

# PORTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

## CITY OF PORTLAND INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE (NOT FOR MAILING)

May 24, 1966

From Dept. of Public Works, City Planning Commission

To Dept. of Public Works

Addressed to Commissioner William A. Bowes

Subject Skyline Boulevard

Dear Commissioner Bowes:

Transmitted herewith are copies of our report: <u>Park-way Development for Skyline Boulevard</u>. This report was approved by the City Planning Commission April 19, 1966.

The Planning Commission suggests that this report be presented to the Council at an informal session. The essential recommendation of the report is the establishment of a policy for widening of Skyline Boulevard's right-ofway at the time subdivision plats are approved by either the City or the County and by establishing setback lines. Very little development has occurred along Skyline Boulevard and now is the time to agree on a policy so that the expense of obtaining right-of-way for future parkway development can be held to a mere fraction of what it would cost to buy the land and demolish buildings.

If you wish to have the various City and County officials read this report prior to the Council's consideration, we shall be glad to deliver copies to them.

Also returned herewith is Council Calendar No. 1888 (1964), the report of the City Engineer dated May 14, 1964, recommending approval of the proposed vacation of streets in Kruse Heights initiated by Resolution No. 29237, requested by the Commissioner of Finance.

As a result of conflict between the views of the City Engineer's Office and the City Planning Commission with respect to the desirable future right-of-way width for Skyline Boulevard, revealed in connection with their respective recommendations concerning requested vacation of unused and unneeded streets within Kruse Heights in Quarter Section 2116, both the City Engineer and the Planning Commission were asked to reconsider their recommendations. Commissioner Bowes Skyline Boulevard

In his May 14, 1964, report, the City Engineer had stated that the existing 60 foot right-of-way on Skyline Boulevard was adequate. In a report of May 7, 1964, the City Planning Commission had recommended approval of the requested vacation of streets, provided that a strip of land 20 ft. wide was dedicated along the Skyline Boulevard frontage of the property owned by Father Milan Mikulich's parish, for future widening of Skyline Boulevard to a dedicated width of 100 ft.

As requested, the City Planning Commission has again considered the proposed vacation, taking into account the City Engineer's August 24, 1964 supplemental report on this matter which recommends dedication of 10 ft. from the property owned by Father Milan Milulich's parish, for the purpose of ultimate widening of the right-of-way of Skyline Boulevard to 80 ft.

The Commission also has reconsidered the proposed vacation of streets in Kruse Heights in the light of the attached report, and reaffirms its previous recommendation (May 7, 1964) of "Approval of the vacation of all streets and blocks in Kruse Heights, a subdivision of Tracts 4 and 5, Skyline Acres, provided that a strip of land 20 ft. wide is dedicated along the NW Skyline Boulevard frontage of the property owned by Father Milan Mikulich's parish for future widening of NW Skyline Boulevard to a dedicated width of 100 feet."

Respectfully submitted,

floyd T. Kefe

Lloyd T. Keefe Planning Director

LTK/yh

Attachments

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## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adoption of the West Hills Scenic Route and connections as shown on Figure 2 as part of a Comprehensive Plan for Scenic Routes and Drives throughout the City of Portland.
- 2. That the City of Portland Park Bureau Director, City Engineer, Traffic Engineer, and Planning Director be authorized to proceed, in cooperation with the Multnomah County Roadmaster, Planning Director, and Parks Director, and with the Metropolitan Planning Director, on studies necessary to complete a detailed plan for desirable expansion of Forest Park and future acquisition of certain properties abutting the right-of-way of Skyline Boulevard between Cornell and Newberry Roads, which are needed to make Skyline Boulevard a scenic route with turnouts and viewpoints.
- 3. That expansion of Forest Park and development of Skyline Boulevard as a scenic route proceed in the following steps:
  - A. Adoption of 100 feet minimum dedicated width as the desired minimum standard for that portion of Skyline Boulevard between Cornell Road on the south and Newberry Road on the north which is proposed to be a major element of the West Hills Scenic Route System shown on Figure 2.
  - B. That the City Council seek an agreement with Multnomah County that a 100 foot wide right-of-way for Skyline Boulevard between Cornell Road and Newberry Road be obtained by means of the following:
    - a. Establishment of setbacks along both sides of Skyline Boulevard, such setbacks to be 80 feet from the centerline of the present 60 foot rightof-way, thus allowing both for 20 foot widening and the 30 foot front yard required in the existing Rl0 zoning (both City and County).
    - b. Acquisition by the City and County through dedications of land for street purposes, either as portions of approved subdivisions of land or in exchange for vacations of existing street areas.

