

Youngberg, Hampton disagree on radial options

Youngberg says radial defies logic



Photo by Mark Billingsley

Eric Youngberg

Editor's note: The Northeast Radial is a roadway designed as an outlet to Northeast Lincoln. Three plans have been proposed for the roadway. The first, called the no-build plan, calls for not building the roadway at all. The second, the 19th Street plan, places the radial through 19th Street. And the third, the 22nd Street plan, calls for building the radial through 22nd Street. Both stories were written by Maureen Costello.

City Councilman Eric Youngberg thinks UNL students are being misled about the effect the Northeast Radial will have on the UNL campus.

In the Sept. 26 Daily Nebraskan, it was reported that if 17th Street was used for the radial, parking for Cather-Pound, Neihardt, and Abel-Sandoz residence halls would be reduced and the intramural athletic field near Cather-Pound would be eliminated.

Youngberg said no 17th Street alternative exists, and if the 19th Street option were implemented, approximately one row of parking and one-fourth of the athletic field would be taken.

"I think UNL can replace a row of parking and a fourth of a baseball field a little easier than we can replace the Malone neighborhood," Youngberg said.

In 1967, when plans for the Northeast Radial were initiated, auto sales were on the increase, cars were larger, urban sprawl in Lincoln was rampant, bus usage was declining, there were vacancies in central Lincoln, and gasoline was thirty-five cents a gallon, Youngberg said.

Today, with plans for the radial still moving along, auto sales have decreased, cars are smaller and developers can't sell or pay assessments on land they have developed, he said.

Currently, the city can't buy enough buses, buses are used 30 percent more; vacancy in downtown Lincoln is less than 1.5 percent and gas (the last time Youngberg checked) was \$1.20 a gallon, he said.

Yet Lincoln still plans to build a six-lane divided highway that "defies all logic and reason," Youngberg said.

When the radial was planned, there was a concern to keep the downtown viable. The Chamber of Commerce thinks this depends on an efficient expansion of streets to lessen the time it takes to travel downtown, Youngberg said.

Maybe even more frustrating than knowing Lincoln doesn't need the radial is knowing that the radial doesn't go anywhere, he said.

In 1977, the radial was cut in half and "dead ended" at 27th and Fair Streets, he said.

"A six-lane highway doesn't just dead end. This is just the beginning. If this much of the radial is built now, it will continue further east later," he said.

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Hampton favors 22nd Street radial



Photo by Mark Billingsley

Joe Hampton

City Councilman Joe Hampton said he thinks there are many advantages to a 22nd Street Northeast Radial option.

Unlike City Councilman Eric Youngberg, who favors the 19th Street option, Hampton said he favors a plan that would put a radial through 22nd Street.

From 22nd Street west, the bulk of the land in the corridor planned for the radial is owned either by UNL, the city or private commercial operations, he said.

"Little is left in private residential ownership, and generous benefits will be available to them," Hampton said.

An owner has to do what he feels is best for his property, Hampton said. But he said he thinks enough money will be available that land owners will sell their land.

But if the 19th Street option is used, he said, the city won't be able to offer enough money to land owners to encourage them to sell their property.

"There is no way they are going to release their ground to the city for the price being offered to them," he said.

He said that Commonwealth Electric and a concrete plant are in the middle of the 19th Street option, and to get control of the businesses' land, the city would have to file condemnation actions in court. He said he thinks the court would award the companies the same amount that is now projected for the entire project.

Hampton said the 22nd Street radial would allow UNL to close 16th and 17th streets and would enable long-term growth for UNL. Hampton said the only logical way for UNL to grow is east to 20th Street on land they now own.

The radial also will give new access to the Fairgrounds and to the Bob Devaney Sports Center, Hampton said. He said the radial will eventually extend to the inter-

state, creating integral access off the interstate to downtown.

The radial also will alleviate traffic flow on Holdrege Street, he said. He added that Holdrege Street was designed to carry 8,000 to 9,000 cars, but now carries an average of 14,000 to 15,000. All arterial streets are operating at or above designed capacity, he said.

Hampton said he thinks ending the radial at 27th Street is a mistake. The city owns 95 percent of the land needed for the radial from 27th Street to 48th Street and 85 percent of that is already cleared, he said.

"There will be a point in time when the traffic buildup will have no alternative but to go into the neighborhoods," he said. "If neighborhoods don't want the radial, they must be willing to accept more traffic."

"The vitality of any economy or society depends on the strong efficient means of carrying out trade, commerce and traffic. Most backward, struggling areas have an inadequate transportation system."

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Retailer: Doctors' scrub suits are a 'hot item'

By Kathy Harmon

Picture this . . . your time has come . . . time for the old tonsils to come out. Your surgeon comes in wearing cut-offs and a white T-shirt. Why? Because all the scrub suits suddenly have disappeared.

It may sound like fantasy, but if the disappearance of the outfits used by doctors continues, it may not be far from the truth.

According to Doris Michelsen of Dory's Inc., manufacturer of the suits, they are a "hot item" right now. So hot, in fact, that Michelsen has branched off into the retail business.

The company recently advertised in the three area college newspapers, and the response for the suits was excellent, she said. Sales reached about 1,000 from the ad which ran consecutively for a few days, she said. They

were advertised for \$18 for top and bottom, and purchasers could choose from blue, jade green and misty.

Michelsen said she cannot explain why people would want the suits.

'No shape or fit'

She described the suit as "not having any shape or fit . . . just a V-neck pullover shirt and drawstring pants that hardly stay up."

She said some of the outfits are reversible if they are ones actually used in hospitals.

Michelsen said the suits take about five minutes to make. Her Omaha business has grown in the last three years from a sheet mender and recycler in her home to a full-fledged surgery suit manufacturer and use of about 30 machines, she said.

The company recently began to sell to many well-known retail outfits in Omaha and demand is up, Michelsen said.

She said the only problem with new suits is that customers really prefer those that look used. She said some customers even ask for the most-faded versions or ask for patches to be sewn on the new models to give a worn or "authentic" appearance.

She said the suits are sold to hospitals in large quantities of about 10,000 for about \$12.

Michelsen said one reason the suits may be so popular is their connection with doctors, who have traditionally worn them.

'The shabbier, the better'

Whatever it is, Michelsen said, business is good. All the suits are saleable "and the shabbier, the better," she said.

The director of Linen Service for several Omaha and Lincoln hospitals has another version of the suit disappearance mystery. Kasmer Konczak said the trend is hurting his business and making it harder to keep hospitals supplied.

"We can send the hospital a six-day supply, then suddenly they will run short and we will have to find more just to keep them in suits," Konczak said.

He said the fad is not limited to the Omaha-Lincoln area.

"It is all over the country. I belong to a laundry association and all the directors have the same disappearance complaint. Even though they are selling at retail, people don't want to pay the price if they can get one for less or for free."

The director said that one of the largest manufacturers that supplied him last year went into business to produce the suits for a retail market.

Some hospitals are even making them in ugly colors so they won't be as popular, according to Konczak. He said University Hospital in Iowa City, Iowa, has begun to outfit surgeons in an "ugly pink" to discourage theft. He said writing the hospital's name on them has only made the suits more valuable.

"It's a big problem for us," he said. "We can't keep up with the demand."

One Lincoln hospital reportedly may try to make the most of a good thing—by offering the surgeon outfits for sale in their gift shop.



inside tuesday

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