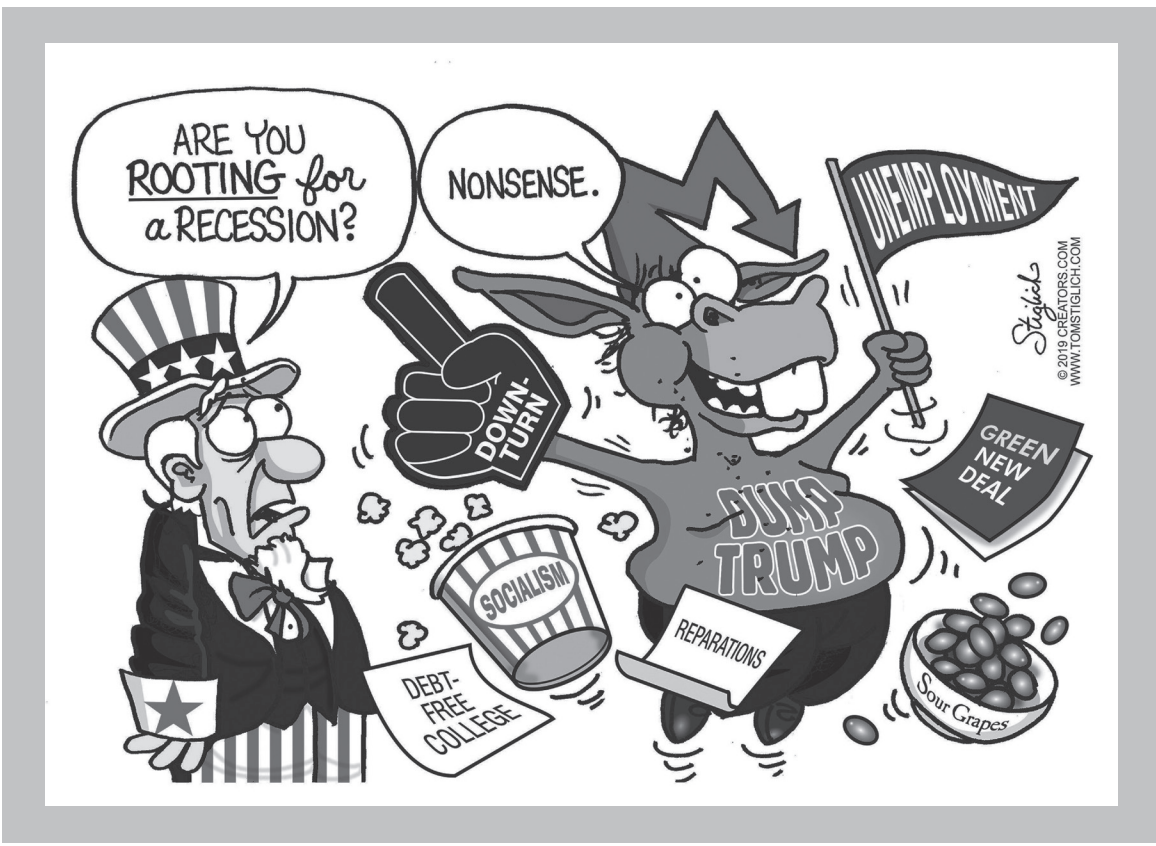


Opinion



Setting the table for success

The Keizer Revitalization Plan, that is before the city council after more than a year of public meetings and forums, is not change for change's sake.

The comprehensive plan—all 450 pages of it—targets River Road and Cherry Avenue and sets the table for future success of the commercial zones from the south end of Keizer, through the city's core and up to the Wheatland Road junction.

Keizer won't look different tomorrow, but in the coming years, we can expect to see the marketplace respond to more business-friendly zoning and codes. The city has been fairly rigid with its comprehensive code giving some pause about investing in new development.

When the revitalization plan is adopted the hope is that businesses will give Keizer a serious look rather than head for south Salem or Lancaster. Growth is important to the city because every new development that gets added to the city's tax roll adds money to the general fund. It is the from the general fund that the city uses to maintain and expand on the

amenities Keizer residents want—more sidewalks in neighborhoods, funding for parks and police.

