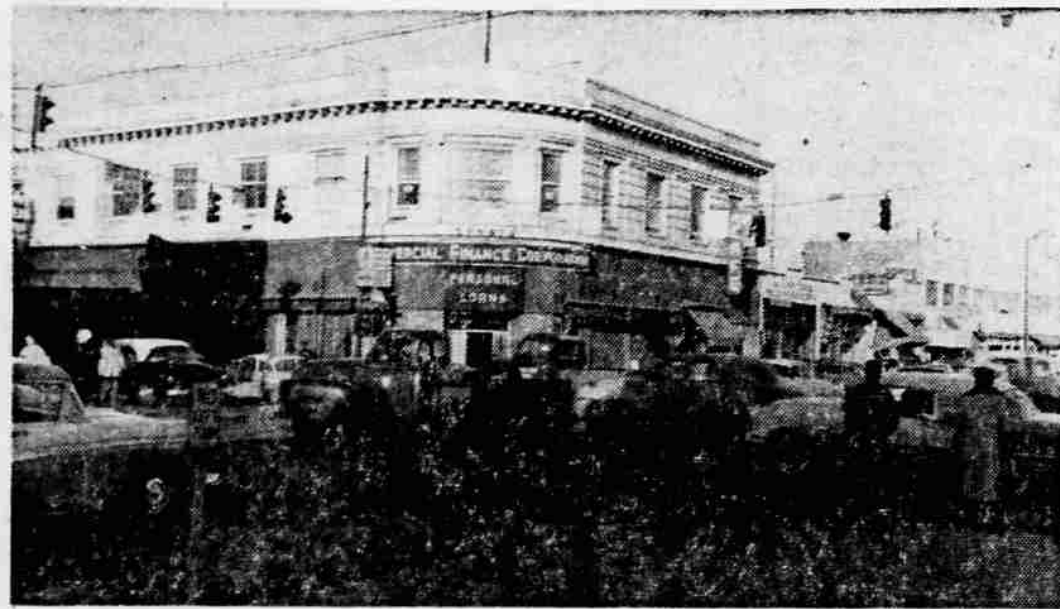


Accident Records Help Control Planning



MOST DANGEROUS INTERSECTION—The Main st. and Riverside ave. intersection is the most dangerous in Medford, according to the police map for 1957. Police listed 16 collisions at the location with one injury involved. The largest accident of the year took place at the location last fall when six cars tangled in a collision



MAIN ST. AND CENTRAL AVE. INTERSECTION—The Main st. and Central ave. intersection is also on the police department list as one of the most dangerous in Medford. The crossing listed 14 accidents during 1957 with two injuries involved, police explained. They said the intersection

Maps Maintained Of All Collisions By Medford Police

By HAL LESSER
Mail Tribune Staff Writer

Almost forget the minor accident that took place in Medford last year?

Well, the Medford police department and the department of public works haven't forgotten it. If a police officer was present, a record of the officer's report was made and if the accident occurred this year a pin indicating the type of accident is placed in a large map of the city in the police department.

At the end of the year, the map will be transferred to the public works department along with all officers' and driver's reports of vehicle collisions in Medford. The public works department now has maps of 1957, 1956 and 1955 on which the number and type of accident is available by the type and number of pins at accident locations.

Police use one red pin to indicate an accident involving either one or a number of cars. A blue pin indicates an accident involving pedestrian and a vehicle. A green pin means a collision between a bicycle and a car, occurred, and a red flag means five collisions at one location. A yellow flag means a collision in which there was an injury. A black flag indicates a collision in which a death occurred.

Easily Visible

Police use a map about five by seven feet. It is easily visible from several feet away and one can tell at a glance which Medford intersections are the most dangerous. The public works department uses a smaller scale map to make storage easier. The maps are in Vernon Thorpe's office where they are placed on the walls.

Police in charge of the map are Patrolman Ted Whisler and Lt. Rollie Pean, both on day shift. They also prepare the smaller maps at the end of the year for use by the public works department.

Medford police, although they never had conducted a drive for tickets and do not plan any drive, can tell at a glance what sections of the city are accident hazards and what type accident occurs at a particular point. Keeping the map's pins and flags in mind, patrolmen devote a longer period of time to traffic patrol in those sections.

Reports and old maps are kept in mind by Thorpe when considering improvements in the traffic control system. Each report is filed by streets. When a large number of accidents take place at an intersection which has no or little traffic control, Thorpe can tell at once by his file of accidents. It is then a simple matter to begin correction by use of traffic control.

