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This regards closing Glenn Street and part of Laurel Street at the railroad tracks.

Instead of funding an engineering study, please direct staff and Traffic Safety Commission to work with the neighborhood to study the entire safety situation. Our neighborhood has a triple whammy occurring on Laurel Street.

(1) We have increased traffic from 72 lots in Billings subdivision, including heavy trucks, and the potential opening of Randy Street sometime in the future.

(2) We have increased traffic from the proposed 21-lot Otis Street subdivision at the site of the Helman Baths.

(3) Closing Glenn Street would shift traffic to the school zone on Laurel Street, which is getting more traffic from 2 new subdivisions.

This triple whammy is being dumped into the Laurel LID and will result in liens on people's homes.

When this issue first came up in 2004, over 90% of those surveyed in the Laurel St area were opposed to closing Glenn Street, primarily on safety grounds. It would push traffic into the school zone. Also, making people go out of their way leads them to speed up, which is counter-productive. They believed that concentrating traffic in the school zone is an endangerment, not an improvement.

Not one person in Public Works or Traffic Safety Commission spoke that closing all traffic at Glenn St would be a safety improvement. The reason to do it is because ODOT-Rail (not regular ODOT) wants to meet a numerical goal of the number of railroad crossings, and picked Ashland to help do it. They want to pay us to close that intersection. Closing a crossing does not decrease the number of cars crossing the railroad tracks. Instead, it would move traffic from Glenn Street to Laurel at Hersey, where the railroad tracks go through the middle of the intersection. I have not heard anyone say that intersection would be safer.

A Traffic Safety Commissioner called this a "bribe". We don't need a bribe to do an unsafe project. Public Works isn't telling you that this would increase safety. Most people in the neighborhood reported that it hurts safety and would endanger their children and grandchildren.

We don't need a bribe to do a project that doesn't make safety sense.

We need a collaborative effort between the neighborhood, Public Works, and Traffic Safety Commission to improve overall traffic safety in the neighborhood. Traffic Safety Commission has already said they want to study safety on a neighborhood level, not just approve projects. The Laurel Street section of Quiet Village is an excellent place to do this because of the triple whammy we face.

Instead of throwing money at an engineering study that doesn't improve safety, let's invest in openness and collaboration. Use the money from this unneeded engineering study to pay down AFN debt.

It's time for dialogue, not dollars.