How should the concerns of those who want Keizer to remain the quaint, small town be addressed? Does the revitalization plan destroy any semblance of Small Town, USA? No, it does not, and for one very good reason.

More than infrastructure or pace of traffic, a quaint community is made up by the people who live there. Regardless of how many extra square feet of development is added to River Road or Cherry Avenue, it is the spirit and the camaraderie of our residents that make Keizer livable.

Enhanced commercial districts will take nothing away from the live Keizerites are making for themselves. It will do good. New development will mean more business entities which means jobs right here where people live. That is the wave of the future, create cities where people can not only live, but have jobs to go to without having to commute in a vehicle

The city cannot demand that a

business hire Keizer residents first, but it is better to have the opportunity for those who want to work close to home.

The revitalization plan was not conceived in a vacuum. The process has been reported on, there have been meetings, hearings and forums to allow anyone to comment.

The city is poised on the edge of its future. The voters have elected a mayor and a city council to address and plan for that future. Everyone has the opportunity and the right to make their opinion heard about how their city should look tomorrow and 20 years from now.

The city and its leaders should always be mindful to explain what the revitalization plan is and how it will affect the average resident. People will want to know, for example, how the plan will alter their daily commute in and out of the city, especially during rush hour.

Keizer has been a desired address for years—we built a community people want to join. When we set the table for success we have the community we all seek.

—LAZ

our opinion

Plenty of candidates, but no stars

By DEBRA J. SAUNDERS

When you consider how much the Democratic establishment loathes President Donald Trump, it's just plain sad to watch a Democratic primary that has yet to offer up a front-runner who has Democrats truly jazzed about the election.

Insiders are waiting for former Veep Joe Biden, 76, not so much to stumble, as to stumble and not be able to get up afterward.

At 73, Trump is no spring chicken, but he exudes a vitality Biden lacks.

Vermont Sen. Bernie Sanders, 78, is a lovable scold to his die-hard supporters, and he's genuine. So why aren't Democrats more enthusiastic about him?

Elizabeth Warren, 70, is a great campaigner who gained strength during the long slog that she began as the Democrat with a dubious claim to being Native American. And still, the party apparatus has not coalesced behind her.

And below that top-tier of Nestors are a pack of middle-aged opportunists who stand out for their willingness to say anything to generate buzz.

"Hell, yes, we're going to take away your AR-15, your AK-47," former Texas congressman Beto O'Rourke crowed in response to a question.

An August *Fox News* poll shows that two-thirds of Americans support an assault weapons ban. No doubt many Democrats see such polls and hence see no

problem with a candidate calling for such a ban.

So they don't realize that O'Rourke's comment probably prompted countless gun owners to run out and buy the guns they hate. And they certainly don't think about the carnage that would ensue if the government actually tried to take those weapons from otherwise law-abiding owners' cold, live hands.

"I frankly think that clip will be played for years at Second Amendment rallies with organizations that try to scare people by saying Democrats are coming for your guns," said Sen. Chris Coons, D-Del., to CNN.

The ABC-led team of debate moderators didn't help. There was no pointed follow up. No mention of the fact that a year ago after the host told O'Rourke he owned an AR-15, O'Rourke told *The Chad Hasty Show*: "If you own a gun, keep that gun. Nobody wants to take it away from you."

"The Democrats and the media, it's as if they're one," Trump observed during a speech at a House policy retreat in Baltimore delivered in the same time slot.

Univision anchor Jorge Ramos challenged Biden: "Are you prepared to say tonight that you and President Obama made a mistake about deportations? Why should Latinos trust you?"

Ramos offered no recognition that Obama was enforcing federal

law—which is part of the job description. His question was based on the assumption that it was wrong to enforce the law. And he presumed to talk for all Latinos.

Biden should have defended Obama for doing his job—and rightly discouraging Central American migrants who would not qualify for asylum from crossing the border. In a different election year, Biden probably would have defended enforcing immigration law instinctively.