- C. That the City Park Bureau, in cooperation with Multnomah County and as funds permit, acquire properties to:
  - a. Provide turnouts and viewpoints along Skyline Boulevard between Cornell Road and Newberry Road where detailed planning shows them to be desirable. (See Figure 3)
  - b. Provide for a divided parkway along Skyline Boulevard between Cornell Road and Newberry Road where detailed planning shows such divided parkway is needed to make the fullest possible use of turnouts and viewpoints and to insure park-like character along the Boulevard. Such parkway to utilize the existing Skyline Boulevard as two lanes southbound in combination with a new two-lane roadway northbound, and to extend from a point approximately 1,000 feet south of N.W. Thompson Road on the south to a point approximately 2,500 feet south of Newberry Road on the north. (See Figure 3)
  - c. Expand Forest Park westward to Skyline Boulevard, where detailed planning indicates this to be desirable, between a point approximately 1,000 feet south of Thompson Road on the south and a point approximately 2,500 feet south of Newberry Road on the north. (See Figure 3)
  - d. Expand Forest Park westward and southward from the present boundaries on Thompson and Cornell Roads in order to insure future park-like character along both Thompson and Cornell Roads in the area east of Skyline Boulevard. (See Figure 3)
- 4. That the City of Portland Highway Coordinator, Traffic Engineer and Planning Director be authorized to proceed, in cooperation with the Washington and Multnomah County Roadmasters and Planning Directors and with the Metropolitan Planning Director, with studies necessary to present to the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Transportation Study organization a specific proposal for routing of a west side circumferential expressway extending from the west end of the St. Johns Bridge, around the major population and traffic areas of the city, to a connection with the Baldock Freeway in the southwesterly portion of the city. (See Figure 2)

## PURPOSE OF STUDY

As a result of difference between the views of the City Engineer's Office and the City Planning Commission with respect to the desirable future right-of-way width for Skyline Boulevard, the Planning Commission has attempted, in this study, to determine what the City of Portland's policy should be with respect to the function of Skyline Boulevard within the City transportation system,

The Commission has also attempted to determine how Skyline Boulevard should be developed to adequately perform its function with the city transportation system. Obviously, the type of development needed will influence the right-of-way width for Skyline Boulevard.

## SITUATION OF SKYLINE BOULEVARD

Skyline Boulevard is located in the northwest guarter of Portland. At its southerly end it connects with Scholls Ferry Road and intersects Sunset Highway (U.S. 26), the major highway between Portland and the Coast, approximately at the crest of the pass over Portland's West Hills (the Tualatin Mountains). From that location, Skyline Boulevard extends northwesterly approximately 12 miles to an intersection with Cornelius Pass Road. Cornelius Pass Road follows the only pass through the West Hills between the northerly part of the Tualatin Valley, located on Portland's west side, and the Columbia River Valley and connections with the Portland-St. Helens-Astoria Highway (U.S. 30).

From Cornelius Pass Road, Skyline Boulevard extends on northwesterly approximately six miles along the mountain ridge overlooking the Columbia River, to an intersection with Rocky Point Road which crosses this ridge just south of Dixie Mountain, the highest point on the ridge. Beyond Dixie Mountain the ridge connects with the mountain complex (Tualatin Mountains) lying between the Columbia River and the Nehalem River drainage area round Vernonia.

Through most of its length, Skyline Boulevard is on the crest of the West Hills ridge and is bordered for the greater part by wooded areas. This leads many persons to believe that this scenic route is within or adjoining Forest Park, the great natural park which has been acquired by the City of Portland and extends from N.W. Cornell Road on the south to Newberry Road on the north (approximately the southerly end of Sauvies Island). The fact is that Forest Park occupies the easterly side of the West Hills, and its western boundary extends to Skyline Boulevard at only three locations, all between Germantown Road and Newberry Road.

For most of its length, Skyline Boulevard is located outside of the City of Portland and within the jurisdiction of Multnomah County. Consequently, any planning for widening and development of this street must be carried out in cooperation with Multnomah County. In any event, it should be conducted with reference to comprehensive planning.

## HISTORY

Skyline Boulevard has a long and interesting history. One story is that Skyline had its beginning as an Indian tral between Sauvies Island which was a meeting place for the Willamette Indian tribes, and Council Crest, where the chiefs allegedly met in tribal council. Whether this is fact of fancy is uncertain.

Certainly, Skyline Boulevard was in use at an early date as a wagon road providing access to the northern part of the Tualatin Valley, and as a logging road during the removal of timber from the West Hills, the crest of which it follows for several miles. Interesting, too, is the fact that the segment from the present Cornell Road to Springville Road was at one time called Cornell Mountain Road.

Skyline Boulevard has been a country road since the early 1920's and in the depression years of the 1930's realignment of the roadway was a Public Works Administration project. The segment between Germantown and Cornelius Roads was the first realigned, and other portions of Skyline have been realigned since that time.

Planning studies which included Forest Park began 60 years ago, and studies suggesting boulevard development for Skyline go back more than 40 years. These are listed as follows:

- (a) 1903. Park & Boulevard Plan, by Olmsted Brothers.
- (b) 1912. Park & Boulevard Plan, by E. H. Bennett.
- (c) 1921. Park & Boulevard Plan, by Charles H. Cheney and Portland City Planning Commission
- (d) 1932. Major Street Report, by Bartholomew & Associates.
- (e) 1936. "Summary of Public Recreation Areas", by Freeman and Portland City Planning Commission
- (f) 1943. "Portland Improvement", by Robert Moses.
- (g) 1962. "Recreation Outlooks", by Metropolitan Planning Commission.

The Olmstead Brothers proposed a Forest Park on the easterly slope of the West Hills (See Figure 1) with a boulevard extending scuth along the side of the West Hills, but the Bennett plan of 1912, although more ambitious with respect to parks, did not include a boulevard.

