

Dear Road Wizard: Going north on Locust Grove Road and crossing Fairview Avenue, a median barrier has been installed, evidently without notifying Walgreen's. You can no longer turn left into Walgreen's. Whose bright idea was this? J.O.@"

Walgreen's (or its developer) agreed to the median before the property was developed and put the money for it in ACHD's trust fund. The deal was that ACHD would install it when needed. Walgreen's may not have notified its floor personnel about this tiny bit of history.

When the property adjacent to Carol Street sought commercial rezoning, ACHD installed the median. Pre-median, the daily drill was head-to-head confrontation and congestion in Locust Grove's center lane: southbound turning left, northbound turning left.

With even more commercial land use on Locust Grove, the center-lane jams - and the crash count - had no way to go but worse.

The median restored refuges for northbound drivers turning left into Carol Street and southbound drivers turning left onto Fairview Fred Meyer's first driveway, which is too close to the Fairview intersection to expect full-service access forever and has become Right-In/Right-Out.

The customers leaving Walgreen's and wanting to go north can do legal U-turns at Fairview. You, stopping at Walgreen's on your northbound trip up Locust Grove, must now make your left turn onto Fairview and then turn right into the parking lot next to Walgreen's. Not as intimate, but less thrilling.

Dear Road Wizard: Do signal controllers know the days of the week? I exit Interstate 84 westbound to Meridian Road and wait to turn left about 7:10 a.m. On weekdays, I expect to wait a long time, but on weekends, no cars are in sight, but I still have to wait. T.B.@"

Nearly all the controllers in Ada County are literate enough to know the day of the week. Your beef is with the human who selects the weekend routine.

After the Friday evening commute, which ends at 6:30 p.m., your signal goes to "free" mode for the night. The light stays green for Meridian Road until someone shows up at the off-ramp. After Meridian gets the usual few seconds of yellow and all-red lights, off-ramp traffic gets its green.

On Saturday morning at 8 a.m., things change. The system goes to a 120-second cycle and gives more "guaranteed" green time for Meridian than the off-ramp. The signal goes back to free mode at 8 p.m. On Sunday, it runs the 120-second cycle from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Saturday used to run free, but this stopped working well after

we invited a large population to live south of I-84. This crowd is up and about by 8 a.m., hot to shop and do errands north of the freeway.

The 120-second cycle means that if you arrive on the off-ramp just after you miss a green opportunity, your worst-case wait will last about 100 seconds.

Thanks to your letter, ACHD found an incorrect setting that might have been interfering with your "free" experience at 7:10 a.m. It's fixed now. Right?

Dear Road Wizard: How much longer before the bridge is built connecting Chinden Boulevard with McMillan Road? B.W.@

If you missed it in the regular news, bridge construction is starting. Should be well and truly done by April. The McMillan/Maple Grove intersection has closed.

Dear R.L. re the visual obstruction on the northwest corner of Warbonnet Drive and S. Cole Road:

The property owner also is quite concerned about safety and is working cooperatively with ACHD to re-shape the landscaping.