Instead, Biden denied that the Obama administration put migrants in cages or separated families.

Politifact rated Biden's claim as "false." The fact-checking organization noted that while Trump has a tougher approach to family separation, the Obama administration did put children in chain-linked enclosures. That is, Biden was gutless and wrong.

In the words of former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in 2014: "We have to send a clear message: Just because your child gets across the border, that doesn't mean your child gets to stay. We don't want to send a message that's contrary to our laws or (it) will encourage more children to make that dangerous journey."

That sort of commonsense thinking went out the window during a 2016 presidential debate when, under Ramos' questioning, Clinton changed her position and pledged not to deport undocumented immigrants who don't have a criminal record. The tail wagged the dog. That's how the Democrats' got a field with no clear star.

Over and over again, I hear Democrats say that Trump's tenure in the White House is untenable, that they'll do whatever it takes to win back the White House. Well, anything but stand up for positions they held five years ago. Anything but try to understand what the middle thinks. Anything but allow a debate on *Fox News*.

(Creators Syndicate)

other voices

COUNCIL, continued from Page A1

redevelopment along the commercial corridors. To do so, it proposes relaxing some standards, like off-street parking requirements, and tightening others, such as higher quality landscaping.

The largest point of contention in the report was when the new standards would kick in for redeveloped properties. The study suggested implementing new development standards whenever a remodel/redevelopment amounted to 25 percent or more of the assessed value of the property in question.

"You don't want to go too high or no change will happen, but we might be able to tweak and redefine the threshold," said Matt Hastie of Angelo Planning Group, a consultant on the project.

Speaking as a business owner and president of the Keizer Chamber of Commerce, Jonathan Thompson said a higher threshold would be preferable because some businesses might replace equipment inside a building that blows through the 25 percent threshold.

In the end, councilors requested that the 25 percent figure include both buildings and the land underneath them. Exemptions are also planned for replacing equipment, major maintenance (roofing, HVAC systems, repaving, etc.), and interior remodels without a change in the use of the building.

Thompson applauded the creation of three "centers" within the overlay district that he said Keizer Chamber members felt they would contribute to creating a downtown. Design and development standards ratchet up slightly in the centers around the Lockhaven Drive intersection, the Chemawa Road intersection and the Cherry Avenue/River Road triangle.

Jonathan Eggert, owner of Creekside Veterinary Clinic with his wife, expressed concern over the reduction in off-street parking.

"We are fairly constrained on parking now and any reduction has the potential to affect us," Eggert said.

In response to Eggert and others' requests, the council asked that the current parking maximums be kept in place, but that any new or redevelopment applicants would be given the opportunity to pursue reduced standards.

Other major components to receive heightened attention related to transportation, specifically what to do about accommodating travel other than cars.

The study recommends narrowing the lanes on River Road to install a multiuse path for cyclists and pedestrians on one side, but one resident felt that isn't enough.

"That leaves a substandard sidewalk on the other side of the road and it's only solving half of the problem," said Kathy Lincoln. "I encourage you to look at something that solves it on both sides."

Lincoln is also a member of the Keizer Traffic Safety, Bikeways and Pedestrian (TBP) Committee.

Several councilors seemed reticent to reduce lane widths, but didn't offer other solutions. Instead, they wanted to leave the recommendation more vague. That didn't sit well with Brown.

"We need to emphasize that it is a pressing issue to address the mobility issues in our corridors. We're putting it off, but we can't put it off all together," Brown said.

The council also requested that the final report include language directing the city to study the need and appropriateness of additional pedestrian crossings along River Road and Cherry Avenue Northeast, a nod to concerns voiced by the Keizer Planning Commission and TBP Committee (See related story *Committee suggests* below).

The council kept the public record open at the end of the meeting. That means written testimony on the report's recommendations can still be submitted to the city until 5 p.m. Monday, Sept. 30.