The 1921 Cheney plan proposed a Skyline Boulevard development partly along the present alignment of the route. The 1932 Bartholomew report included the route as part of a major street



plan, and the 1936 plan by Harry Freeman for the City Planning Commission, proposed a boulevard along the present alignment. The latter plan for parks and boulevards was adopted by the voters of Portland.

In 1943, Robert Moses prepared a plan for Portland improvements which included a plan for an outer scenic drive completely encirclling the city, and including Marine Drive and a partly realigned Skyline Boulevard. Also included was a scenic drive connection along a realigned Germantown Road between Skyline Boulevard and St. Helens Highway.

The 1958 Planning Commission report proposed a Sylvania Boulevard development from the intersection of Skyline Boulevard with the Sunset Highway (U.S.26) southerly to a connection with Country Club Road which extends east into the City of Oswego. The Planning Commission's Comprehensive Development Plan for Portland (see later discussion in this report) now includes existing Skyline Boulevard northward from W. Burnside Street, and the proposed Sylvania Boulevard route southward from Sunset Highway as major streets.

The 1962 report of the Metropolitan Planning Commission--"Recreation Outlook 1962-1975"--recommended, "That a system of these areas (parkways and boulevards) featuring pleasure driving and bicycling, should be provided at every opportunity throughout the urban area, planned to include both scenic viewpoints and landscapted, park-like strips. Existing ones need to be protected and enhanced." The report specifically proposed three principal scenic drives or parkways, one of them being N.W. Skyline Boulevard (W. Burnside to Rocky Point Road, possibly to Gilkison Road).

Despite the number of studies which have been made regarding the role of Skyline Boulevard as a scenic route or arterial street, there is need to review its relationship to current comprehensive planning in the metropolitan area.

#### THE COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A comprehensiv development plan for a city consists of four major elements--a plan for public schools, parks, and other public grounds and buildings; a plan for transportation, including necessary arterial streets and highways and transit lines; a plan for private land uses, including industrial and business areas

essential to the city economy and residential and apartment areas to house the population; and a plan delineating residential neighborhoods to be served by elementary schools and parks. For a plan to be truly comprehensive, each of the plan elements must be carefully coordinated to maximize the efficiency of the city and to enhance the environment for city residents. In addition to the major elements of the plan cited above, a comprehensive plan may also include overall plans for such other services or facilities as police or fire stations, water service facilities, etc. All public works elements of the plan must, of course, be prepared in cooperation with the agencies responsible for construction and operation of such facilities.

In 1958, the Portland City Planning Commission officially adopted a comprehensive development plan for the City of Portland. This plan is a proposal for the future physical development of the city and consists of a city-wide map showing the general plan adopted by the Commission, and more detailed studies and reports approved by the Commission with respect to certain elements of the r'an, such as the report on "Land for Schools" published in 1958. The plan covers only the area of the city as it existed, plus areas subsequently annexed to the city. It does not cover the urbanized areas lying outside of the city limits which are in the jurisdiction of Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington Counties, all of which have Planning Commissions and planning staffs.

Like similar plans prepared by the three County Planning Commissions, the City of Portland plan covers only one segment of the Portland metropolitan area. The Portland Metropolitan Planning Commission was created jointly by the city and the three counties in 1959, and staffed for the purposes of completing metropolitanwide studies and formulating a coordinated plan for the development of the entire metropolitan area.

The portion of the comprehensive development plan for the City of Portland of particular concern in this study is that for trafficways, arterial streets, and highways. The existing street system already includes a few freeways, expressways, arterial streets, but the plan for trafficways should provide ultimately for adequate highway and arterial streets between all major functional areas or elements of the city.

In this regard, it is gratifying to the Planning Commission to know that the trafficways element of the Commission's comprehensive development plan for the City of Portland was selected for testing in the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Transportation

Study being conducted jointly by the Oregon and Washington State Highway Departments and the counties and cities in the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area under the general guidance of the Federal Bureau of Public Roads.

Beyond the plan for arterial streets and highways, the city necessarily must have detailed plans to serve local traffic needs. This is accomplished through subdivision regulation, local street improvement projects, traffic engineering, etc. However, one need for street service, which lies somewhere between the need for arterial service and local traffic service, is the need for a system of scenic routes and drives for recreational purposes both for tourists and for residents of the city.

The need for a comprehensive layout for scenic routes and drives throughout the city has long been recognized, and, as noted previously in this report, plans for such routes and drives which have been prepared previously included a Skyline Boulevard route.

In addition to this long recognized function for Skyline Boulevard, the Commission's comprehensive development plan (as noted earlier) proposes use of Skyline Boulevard as a major northsouth arterial street for Portland's west side area.

Therefore, the Commission has considered it necessary to evaluate Skyline Boulevard both as a potential scenic route and as an arterial street. The function of Skyline Boulevard as an arterial route depends in great measure on its relationship to the future location and development of any major north-south arterial from the Beaverton area, through the north part of the Tualatin Valley to the St. Helens Highway and the St. Johns Bridge.