Plans Improvement

Thorpe also can tell when a large number of accidents occur at a traffic controlled intersection. He then plans, with police department officials, means to improve control devices and what steps of improvement will be necessary.

Accidents are recorded from state accident reports turned in at the station, reports made by officers present at the scene and the total year's figures which are given to the department by the department of motor vehicles at the end of each year.

The project has grown into a major time-consuming job since it was put into operation several years ago. Not only because more complete records are kept, but the increasing number of accidents also is adding to the job.

The most dangerous intersection in Medford during 1957 was at Riverside ave. and Main st. Police recorded 16 accidents in which one person was injured at the intersection during the year. Main st. and Central ave. intersection was the second most dangerous, with 14 accidents involving two injuries.

Most Injuries

The intersection where the most injuries occurred during the year was Main and Front sts. There were three injuries and two pedestrians struck by vehicles at the location.

Other dangerous intersections during 1957, according to the police map, are 12th st. and Central ave., 13 accidents, three injuries; Sixth and Front sts., 14 collisions; Ninth st. and Central ave., 11 collisions; and Riverside ave. and McAndrews rd., 10 collisions, three injuries.

Police named the most accident-filled section of Medford during 1957 at Central

ave. between 12th and Jack sts. They reported 119 collisions in which there were eight injuries and one accident involving a pedestrian. Another dangerous section was on Main st. between the Bear Creek bridge and Holly sts. where 93 collisions occurred involving six injuries, three pedestrians and one death.

Traffic Deaths

Traffic deaths during the year numbered four but only two in what police termed the downtown section. One death was recorded at Fir and Main sts., one at Main st. and Riverside ave., one at Highway 62 and Delta Waters rd. and one on Highway 99 near a truck stop. Three of the deaths were pedestrians. The traffic fatality was at Highway 62 at Delta Waters rd.

Although police records show most accidents take place in the downtown section, there are several other areas where traffic collisions are frequent. The most dangerous section on the East side is Main st. between Crater Lake ave. and Cottage st. Police report 22 collisions involving one pedestrian in the one-block area.

Also listed as dangerous intersections are Stewart and Riverside aves. and the Big Y intersection of Highway 99, 62 and Table Rock rd. The McAndrews rd. and Court st. intersection also is dangerous. There were seven collisions there during 1957.

Causes Listed

Police Capt. Clyde Fichtner said the majority of the collisions in the downtown area were rear-end, side-swipes and head-ons. He said they were caused by drivers following too close, failing to maintain proper lookout, violation of basic rule, improper turns, improper lane usage and failing to yield the right-of-way.

Failing to maintain proper lookout and failing to yield the right-of-way caused most of the collisions in the downtown area, he said. He blamed most accidents on lack of driving courtesy and inattentiveness.

Fichtner said national research has proven that drivers involved in an accident are almost always in violation of some traffic law. "Someone is always doing something wrong in a collision," he said. Medford police officers do not cite drivers involved in collisions unless they see the accident or can make an investigation before cars are moved, police officials said. He said that most drivers are cited for failure to maintain proper lookout.

Another problem in enforcement are drivers who hit a parked car or object and then fail to leave information, Fichtner said. He explained that several accidents of this type occur during the winter when fog is heavy and driving conditions are poor.

Although damage may not appear to be great, drivers of cars involved in accidents are required to leave information on the damaged car and fill out an accident report, he warned.

1,006 Accidents

According to police records,

1,006 collisions took place in Medford last year. The month with the most recorded was August with 113. December followed with 111 accidents, January with 88 and March with 85. Fichtner said these months always rate high because of the fog during the winter months and the relaxed condition of drivers during August when there is a large number of cars on the highways.

About 94 per cent of the accidents involved two cars, about two per cent involved pedestrians and another 2 per cent were cars running off the road. Police officials are unable to explain how so many cars run off the road during dry summer months as during wet, foggy months.

The most collisions, broken down by days of the week, take place on Friday. These were 176 of the 1,006 accidents recorded on Friday. On Saturdays there were 169 and on Sundays, the safest, there were 104. Citations issued by police run about the same percentages, figures show. A total of 3,373 citations were issued for violations of driving laws during 1957.

The greatest number of citations were issued on Saturday with 595, while Fridays and Sundays there were 505 citations issued on those days.

