

TO: Citizens Advisory Traffic Commission

FROM: Kevin Hottmann, PE, City Traffic Engineer
Public Works Department

DATE: December 18, 2019

SUBJECT: **Appeal of a Left-turn Restriction for Northbound Traffic on 12th Street SE at Cannon Street SE**

Issue

Should the City remove the existing Left-Turn sign for northbound traffic on 12th Street SE at Cannon Street SE (Attachments A)?

Background

In November 2018, the City completed widening 12th Street SE by adding a second southbound lane. In order to preserve two historic homes, the project was not able to widen the road enough to maintain a two-way left-turn lane on 12th Street SE at Cannon Street SE.

The City placed a No Left-Turn sign on 12th Street SE at Cannon Street SE because vehicles wanting to make the left turn onto Cannon Street SE would have to stop in the only northbound through lane to make the turn. The City was concerned this would result in blocked traffic and create a potential for rear-end crashes. Northbound traffic on 12th Street SE destined for Cannon Street SE could continue north for one block and use McGilchrist Avenue SE to loop around back to Cannon Street SE (Attachment B).

When the intersection was posted with the turn restriction, staff received an email from WaterLab Corp. regarding the turn restriction and the inconvenience for truck access to their business (Attachment C). Staff decided to wait and let the restriction remain to determine if any issues with the restriction developed. There have been no issues with the turn restriction in place.

In the beginning of November 2019, staff received a letter from WaterLab Corp. officially requesting the restriction be removed (Attachment D).

The City will post notice of the proposed Citizen Advisory Traffic Commission (CATC) hearing at the intersection from December 30, 2019, to January 7, 2020.

Existing Conditions

12th Street SE is listed as a major arterial street within the *Salem Transportation System Plan* (Salem TSP). It is fully improved and varies in width from 60 feet at Fairview Avenue SE to 48 feet at Cannon Street SE.

Facts and Findings

The CATC, under the authority of *Salem Revised Code* Chapter 5.030, is an advisory body for the Public Works Director and City Council on matters related to traffic and parking control.

Staff posted a No Left-Turn sign on 12th Street SE at Cannon Street SE when the left-turn lane was removed for that turn.

There is no data available regarding crashes prior to the installation of the No Left-Turn sign. Subsequent to the completion of the project and the restriction of the left turn, there are no reported crashes in this area.

Staff Recommendation

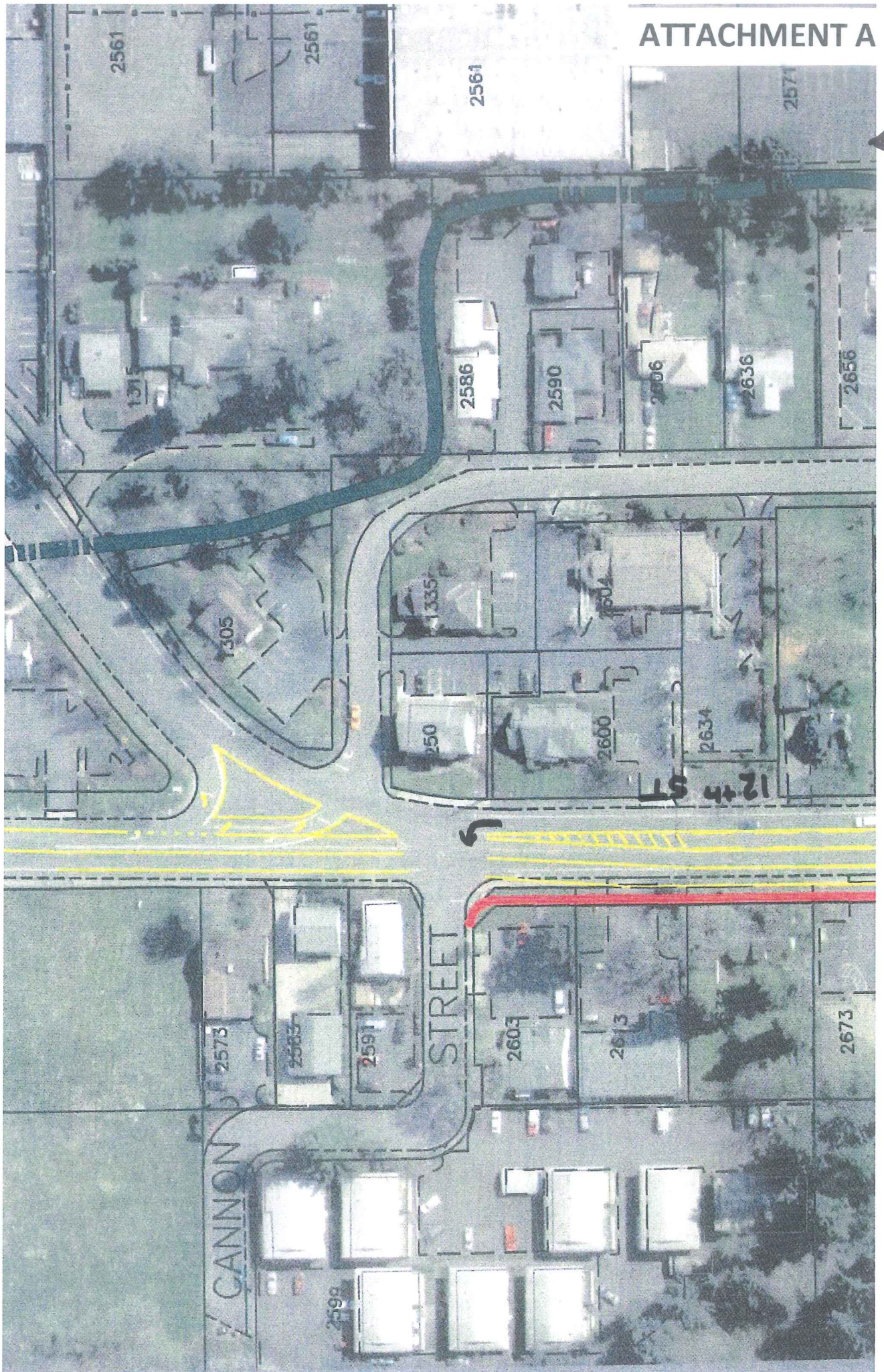
Staff recommends the turn restriction remain in place on 12th Street SE at Cannon Street SE.