## NEED FOR NORTH-SOUTH EXPRESSWAY WEST OF THE WEST HILLS

Within cities as large as Portland there is need for either a partial or complete freeway loop close in around the central commercial areas of the city. Portland will have such a central freeway loop in the form of the combined Eastbank and Stadium-Foothills Freeways linked by the Marguam and Fremont Bridges. This loop will serve as a distributor ring for the central business district and will connect the primary highcapacity radial routes that are now in use, under construction, or are part of the trafficways plan.

In addition to the central freeway loop, there is need for a circumferential freeway loop within the urban area, which will

serve as a bypass around the major population and traffic areas within the city, but also connect the high-capacity radial routes to serve cross-town traffic movements.

In Portland, if the I-205 route is completed as proposed, this circumferential loop will consist of that route on the south and east, the Columbia Expressway on the north, and the Beaverton-Tigard Expressway on the west. At present, no specific right-of-way proposal has been made for the final link in this outer loop from Sunset Freeway to the St. Helens Expressway.

However, the Joint City-County Planning Advisory Board (Washington County, Hillsboro, et. al.) has proposed a route location which would connect with the Barnes Road-Beaverton-Tigard Expressway interchange on the Sunset Freeway, climb northward up the westerly slope of the West Hills, enter a tunnel through the West Hills ridge and then descend to the St. Johns Bridge.

According to the Traffic Engineers, present traffic flow does not justify a major development for this portion of the west side circumferential route, but the Commission believes that cooperative studies should proceed on selection of a specific alignment for this route so that a proposal can be submitted for consideration as part of the Metropolitan Transportation Study now under way.

However, Skyline Boulevard, which is located on top of the mountain ridge, should not be a part of this circumferential route. The boulevard should be part of a city-wide scenic route system and have local arterial use only.

#### NEED FOR WEST HILLS SCENIC ROUTE SYSTEM

It has long been recognized that within cities there is need for open space or park areas in which people can escape momentarily from the activity and sounds of city life. It is equally important that the transportation system of a city include not only the facilities necessary for efficient movement of people and vehicles from one area to another, but that it also include routes which offer more leisurely, pleasant trips for those who are not hurrying from one location to another. The several plans for parks and boulevards which have been prepared in the past for Portland, are attempts to encourage development of such facilities to the extent needed for current and future generations of city residents. Terwilliger Boulevard, with a rightof-way 200 feet or more in width, most of the distance from S.W. Sheridan Street to S.W. Capitol Highway, is an excellent example of an existing scenic route.

Portland's West Hills, where Forest Park and Skyline Boulevard are located, is the outstanding physical feature of the city. Except for the West Hills, much of the Portland urban area is relatively level, modified in the Tualatin Valley area west of the West Hills only by rolling terrain and in the area east of the Willamette River only by a few elevations such as Mt. Tabor and Rocky Butte. The West Hills however, is a mountain range with tremendous potential for residential districts with views of the more level areas of the city, and with areas of almost unequaled potential for public acquisition and development of scenic routes and viewpoints looking out over large areas of the city, the Tualatin Valley, the Willamette and Columbia Rivers, Mt. Hood, Mt. St. Helens, Mt. Adams, and even distant Mt. Rainier.

With recognition of the great potential of Portland's West Hills as a location for scenic routes and for public open spaces, a plan has been prepared for a West Hills Scenic Route System (See Figure 2) which can be integrated with a Scenic Route System for the entire city by means of connections to the system of freeways and expressways which will be developed in coming years, and to the bridges crossing the Willamette.

As planned, the West Hills Scenic Route System would include a north-south route on the hills--i.e., Terwilliger Boulevard, Fairmont Boulevard, Humphrey Boulevard, and Skyline Boulevard --and connections from the hills to the downtown, Willamette valley and river bridges including Riverside Drive, Baldock Freeway, Terwilliger Boulevard, Broadway Drive, Vista Avenue, Sunset Freeway, Burnside, Cornell Road, Thompson Road, Germantown Road, Newberry Road, Cornelius Road. Lesser routes in Council Crest, Washington Park, King's Heights, and Forest Park would connect with the system. Some of the routes would be only local residential streets used as connectors, others are existing arterial streets. Future development of some of the routes in the Scenic Route System into drives of parklike character is not only desirable but possible.

At this time, more detailed examinations have been limited to Forest Park and to that segment of Skyline Boulevard between S.W. Conell Road on the south and N.W. Newberry Road on the north (see Figure 3). As noted earlier, Forest Park and Skyline Boulevard have long been major elements in any planning for parks and boulevards for the city, and for excellent reasons.





POSSIBLE VIEW POINTS



## PROPOSALS FOR SKYLINE BOULEVARD AND FOREST PARK

In Forest Park, Portland is the possessor of the largest wooded area existing within any large city. To date, however, this area has not been utilized to the extent possible because of inaccessibility. Expansion of the park area westward to Skyline Boulevard, however, would provide the access needed to make this park readily available to the public. Such expansion is most possible along the segment of Skyline Boulevard between a point approximately 1,000 feet south of Thompson Road on the south, and a point approximately 2,500 feet south of Newberry Road on the north. Expansions of the park west and south from Cornell Road and Thompson Road to preserve the park-like character of those portions of these routes east of Skyline Boulevard also is needed.