Times of Day

Times of day for accidents show the 4 to 5 p.m. period the most dangerous. A total of 103 accidents took place in that period. Between midnight and 1 a.m. the greatest number of citations were issued, 222.

Police said drivers going to work in the 6 to 7 a.m. period violate many traffic regulations, as do people returning from parties and athletic events in the 10 to 11 p.m. period.

Two-thirds of the total of 1,006 accidents in Medford took place during the day, about 60 per cent in the downtown area, about 35 per cent in an intersection and about 21 per cent at a location where traffic control devices were in operation, police records show.

1,698 Drivers Involved

Of the 1,006 collisions, 1,698 drivers were involved. The largest single accident involved six drivers. About 80 per cent of the total drivers involved in accidents were men.

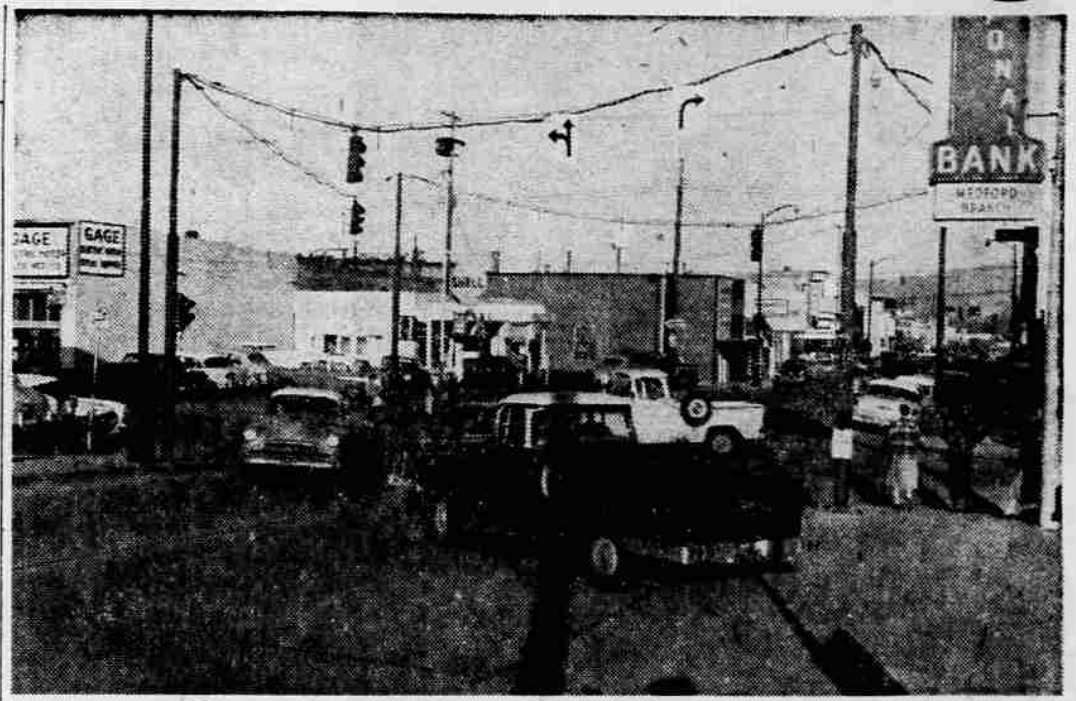
Some 335 drivers involved in collisions were in the 25 to 34 year group. There were 286 drivers in the 35 to 44 year age group. Police reported 15 collisions involved drivers less than 16 years old.

Injuries suffered in car collisions totaled 133. Fourteen were hurt in collisions involving cars and bicycles, and 20 were injured in car and pedestrian accidents, police said. Most injuries resulted when vehicles hit fixed objects.

Twenty-one persons in the 25 to 33 year age group were injured, and 18 in the 15 to 19 year age group were hurt.

Drivers Cited

Drivers were cited for a driving violation in 250 accidents. In 179 crashes drivers were cited for following too close.



POLICE RECORD 14 ACCIDENTS—Medford police reported 14 collisions at the Front and Sixth sts. intersection during 1957. Their records show this intersection is one of the most hazardous in the city despite being controlled with traffic signals for cars and pedestrians. The raised section of the street with lack of warning for the left turn lane for cars traveling west on Sixth st. is listed as a major hazard, according to a recent poll of drivers at the Southern Oregon Safety fair last fall.

A recent project of the Altrusa club, a women's service group, was a "traffic hazard" map at the Safety Fair last fall in the Medford armory. Visitors were invited to list the intersection or street he felt needed additional protection.

