

P Street conversion to two-way coming soon

BY LINDSEY WRIGHT
Staff Reporter

When returning college students turn down P Street this fall they might be shocked to see traffic in an oncoming lane.

For the first time in nearly 30 years, P Street will be converted back to a two-way roadway.

The goal of turning P Street, between 9th and 17th streets, into a two-way is to strengthen the link between downtown and the Haymarket, said Dallas McGee, assistant director of Lincoln Urban Development.

In the 1980s the Haymarket's P and Q streets were one-way. However, when they were changed to two-way streets the traffic slowed, said McGee.

The Haymarket became pedestrian friendly, which created a better environment for sidewalk cafes and small shops. Slowing traffic on P Street should help produce that same environment, McGee said.

"The most important part of the project is encouraging private businesses to invest along the street," McGee said.

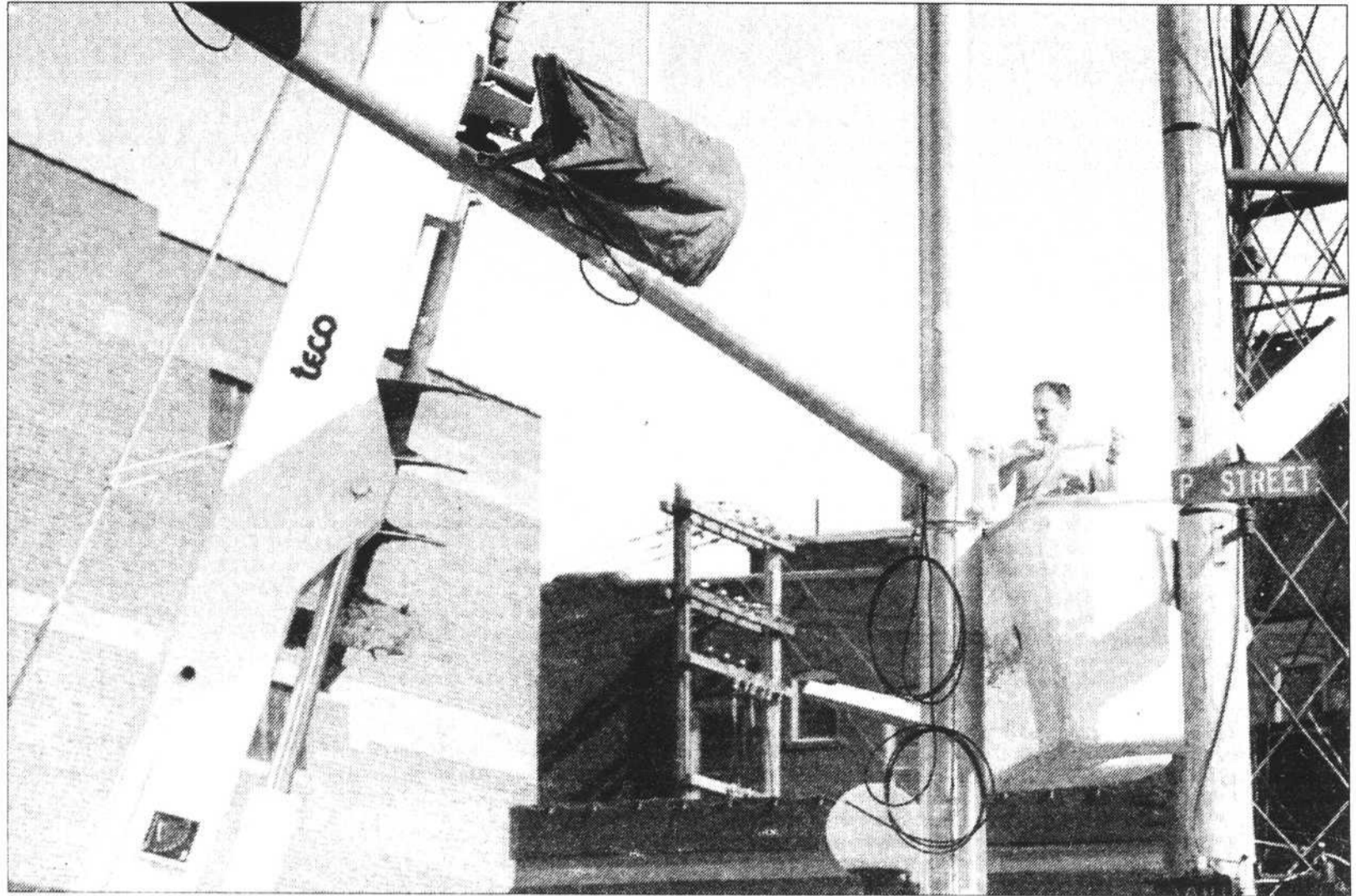
Some feel, though, that until construction is completed some businesses will be hurt by the change.

"The construction is making everything look a lot less attractive," said Sandy Lemen, an employee of the Coffee House, 1324 P St.

Trees have been cut down and traffic doesn't easily flow down the street, Lemen said. The inconvenience may deter potential customers, especially new students, she added.

"Right now, everyone is just stressed," Lemen said.

Construction is expected to be completed by the end of the year. The two-way traffic flow will be



augmented by new sidewalks, trees and new businesses such as the Embassy Suites hotel, McGee said.

For the already established businesses on P Street, the end product may prove to be a much needed change of atmosphere.

"Driving around downtown will be made easier and people will probably be more inclined to shop," said Stephen Wasile, an employee at the Post and Nickel, 144 N. 14th St. "It will be easier to park, too."

SAM CLUXTON WORKS on the P Street traffic signals Wednesday morning. Cluxton works for ABC Electric, the company in charge of changing the traffic signals from one-way to two-way on P Street.

DAWN DIETRICH/DN

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