Expansion of Forest Park westerly to Skyline in the area from south of Thompson to south of Newberry Road would make possible the development and easy accessibility of a substantial number of viewpoints on the crest of the West Hills overlooking broad city areas to the east or west, and, in several instances, areas in both directions. Such park expansion also would make possible the provision of parking areas allowing the interchange of automobile to bicycle or pedestrian traffic within Forest Park.

With Forest Park expanded westward to Skyline Boulevard, it would be possible to develop a divided variable-width parkway along the crest of the West Hills between a point approximately 1,000 feet south of Thompson Road and a point approximately 2,500 feet south of Newberry Road, utilizing present Skyline Boulevard as two lanes southbound and a new roadway to the east within the park as two lanes northbound. In addition to the scenic route and park access functions, this development also would provide traffic service for the residential development which will occur in the future along the adjacent westerly slope of the West Hills in northwesterly Portland. Suggested ultimate development for this portion of Skyline Boulevard and Forest Park is shown on Figure 3.

More detailed studies and planning for the westward expansion of Forest Park and development of Skyline Boulevard as a scenic parkway from south of Thompson Road to south of Newberry Road, should be accomplished jointly by City and County planning, park, and engineering personnel. Early action on the first step to development of the proposal is extremely important, however. In the event that certain areas of Forest Park cannot be expanded to Skyline Boulevard, the Boulevard still should be developed as a scenic parkway. Commission studies indicate that anything less than a 100 foot width right-of-way for Skyline the entire distance from Cornell Road to Newberry Road will make impossible the preservation of a park-like drive along Skyline, and will permit development close enough to the roadway to create the appearance of an ordinary residential street. For this reason the Commission believes that as a necessary first step, setbacks of not less than 80 feet from the center line of the existing 60 foot right-of-way are needed. This would permit future widening of Skyline between Cornell and Newberry Roads to 100 feet with 30 feet remaining for required front yards, the standard established in the RIO zoning in the area. (See Figure 4)

The urgency of action on setbacks as the first step to development of Skyline Boulevard as a parkway, however, cannot be overstressed. Funds for early expansions of Forest Park to Skyline and for right-of-way for a divided parkway are not available. Land is now being rapidly developed in the entire West Hills area because of improved means of construction. The area in the vicinity of Skyline Boulevard, west of Forest Park, has great potential for private development in the near future. In March. 1965 a large area between the Boulevard and Forest Park was annexed to the City of Portland. The Commission has received a plan showing proposed development of the property; therefore, it appears that this area might not be acquired for park purposes. However, in the approval of this development and also of Father Milan Mikulich's proposals, the Commission would require dedications adjacent to Skyline Boulevard as recommended in this report.

## CONCLUSIONS

As a result of its studies, the Commission believes that:

- 1. The City of Portland should adopt a comprehensive plan for scenic routes throughout the City.
- 2. That Forest Park should be expanded westward to Skyline Boulevard between a point approximately 1,000 feet south of Thompson Road and a point approximately 2,500 feet south of Newberry Road, and that Skyline Boulevard between Cornell Road and Newberry Road should be developed into a scenic route which would be a major asset to the City of Portland. (See Figure 5)



PORTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION



ADDITIONAL FUTURE ROADWAY (ONE-WAY NORTH)





PORTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

3. A major north-south arterial route on Portland's west side should be developed as part of a circumferential or outer loop around the greater portion of the urbanized area of the city, but this route should not follow that portion of Skyline Boulevard adjacent to Forest Park.



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## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Adoption of the West Hills Scenic Route and connections as shown on Figure 2 as part of a Comprehensive Plan for Scenic Routes and Drives throughout the City of Portland.
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b. Acquisition by the City and County through dedications of land for street purposes, either as portions of approved subdivisions of land or in exchange for vacations of existing street areas.

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The Commission has also attempted to determine how Skyline Boulevard should be developed to adequately perform its function with the city transportation system. Obviously, the type of development needed will influence the right-of-way width for Skyline Boulevard.

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From Cornelius Pass Road, Skyline Boulevard extends on northwesterly approximately six miles along the mountain ridge overlooking the Columbia River, to an intersection with Rocky Point Road which crosses this ridge just south of Dixie Mountain, the highest point on the ridge. Beyond Dixie Mountain the ridge connects with the mountain complex (Tualatin Mountains) lying between the Columbia River and the Nehalem River drainage area round Vernonia.

Through most of its length, Skyline Boulevard is on the crest of the West Hills ridge and is bordered for the greater part by wooded areas. This leads many persons to believe that this scenic route is within or adjoining Forest Park, the great natural park which has been acquired by the City of Portland and extends from N.W. Cornell Road on the south to Newberry Road on the north (approximately the southerly end of Sauvies Island). The fact is that Forest Park occupies the easterly side of the West Hills, and its western boundary extends to Skyline Boulevard at only three locations, all between Germantown Road and Newberry Road.

For most of its length, Skyline Boulevard is located outside of the City of Portland and within the jurisdiction of Multnomah County. Consequently, any planning for widening and development of this street must be carried out in cooperation with Multnomah County. In any event, it should be conducted with reference to comprehensive planning.

## HISTORY

Skyline Boulevard has a long and interesting history. One story is that Skyline had its beginning as an Indian tral between Sauvies Island which was a meeting place for the Willamette Indian tribes, and Council Crest, where the chiefs allegedly met in tribal council. Whether this is fact of fancy is uncertain.