A total of 31 intersections were listed by 91 people. Fifth and Bartlett sts. was listed as where control is needed most because of the blind corners. Another was the Eighth st. and Oakdale ave. intersection where people complained of confusion due to parked cars.

Also Listed

The South Oakdale and Stewart aves. intersection also was listed because of a large hedge which blocks vision although there are traffic lights in operation at the intersection.

The board has been presented to the police and will be used in future consideration of traffic control, they said.

Police Chief Charles P. Champlin said, "he was discouraged after seeing the 1957 death and accident rate." He said despite increased enforcement, public education and engineering, all types of accidents increased. He said that enforcement would be focused on yielding the right-of-way to pedestrians because of the three deaths of pedestrians during 1957.

He said enlargement of the city by annexations would account for some of the increase as well as an increased number of cars on the road during the year.

First Of Refunds From Tax Received

Salem — Mrs. Maxine Delapp, Salem, has received the first of this year's record-breaking number of state income tax refund checks from the State Tax Commission.

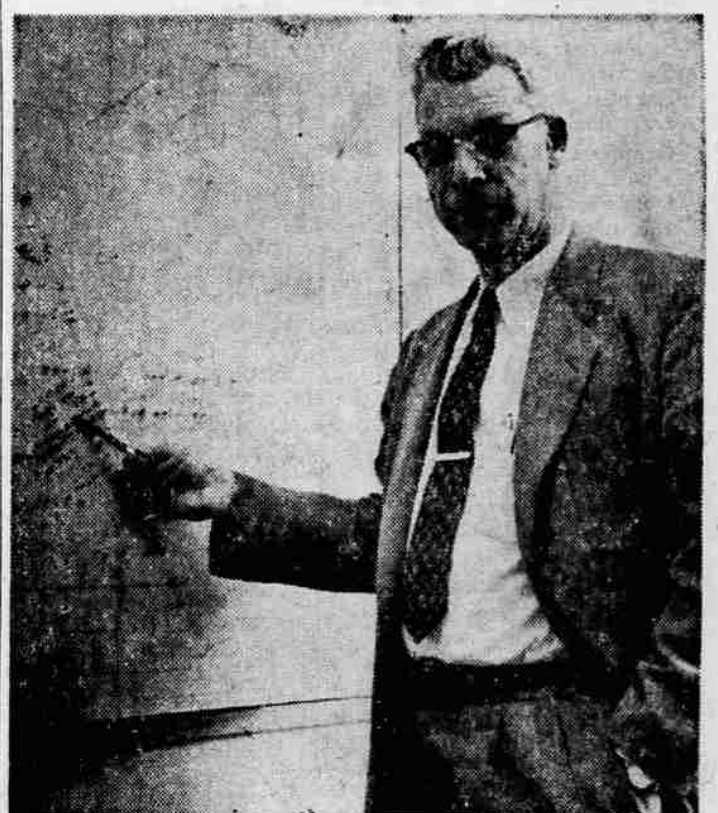
Mrs. Delapp, a secretary, received refund check number one from Gov. Robert D. Holmes at a ceremony in State Tax Commission offices here Friday.

As soon as the check came out of the IBM machine, it was signed by Commission Chairman S. W. Horn and delivered by the Governor.

More than 250,000 taxpayers are expected to file for refunds before the April 15 deadline. Last year more than five million dollars was paid out in refunds and the figure is expected to be higher this year.



LOOKS OVER FILES FOR MAIN ST.—Mrs. Opal Carter, secretary to City Attorney Roy Bashaw, looks over the file for Main st. in the police officer's reports which are kept in the department of public works. She and Mrs. Wilma Rauch keep the files up to date in addition to their regular duties. The file is located in such a manner that easy access is available to members of the planning department working on traffic control problems.



LOOKS OVER PUBLIC WORKS MAPS—Vernon Thorpe, city director of public works, looks over maps of past year's traffic accidents in his office. He uses the maps, with the records of accident reports, to have a current file on all dangerous intersections in Medford. The maps and file are referred to when corrections or additions to the traffic control system are made, he said.

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OFFICE WORK NEEDED FOR RECORDS—Mrs. Wilma Rauch, secretary to Vernon Thorpe, city director of public works, checks each police officer's report on collisions and then files them according to streets for future use by the traffic engineering department when they consider a change or additional traffic control signals.

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