Committee suggests a dozen new crosswalks

By ERIC A. HOWALD
Of the Keizertimes

Throughout the Keizer Revitalization Study, members of the Keizer Traffic Safety, Bikeways and Pedestrian have carried the torch pushing for inclusion of cyclists and pedestrians.

At the group's meeting, September 12, it took the effort to a whole new level. Two members of the committee, Pat Fisher and Mike DeBlasi, presented proposals for multiple new River Road crosswalks from the south border of the city to intersection of River Road North and Oakwood Street Northeast. DeBlasi has his sight set on 16 new crosswalks, Fisher put forth 10 potential sites.

"Pedestrian crossings are barely touched on in [the revitalization] plan," said Fisher. "Allowing for pedestrian access are going to be very important."

The TBP committee have allies on the Keizer Planning Commission who also called for consideration of pedestrian crosswalks as it forwarded a recommendation to approve the report to the Keizer City Council.

Community Development Director Nate Brown was impressed enough with the two lists that he forwarded them to the transportation engineer participating in the study, Susan Wright. Wright said the sites on both lists were well-thought-out, but that engineering studies would be needed at each proposed location.

Hersch Sangster, a member of the committee, endorsed the sites proposed as "perfectly logical. If we want more density, we are going

to have to allow for crossings. The south section of River Road is what I would want to prioritize."

Brown said rather than listing specific sites in the final report, he would rather see a recommendation that the investigation of potential crosswalks be engaged as the revitalization plan is implemented.

"The last thing that I want is that the process get ground to a halt," Brown said.

Members of the committee agreed to the broader approach.

Regardless of how the city chooses to begin the process, it will come with a cost. Estimates to install crosswalks on a five-lane road range from \$80,000 to \$240,000 each.

Sgt. David LeDay cautioned against creating a "false sense of security" by installing mid-block crosswalks and noted that most of the injuries and fatalities involving pedestrians in Keizer have taken place within 200 feet of signalized intersections.

"It's not outside of the crosswalks where we have the issues, it's inattentive drivers," LeDay said.

At a city council meeting Monday, Sept. 16, Wright said the crosswalk frequencies suggested by the committee were in line with what is found in urban mix planning, with each about 550 apart from the next. That is the direction Keizer will be heading if redevelopment happens. However, it isn't simply a matter of build-it-and-they-will-cross.

"Just implementing a crossing in and of itself doesn't increase safety if the environment isn't right," she said.

traffic court

NO INSURANCE

Juan Daniel Cabrera-Hernandez, \$642; Alicyn Jasmin Ramirez, \$600; Enrique Antonio Ramirez, \$600.

NO PROOF OF INSURANCE

Joseph Daniel Morales, \$642; Simone Casara Jensen, \$600.

DRIVING WHILE SUSPENDED

Amy Rae Ogbin, \$1,258; Jerry Dulany Haley, \$1,258; Heather Brooke Wright, \$1,258; John Luke Manitsas, \$1,258; Enrique Antonio Ramirez, \$1,258; Simone Casara Jensen, \$1,258; Woodward Sean Chen, \$440; Jesus Figueroa Smith, \$415.

USE OF MOBILE DEVICE

Miguel Angel Rangel-Zapien, \$642; Alicyn Jasmin Ramirez, \$642; Olivia Marie Stuckart, \$235; Noah Austin, \$235; Whitney Nicole Beyer, \$235.

SPEEDING

Jordan Keahi Uu-Bernard, \$342; Xavier

Rivera Caballero, \$342; Gail Ann Young, \$145.

OTHER

Matthew Lee Mehlhoff, \$125, misuse of special left turn lane; Marcus Ray, \$192, failure to use safety belt; Dwayne L Mercer II, \$115; Kiana Marie Crofoot, \$192, failure to use safety belt; Benicio Fuentes Camacho, \$245; Alfonso James Soto, \$115, failure to use safety belt; Robert James Branch, \$265, careless driving; Shane Mitchell Baldwin, \$115, failure to use safety belt; Woodward Sean Chen, \$115, failure to use safety belt; Hakam Singh Nagra, \$115; Carrie Kathleen Strong, \$115.

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