Certainly, Skyline Boulevard was in use at an early date as a wagon road providing access to the northern part of the Tualatin Valley, and as a logging road during the removal of timber from the West Hills, the crest of which it follows for several miles. Interesting, too, is the fact that the segment from the present Cornell Road to Springville Road was at one time called Cornell Mountain Road.

Skyline Boulevard has been a country road since the early 1920's and in the depression years of the 1930's realignment of the roadway was a Public Works Administration project. The segment between Germantown and Cornelius Roads was the first realigned, and other portions of Skyline have been realigned since that time.

Planning studies which included Forest Park began 60 years ago, and studies suggesting boulevard development for Skyline go back more than 40 years. These are listed as follows:

- (a) 1903. Park & Boulevard Plan, by Olmsted Brothers.
- (b) 1912. Park & Boulevard Plan, by E. H. Bennett.
- (c) 1921. Park & Boulevard Plan, by Charles H. Cheney and Portland City Planning Commission
- (d) 1932. Major Street Report, by Bartholomew & Associates.
- (e) 1936. "Summary of Public Recreation Areas", by Freeman and Portland City Planning Commission
- (f) 1943. "Portland Improvement", by Robert Moses.
- (g) 1962. "Recreation Outlooks", by Metropolitan Planning Commission.

The Olmstead Brothers proposed a Forest Park on the easterly slope of the West Hills (See Figure 1) with a boulevard extending south along the side of the West Hills, but the Bennett plan of 1912, although more ambitious with respect to parks, did not include a boulevard.

The 1921 Cheney plan proposed a Skyline Boulevard development partly along the present alignment of the route. The 1932 Bartholomew report included the route as part of a major street



plan, and the 1936 plan by Harry Freeman for the City Planning Commission, proposed a boulevard along the present alignment. The latter plan for parks and boulevards was adopted by the voters of Portland.

In 1943, Robert Moses prepared a plan for Portland improvements which included a plan for an outer scenic drive completely encirclling the city, and including Marine Drive and a partly realigned Skyline Boulevard. Also included was a scenic drive connection along a realigned Germantown Road between Skyline Boulevard and St. Helens Highway.

The 1958 Planning Commission report proposed a Sylvania Boulevard development from the intersection of Skyline Boulevard with the Sunset Highway (U.S.26) southerly to a connection with Country Club Road which extends east into the City of Oswego. The Planning Commission's Comprehensive Development Plan for Portland (see later discussion in this report) now includes existing Skyline Boulevard northward from W. Burnside Street, and the proposed Sylvania Boulevard route southward from Sunset Highway as major streets.

The 1962 report of the Metropolitan Planning Commission--"Recreation Outlook 1962-1975"--recommended, "That a system of these areas (parkways and boulevards) featuring pleasure driving and bicycling, should be provided at every opportunity throughout the urban area, planned to include both scenic viewpoints and landscapted, park-like strips. Existing ones need to be protected and enhanced." The report specifically proposed three principal scenic drives or parkways, one of them being N.W. Skyline Boulevard (W. Burnside to Rocky Point Road, possibly to Gilkison Road).

Despite the number of studies which have been made regarding the role of Skyline Boulevard as a scenic route or arterial street, there is need to review its relationship to current comprehensive planning in the metropolitan area.

## THE COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

A comprehensive development plan for a city consists of four major elements--a plan for public schools, parks, and other public grounds and buildings; a plan for transportation, including necessary arterial streets and highways and transit lines; a plan for private land uses, including industrial and business areas

essential to the city economy and residential and apartment areas to house the population; and a plan delineating residential neighborhoods to be served by elementary schools and parks. For a plan to be truly comprehensive, each of the plan elements must be carefully coordinated to maximize the efficiency of the city and to enhance the environment for city residents. In addition to the major elements of the plan cited above, a comprehensive plan may also include overall plans for such other services or facilities as police or fire stations, water service facilities, etc. All public works elements of the plan must, of course, be prepared in cooperation with the agencies responsible for construction and operation of such facilities.

In 1958, the Portland City Planning Commission officially adopted a comprehensive development plan for the City of Portland. This plan is a proposal for the future physical development of the city and consists of a city-wide map showing the general plan adopted by the Commission, and more detailed studies and reports approved by the Commission with respect to certain elements of the plan, such as the report on "Land for Schools" published in 1958. The plan covers only the area of the city as it existed, plus areas subsequently annexed to the city. It does not cover the urbanized areas lying outside of the city limits which are in the jurisdiction of Multnomah, Clackamas, and Washington Counties, all of which have Planning Commissions and planning staffs.

Like similar plans prepared by the three County Planning Commissions, the City of Portland plan covers only one segment of the Portland metropolitan area. The Portland Metropolitan Planning Commission was created jointly by the city and the three counties in 1959, and staffed for the purposes of completing metropolitanwide studies and formulating a coordinated plan for the development of the entire metropolitan area.

The portion of the comprehensive development plan for the City of Portland of particular concern in this study is that for trafficways, arterial streets, and highways. The existing street system already includes a few freeways, expressways, arterial streets, but the plan for trafficways should provide ultimately for adequate highway and arterial streets between all major functional areas or elements of the city.

