similar question is being asked. "Do we have anything to lose by going more to the right?" Though this is the time of the year

when not much is being done in the legislature as far as policy, you can see that it is humming with activity based on these internal elections. On a lighter note, each member is now in the process of choosing their office, parking spot and floor desk location. For those of us in the House, it is done on a seniority and alphabetical basis. It's quite alarming that the turnover in seats, via retirement or elections, has made me a senior representative. Of course where my office is or where I park or sit on the House floor is not the most pressing issue of the day but it is part of the job. Lastly, I want to thank everyone who got out and voted November 6. I am humbled and grateful that you chose once again, to allow me to serve you in Salem. I promise as always, though you might not always agree with me politically, I will always tell you the truth and try to give you an "inside" view of life in the Capitol as well as represent you to the best of my ability. Happy holidays!

(Bill Post represents House District 25. He can be reached at 503-986-1425 or via email at rep.billpost@oregonlegislature.gov.)



from the capitol
By BILL POST

Shop local and small

Where will you shop this holiday season? Will all of your purchases be made at a major retailer or online? Or, will you endeavor to do some of your holiday shopping at Keizer's small businesses?

What is a small business? According to the Small Business Administration, a small business is defined as having a maximum of 250 employees and are privately owned. More than 90 percent of all U.S. firms are small businesses.

With that definition, most of Keizer's independently owned retail businesses are tiny. Many employ less than 20 people, but most employ 10 or less.

The owners of very small businesses are the superstars of America. Family businesses carry on the mission of an ancestor who set the company in motion; businesses that were started with a dream, blood, sweat and tears work to provide their customers with selection and customer service.

Saturday, Nov. 24, is Small Business Day in America. Though it was instigated by large credit card company, the motive behind it is pure small town: spend some of your money with a small business in your town: it helps the business, it helps the businesses' employees, it puts money into the community.

During the holidays many choose to go the route of convenience and ease and shop at gigantic stores or buy gifts online from the comfort of their home. For those most driven by comfort and convenience those shopping choices make sense. For those who want to give gifts to loved

ones with meaning and heart, choosing to shop at a local small business is a good choice.

Small businesses make any community more vibrant and alive. They may not have billion-dollar market research to rely on, they do something just as good: they listen to the needs of their customers. Small retailers will do what it takes to satisfy a customer including ordering an item not regularly carried.

A small business can make decisions on the spot that would take a large businesses days or weeks to sort out. Generally, when you talk to an employee of a small business you are talking to the boss.

We hope that every small business in our community is putting their best face on and preparing their stores and inventories for what customers desire. Customer service is a warm, sincere greeting to a customer and an offer to assist in finding just the right thing.

Small businesses can not compete on price against gigantic stores or cyberretailers, but they can compete where it really matters: human to human contact. Small businesses put the humanity into shopping.

We think it is important for holiday shoppers to give serious consideration to purchasing some of the items on their gift list locally and small. That would be good for the sustainability of our small business community

Small Business Day is Saturday, Nov. 24, but everyday should be Small Business Day, shouldn't it?

—LAZ

Where does autocracy start?

There's talk these days about the many nations, some sliding rather quickly, into right-wing, authoritarian, totalitarian regimes where controls in all matters reside with a "strong man." So, what does the strong man do to act on his intents and how does that look, what are its hallmarks that disclose all individual rights and freedoms are on their way out or gone?

He announces that, he "alone can fix everything." His first year reveals that he has brought, further and faster, the erosion of his nation's democratic standards. The nation's core institutions, governed formerly by ethical norms, are attacked and rejected.

He's driven by self-aggrandizement, self-enrichment and revenge against anyone he perceives to be a political enemy or otherwise. Revenues are characterized by punches 10 times harder or screwed 15 times tighter than his "enemies" punched or screwed. He uses the despot's platform to taunt and threaten, relentlessly and destructively going after non-compliant judges, members of the legislative body, law enforcement leaders, celebrities, professional athletes, and members of the media, charged as enemies of the people with violence encouraged.

His supporters unquestioningly accept his promises to reform his ways and be a man of the people, he guaranteeing better lives and living conditions for everyone. Yet, the authoritarian behavior from his past triumphs over hope for good leader behavior while his demagoguery, lying and disdain for the rule of law dominate his regime.

Changes include politicizing the nation's independent institutions, spread-

ing misinformation, amassing executive power, quashing dissent, delegitimizing ethical communities upon which the nation was founded, and corrupting elections. Each and all of these "adjustments" are attacked simultaneously so that the citizens will become fatigued and confused by any effort to fight back and prevent eradications.

He launches ongoing efforts to trash the reputations of institutions like those in law enforcement and declare that he has every right to do so. He has his base of supporters and appointed staff in league with him who spread gossip about "deep state" conspiracies against him, including his repeated charges in reference to the "very bad and evil people" in the capital city trying to sabotage his right to absolute power.

How does a despot get to authoritarian rule? The gullible and ignorant believe the promises made during the campaign are never implemented, save for those to the wealthy. There are those who vote for the despot-in-waiting and stick by him for religious reasons. Then there are those who vote for him

because their prejudices are identical to his and wait for him to act, believing rewards, advantage over others and privileges will come to them.

The guy we've got now has shown his true colors for two years through his throwaways of our system of checks and balances, rule by law and norm foundations from the U.S. Constitution and Bills of Rights; he seeks a path to totalitarian rule with he as monocratic head. Those who could have stood in his way have declined to do so, while recent mid-terms election may erect barriers to a full despotic takeover. The American people can stand up for their way of life or permit a want-to-be despot to make America over into the darkest days of Germany and Italy circa the 1930s.

(Gene H. McIntyre shares his opinion frequently in the *Keizertimes*.)

gene h. mcintyre

Share your opinion

Submit a letter to the editor (up to 300 words), or a guest column (up to 550 words) by noon Tuesday.
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Keizertimes

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SUBSCRIPTIONS

One year:
\$25 in Marion County,
\$33 outside Marion County,
\$45 outside Oregon

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY
Publication No: USPS 679-430

POSTMASTER
Send address changes to:

Keizertimes Circulation
142 Chemawa Road N.
Keizer, OR 97303

Periodical postage paid at
Salem, Oregon



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