This concept tries to provide more control of traffic, improved safety for pedestrians, continuation of existing parking and minimal widening.

The typical cross section of the road includes a median with a minimum width of 6 feet next to the left turn lanes. The width would provide an area wide enough for a pedestrian to stand on. The left turn lanes would be 12 feet wide, which is minimal width. The median would expand to at least 14 feet in areas where there are no left turn lanes.

A 9 feet wide parking lane on both sides of the street would be maintained. One through lane in each direction would be provided. The through lane would be 14 feet wide next to the left turn lanes and 15 or 16 feet next to the wide median areas. The wider through lane is needed for parking maneuvers, friction with parked cars, possible mid block pedestrian crossings, commercial traffic, and potential bicyclists.

The left turn lanes will provide a storage area for traffic waiting to turn left and will virtually eliminate the through traffic delays associated with the left turns. Equally important is the elimination of through traffic bypassing left turning traffic by swerving to the curb lane to pass on the right. This maneuver is of special concern where pedestrians are crossing.

Pedestrians crossing Cascade Ave. at an intersection will only have to cross ½ of the roadway at a time. Even though by law pedestrians have the right of way at an intersection, it is safer if pedestrians can cross one direction of traffic at a time. Observations of traffic have shown motorists are more likely to yield to a pedestrian on a divided roadway than on an open roadway.

Pedestrians crossing Cascade Ave at locations other than an intersection will also have a safer environment. While these crossings will always be hazardous and should be discouraged, they will occur under the existing parking concepts and with the location of the pedestrian generators and routes. Pedestrians again will only have to cross one direction of traffic at a time and have the safety benefits of a median waiting area.

A raised median coupled with parked vehicles should have some “traffic calming” effect on traffic and speeds should be lower. The extra lane width provided for parking maneuvers will reduce the traffic calming effects.

Parking can be virtually maintained along Cascade Ave. Any change in number of parking spaces will be small. Parallel parking maneuvers will be a little more difficult with the median. There is no opportunity for motorists to drive around the parking vehicle by traveling into the opposite
direction lane. This could be considered a safety benefit but also a travel time deterrent. One concern is the impact of a car door opening into the single through lane of traffic.

The medians also help define the location and limits of intersections. Cascade Ave motorists will be more aware of the intersection and its potential conflicts. A few potential conflicts are eliminated (by-passing traffic), and conflict areas are better defined. The median better defines lanes at intersections, both for through traffic and entering traffic. The median is also a barrier and prevents mid block turns further reducing conflicts.

The width of the median and the need to maintain intersection sight distance will limit the areas where any raised beautification efforts can take place. Low level planting areas and a few open areas for taller plantings, etc would be available.

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