In this regard, it is gratifying to the Planning Commission to know that the trafficways element of the Commission's comprehensive development plan for the City of Portland was selected for testing in the Portland-Vancouver Metropolitan Transportation

Study being conducted jointly by the Oregon and Washington State Highway Departments and the counties and cities in the Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area under the general guidance of the Federal Bureau of Public Roads.

Beyond the plan for arterial streets and highways, the city necessarily must have detailed plans to serve local traffic needs. This is accomplished through subdivision regulation, local street improvement projects, traffic engineering, etc. However, one need for street service, which lies somewhere between the need for arterial service and local traffic service, is the need for a system of scenic routes and drives for recreational purposes both for tourists and for residents of the city.

The need for a comprehensive layout for scenic routes and drives throughout the city has long been recognized, and, as noted previously in this report, plans for such routes and drives which have been prepared previously included a Skyline Boulevard route.

In addition to this long recognized function for Skyline Boulevard, the Commission's comprehensive development plan (as noted earlier) proposes use of Skyline Boulevard as a major northsouth arterial street for Portland's west side area.

Therefore, the Commission has considered it necessary to evaluate Skyline Boulevard both as a potential scenic route and as an arterial street. The function of Skyline Boulevard as an arterial route depends in great measure on its relationship to the future location and development of any major north-south arterial from the Beaverton area, through the north part of the Tualatin Valley to the St. Helens Highway and the St. Johns Bridge.

## NEED FOR NORTH-SOUTH EXPRESSWAY WEST OF THE WEST HILLS

Within cities as large as Portland there is need for either a partial or complete freeway loop close in around the central commercial areas of the city. Portland will have such a central freeway loop in the form of the combined Eastbank and Stadium-Foothills Freeways linked by the Marguam and Fremont Bridges. This loop will serve as a distributor ring for the central business district and will connect the primary highcapacity radial routes that are now in use, under construction, or are part of the trafficways plan.

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In addition to the central freeway loop, there is need for a circumferential freeway loop within the urban area, which will

serve as a bypass around the major population and traffic areas within the city, but also connect the high-capacity radial routes to serve cross-town traffic movements.

In Portland, if the I-205 route is completed as proposed, this circumferential loop will consist of that route on the south and east, the Columbia Expressway on the north, and the Beaverton-Tigard Expressway on the west. At present, no specific right-of-way proposal has been made for the final link in this outer loop from Sunset Freeway to the St. Helens Expressway.

However, the Joint City-County Planning Advisory Board (Washington County, Hillsboro, et. al.) has proposed a route location which would connect with the Barnes Road-Beaverton-Tigard Expressway interchange on the Sunset Freeway, climb northward up the westerly slope of the West Hills, enter a tunnel through the West Hills ridge and then descend to the St. Johns Bridge.

According to the Traffic Engineers, present traffic flow does not justify a major development for this portion of the west side circumferential route, but the Commission believes that cooperative studies should proceed on selection of a specific alignment for this route so that a proposal can be submitted for consideration as part of the Metropolitan Transportation Study now under way.

However, Skyline Boulevard, which is located on top of the mountain ridge, should not be a part of this circumferential route. The boulevard should be part of a city-wide scenic route system and have local arterial use only.

## NEED FOR WEST HILLS SCENIC ROUTE SYSTEM

It has long been recognized that within cities there is need for open space or park areas in which people can escape momentarily from the activity and sounds of city life. It is equally important that the transportation system of a city include not only the facilities necessary for efficient movement of people and vehicles from one area to another, but that it also include routes which offer more leisurely, pleasant trips for those who are not hurrying from one location to another. The several plans for parks and boulevards which have been prepared in the past for Portland, are attempts to encourage development of such facilities to the extent needed for current and future generations of city residents. Terwilliger Boulevard, with a rightof-way 200 feet or more in width, most of the distance from S.W. Sheridan Street to S.W. Capitol Highway, is an excellent example of an existing scenic route.

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Portland's West Hills, where Forest Park and Skyline Boulevard are located, is the outstanding physical feature of the city. Except for the West Hills, much of the Portland urban area is relatively level, modified in the Tualatin Valley area west of the West Hills only by rolling terrain and in the area east of the Willamette River only by a few elevations such as Mt. Tabor and Rocky Butte. The West Hills however, is a mountain range with tremendous potential for residential districts with views of the more level areas of the city, and with areas of almost unequaled potential for public acquisition and development of scenic routes and viewpoints looking out over large areas of the city, the Tualatin Valley, the Willamette and Columbia Rivers, Mt. Hood, Mt. St. Helens, Mt. Adams, and even distant Mt. Rainier.

With recognition of the great potential of Portland's West Hills as a location for scenic routes and for public open spaces, a plan has been prepared for a West Hills Scenic Route System (See Figure 2) which can be integrated with a Scenic Route System for the entire city by means of connections to the system of freeways and expressways which will be developed in coming years, and to the bridges crossing the Willamette.