Attachments:

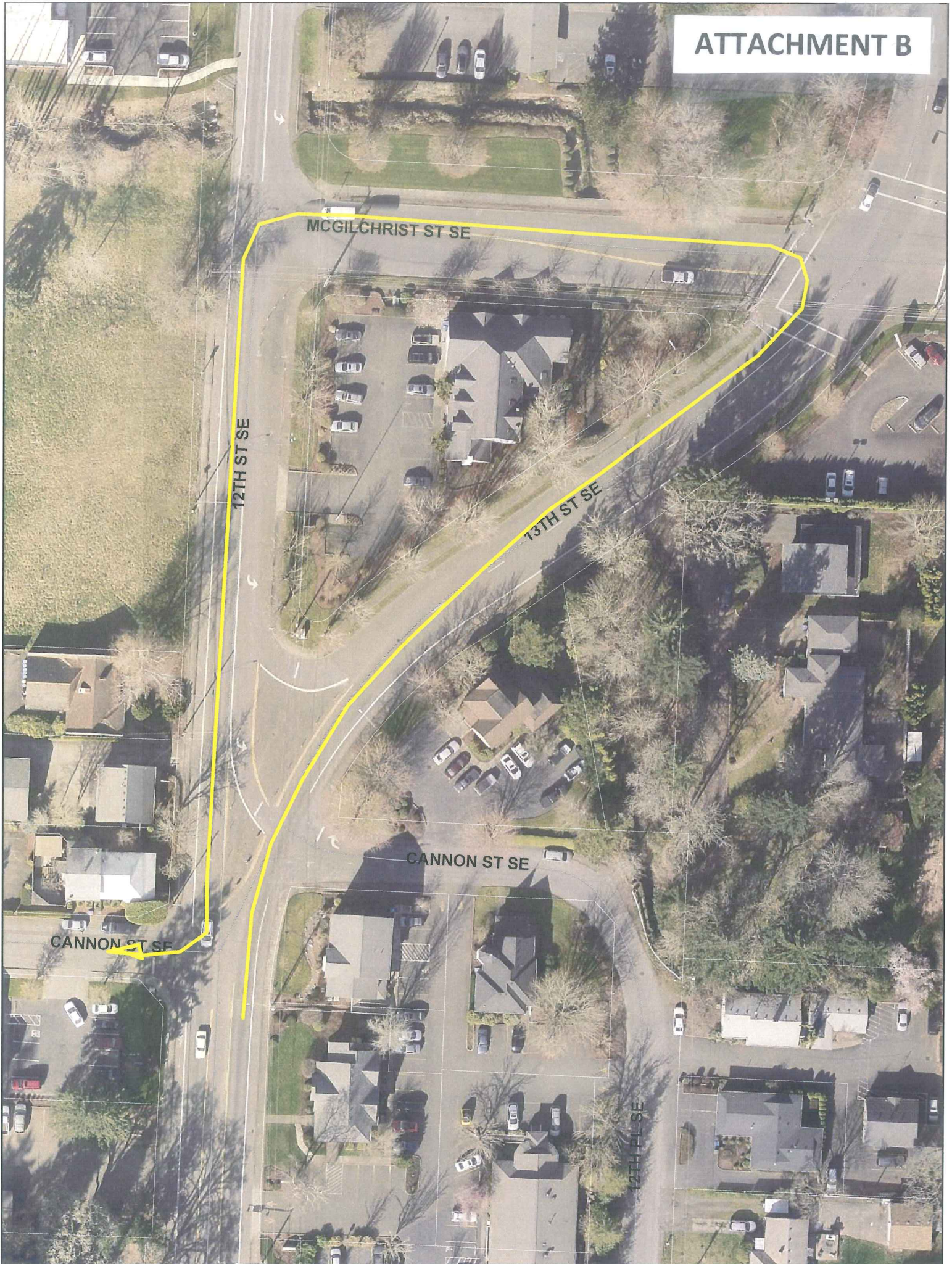
- A. Map of 12th Street SE at Cannon Street SE
- B. Aerial map of 12th Street SE at Cannon Street SE
- C. Email from WaterLab Corp
- D. Letter from WaterLab Corp

cc: File

ATTACHMENT A



ATTACHMENT B



MCGILCHRIST ST SE

12TH ST SE

13TH ST SE

CANNON ST SE

CANNON ST SE

12TH PL SE

ATTACHMENT C

From: Waterlab Corp <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, November 5, 2018 10:12 AM
To: Tom Andersen
Subject: 12th Street work

Hello, Councilor Anderson,
I have owned a business at 2603 12th Street for decades (Waterlab Corp.).