As planned, the West Hills Scenic Route System would include a north-south route on the hills--i.e., Terwilliger Boulevard, Fairmont Boulevard, Humphrey Boulevard, and Skyline Boulevard --and connections from the hills to the downtown, Willamette valley and river bridges including Riverside Drive, Baldock Freeway, Terwilliger Boulevard, Broadway Drive, Vista Avenue, Sunset Freeway, Burnside, Cornell Road, Thompson Road, Germantown Road, Newberry Road, Cornelius Road. Lesser routes in Council Crest, Washington Park, King's Heights, and Forest Park would connect with the system. Some of the routes would be only local residential streets used as connectors, others are existing arterial streets. Future development of some of the routes in the Scenic Route System into drives of parklike character is not only desirable but possible.

At this time, more detailed examinations have been limited to Forest Park and to that segment of Skyline Boulevard between S.W. Cornell Road on the south and N.W. Newberry Road on the north (see Figure 3). As noted earlier, Forest Park and Skyline Boulevard have long been major elements in any planning for parks and boulevards for the city, and for excellent reasons.





# Proposed Parkway Development of Skyline Boulevard

PROPOSED PARKWAY



EXISTING FOREST PARK



RECOMMENDED EXPANSION

POSSIBLE VIEW POINTS



PORTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION



#### PROPOSALS FOR SKYLINE BOULEVARD AND FOREST PARK

In Forest Park, Portland is the possessor of the largest wooded area existing within any large city. To date, however, this area has not been utilized to the extent possible because of inaccessibility. Expansion of the park area westward to Skyline Boulevard, however, would provide the access needed to make this park readily available to the public. Such expansion is most possible along the segment of Skyline Boulevard between a point approximately 1,000 feet south of Thompson Road on the south, and a point approximately 2,500 feet south of Newberry Road on the north. Expansions of the park west and south from Cornell Road and Thompson Road to preserve the park-like character of those portions of these routes east of Skyline Boulevard also is needed.

Expansion of Forest Park westerly to Skyline in the area from south of Thompson to south of Newberry Road would make possible the development and easy accessibility of a substantial number of viewpoints on the crest of the West Hills overlooking broad city areas to the east or west, and, in several instances, areas in both directions. Such park expansion also would make possible the provision of parking areas allowing the interchange of automobile to bicycle or pedestrian traffic within Forest Park.

With Forest Park expanded westward to Skyline Boulevard, it would be possible to develop a divided variable-width parkway along the crest of the West Hills between a point approximately 1,000 feet south of Thompson Road and a point approximately 2,500 feet south of Newberry Road, utilizing present Skyline Boulevard as two lanes southbound and a new roadway to the east within the park as two lanes northbound. In addition to the scenic route and park access functions, this development also would provide traffic service for the residential development which will occur in the future along the adjacent westerly slope of the West Hills in northwesterly Portland. Suggested ultimate development for this portion of Skyline Boulevard and Forest Park is shown on Figure 3.

More detailed studies and planning for the westward expansion of Forest Park and development of Skyline Boulevard as a scenic parkway from south of Thompson Road to south of Newberry Road, should be accomplished jointly by City and County planning, park, and engineering personnel. Early action on the first step to development of the proposal is extremely important, however. In the event that certain areas of Forest Park cannot be expanded to Skyline Boulevard, the Boulevard still should be developed as a scenic parkway. Commission studies indicate that anything less than a 100 foot width right-of-way for Skyline the entire distance from Cornell Road to Newberry Road will make impossible the preservation of a park-like drive along Skyline, and will permit development close enough to the roadway to create the appearance of an ordinary residential street. For this reason the Commission believes that as a necessary first step, setbacks of not less than 80 feet from the center line of the existing 60 foot right-of-way are needed. This would permit future widening of Skyline between Cornell and Newberry Roads to 100 feet with 30 feet remaining for required front yards, the standard established in the RIO zoning in the area. (See Figure 4)

The urgency of action on setbacks as the first step to development of Skyline Boulevard as a parkway, however, cannot be overstressed. Funds for early expansions of Forest Park to Skyline and for right-of-way for a divided parkway are <u>not</u> available. Land is now being rapidly developed in the entire West Hills area because of improved means of construction. The area in the vicinity of Skyline Boulevard, west of Forest Park, has great potential for private development in the near future. In March, 1965 a large area between the Boulevard and Forest Park was annexed to the City of Portland. The Commission has received a plan showing proposed development of the property; therefore, it appears that this area might not be acquired for park purposes. However, in the approval of this development and also of Father Milan Mikulich's proposals, the Commission would require dedications adjacent to Skyline Boulevard as recommended in this report.

## CONCLUSIONS

As a result of its studies, the Commission believes that:

- 1. The City of Portland should adopt a comprehensive plan for scenic routes throughout the City.
- 2. That Forest Park should be expanded westward to Skyline Boulevard between a point approximately 1,000 feet south of Thompson Road and a point approximately 2,500 feet south of Newberry Road, and that Skyline Boulevard between Cornell Road and Newberry Road should be developed into a scenic route which would be a major asset to the City of Portland. (See Figure 5)



PORTLAND CITY PLANNING COMMISSION





#### 4 LANE DEVELOPMENT

FOR DIVIDED PARKWAY AROUND A RIDGETOP HILL

3. A major north-south arterial route on Portland's west side should be developed as part of a circumferential or outer loop around the greater portion of the urbanized area of the city, but this route should not follow that portion of Skyline Boulevard adjacent to Forest Park.