We have endured months of construction, heavy equipment parked in front of our signage for months, cut phone lines, etc.

But NOW last week a "No Left Turn" sign went up on 12th Street disallowing cars from turning left when coming from the south onto our side street of Cannon.

This is a major problem for our customers who are public works people, well drillers, pump repair companies who drive large rigs. Going north and turning left onto McGilchrist and then left again at 12th street to come to Cannon from the north is a true hardship in a large rig. But even those are not easy turns in large rigs. The turn at McGilchrist from 12th Street is a very odd angle and trucks would probably hold up cars heading east or they would have to back up to accommodate the rigs.

In addition, I was told by city workers that the left turn lane WOULD still be there in front of my office so I don't think they know how to read their plans. No one mentioned a "No left turn" sign on 12th Street.

There are many many places in Salem where traffic is held while a traffic makes a left turn.

My business needs my customers to be allowed to make a left turn here during business hours.

Please let me know what I can do about this.

Regards,
Beth Myers
Owner
Waterlab Corp.
2603 12th St. SE
Salem, OR 97302
503-363-0473

Accredited Lab #OR100039

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Salem, Oregon 97302
(503) 363-0473
FAX (503) 363-8900

October 30, 2019

Kevin Hottman
City of Salem Traffic Engineer
555 Liberty St. SE
Room 325
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Mr. Hottman,

Waterlab Corp. respectfully requests the removal of the "No Left Turn" sign at 12th St. and Cannon St. SE.

This sign was put up after the 12th Street work completion in late spring 2019. Previously there was a middle turn lane on 12th Street that accommodated this turn. After the revamping of 12th street, there was no longer any room for the middle turn lane in the area of Cannon St. I had specifically asked at the project planning meetings if there would still be a turn lane at Cannon and was told there would be. However, it was not in the final project.

Our reasons for this request are:

- 1) The revamping of 12th Street included the placement of a traffic light at 12th and McGilchrist. This allows a major break in southbound traffic because there is generally not many cars that turn onto 12th St. from McGilchrist. It is not unusual for there to be no vehicles between McGilchrist and Cannon leaving a very clear path for left turns many many times a day.
- 2) Our customers who drive trucks (well drilling equipment/trailers, pump companies, etc.) tell us they have an easier time turning directly left onto Cannon than going further north to McGilchrist where the intersection is slanted. The streets north of that McGilchrist intersection (on 13th and trying to cut across to 12th) are narrow and full of huge potholes. The sightline on those cross streets to turn back onto 12th is also problematic, particularly for someone with a trailer. The trucks would need to go 9 blocks north to Hines St SE to have a decent roadway to cross over to 12th St., then return those 9 blocks to Cannon St. SE.

- 3) Most of the southbound vehicles are in the east southbound lane or are trying to get over from the west southbound lane. Since the southbound traffic is stopped anyway waiting to get to the light at Fairview St. SE, it is easy to make a left turn even with traffic.
- 4) The northbound traffic is already moving slowing in preparation for the light at 13th and McGilchrist. There is an overhead set of blinking lights on 12th St., south of the "No Left Turn" sign so those are seen first, to slow cars and prepare them for the stop light at McGilchrist, thus stopping for a left turning car does not impact driving time much for people. They sit behind a turning car or at the McGilchrist light.
- 5) People turn anyway. Many appear to still not notice the sign and I know that is not unusual with a traffic change. There is a 36-unit apartment complex behind the lab so there are actually a lot of left turns going on. Many of the medical workers in the complex that links up with Cannon also make left turns onto Cannon in the AM rather than wait at the McGilchrist light.
- 6) There have been no recorded accidents at the site since the traffic change. But Waterlab has been at this location since 1979 with multiple lane configurations on 12th St. and there have been very very few accidents.

I contrast this with the route I take home which is Hwy. 22 and south on Lancaster Dr. I live on Aumsville Hwy. It is common to see near rear end collisions on the section between Hwy. 22 and Cordon Rd. For some reason, drivers do not seem to be prepared to stop for left-turn drivers for the streets on the left (Cranston, Sylvia and into 2 mobile parks as well as into some apartment complexes). The additional truck traffic from industrial development, the curves and no sidewalks make it a harrowing stretch of highway. The left turn situation at 12th St is not like this.

Once again, we request the removal of the "No Left Turn" sign on 12th St SE and Cannon SE in Salem.

Regards,


Beth Myers
President