Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405 Vision Study

Prepared for :

City of Portland, Office of Mayor Vera Katz Portland Development Commission Portland Office of Transportation Oregon Department of Transportation



FINAL REPORT

A Community Assistance Team Demonstration Project conducted by

ASLA Landscape Architecture Foundation

tion

October 1998



October 1, 1998

City of Portland Vera Katz Mayor

Dear Members of the Community:

After five public outreach events and input from over one-thousand citizens I am pleased to accept the "Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405" Final Recommendations Report from the American Society of Landscape Architects Community Assistance Team.

This report is the product of a working partnership between the Mayor's Office, the American Society of Landscape Architects, neighborhoods and many other public and private stakeholders. I appreciate the countless hours of work these groups have invested over the last five months.

In the 1998 State of the City Address I challenged the community to think creatively about what could and should be built over the top of I-405 in downtown Portland. Capping the urban freeway will provide Portland with the opportunity to preserve neighborhood livability and protect the Urban Growth Boundary by focusing growth in the existing downtown area. Based upon the recommended uses in this report I-405 provides the potential for creating 26 new blocks of developable space to add 1,800 jobs, 1,000 housing units, 2,200 parking spaces, 6 acres for parks/recreational uses, and other amenities over what is now vacant air space.

This report maps out a vision for making a series of reconnections throughout the capping corridor which runs from the 4th Avenue overpass to the Glisan Street. The development concepts recognize the improvements planned in the Civic Stadium/Goose Hollow District and the West End District. Recommendations also emphasize the need to make south/north connections from Duniway Park to Portland State University to the Pearl District.

I look forward to studying the report in more detail and sharing it with community leaders to further refine the recommendations that lead to private development which reflects prioritized uses.

I hope you will join us in our efforts to "Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405."

With warm regards,

Vera Katz Mayor

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PREFACE

The Interstate 405 Capping Feasibility Study was one of three 1998 Community Assistance Team (CAT) projects selected by the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) and Landscape Architecture Foundation to enhance the vision of livability in Oregon. It is oriented to address the unique issues associated with revitalization and redevelopment within an urban environment.

The essence of livability is as personal as the individual defining it. As we seek to obtain our own personal utopias we are asked to consider the sacrifices we make to strike harmony between ourselves and the elements that compose our landscapes.

This CAT project, conducted to coincide with the 1998 national ASLA Annual Meeting and EXPO held in Portland, focused on four common denominators that help to define a foundation for study: aesthetics, environment, economy and community.

The 1998 CAT project team developed a partnership with citizens, business and government to achieve a vision of livability within familiar and transferable contexts, and to highlight the balance that must be struck between community growth and natural resource protection.

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Summary Overview

Portland Mayor Vera Katz is leading a citywide effort to protect and improve Portland's quality of life by concentrating growth in the central city, along mainstreets and town centers.

The Mayor is working hard to achieve the goals of the 2040 Plan while at the same time protecting the integrity of residential neighborhoods. Current efforts such as completing the build out of the River District, finishing the planning and beginning the implementation of the North Macadam District are two examples of maximizing the development potential of the central city. These two land masses combined will be providing over 170 acres for jobs, housing, open space, and other uses. Supporting the city's current investment in housing and educational infrastructure in the University District is also an important strategic objective.

The concept for building over the top of I-405 was initially offered in the 1988 Central City plan. Action item GH7 recommended a feasibility study for an appropriate location to build parks or parking over part of I-405. This current effort, undertaken 10 years later, carries that vision several steps further by seeking to accomplish additional objectives outlined in the Central City Plan. This vision study: 1) encourages private investment, 2) is founded upon the importance of creating an inviting atmosphere, and 3) recommends structures be built at a human scale with public amenities that contribute to the urban and natural environment. Additionally, the capping vision emphasizes improving the relationships between the adjacent districts and neighborhoods, another objective of the Central City Plan.

Moving a step closer to realizing these opportunities, the Mayor challenged citizens to think about the creation of a bold new vision for the downtown core-- capping I-405 in downtown Portland from Fourth Avenue to Glisan Street to reclaim key portions of the 38 blocks lost when the freeway was constructed in 1965. The challenge was accepted by the Landscape Architecture Foundation (LAF) and the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) who, as a part of their 1998 Annual Meeting and EXPO in Portland, organized a Community Assistance Team (CAT) to assist the Mayor's



Mayor Katz at Community-Wide Open House

Office with the project. The CAT (referred to as the "Team") was comprised of leading design, planning, and engineering professionals from the Portland area. The Team lent over \$200,000 in pro bono services to the effort.

In the State of the City Address in February of 1998, Mayor Katz looked to Portland's next 25 years and called upon planning efforts for another set of projects for the central city. The Mayor spoke of the importance of capturing retail, office, and housing opportunities in the Rose Quarter, as well as looking to the west at Goose Hollow/West End as a chance to reclaim land for jobs and housing that was lost during the construction of the I-405 ditch. Capturing these central city possibilities will further keep growth pressure off of existing residential neighborhoods.

The Mayor's Office forged a partnership with the multidisciplined Team, representatives of city and state agencies, educational institutions, and several business and neighborhood organizations. A Community Agreement served as the workplan to create a vision of possibilities for the I-405 corridor. The effort became known as "Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405".

The Team spent six months researching built capping projects across the globe; leading a three-phased public outreach effort that began with a Public Open House at Pioneer Courthouse Square on July 2, 1998; and preparing recommendations for constructing alternative uses over the top of I-405. The critical component of the "Bridge the Divide and Cap I405" effort was public outreach. An interactive exhibit at the Open House allowed individuals to dream and draw what they would like to see built over the top of the I-405 in downtown. Comments served as the basis for a series of community design workshops that followed. Citizens were asked by the Team to brainstorm a vision of the corridor. During the workshops, key issues and goals were identified, and benefits were illustrated through the creation of eighteen vision maps. The Team synthesized all the maps into a thematic concept map that was presented to the public at a Consensus Building Workshop on July 28, 1998. The Consensus Plan emerged as the backbone for a series of design charrettes that followed.

From the wealth of information and input provided by the community, the Team recommended reclaiming five key locations resulting in the construction of 26 of the original 38 blocks that were eliminated when the freeway was constructed in 1965. The recapturing of this land could lead to 1,000 housing units (2,000 residents), 650,000 square feet of commercial space (generating 1,800 permanent new jobs), 2,200 parking spaces, 6 acres of parks, 2 acres of indoor recreational uses and 50,000 square feet for civic/exhibition uses.

In addition to accommodating new uses, the Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405 Vision Plan for the I-405 corridor accomplishes the following revitalization goals:

Connectivity - The primary purpose of the plan is to reconnect of the neighborhoods of downtown. Eight key neighborhoods (Northwest, Pearl District, West Burnside, Civic Stadium, The West End, Goose hollow, PSU, and Duniway) could be reconnected using currently vacant air space. The emphasis is on renewing both east/west as well as north/south connections.

Multi-Modal Transportation - While accepting the presence of the automobile, alternative forms of transportation will be promoted. Mass transit, bicycles, pedestrians and citizens with disabilities are of equal if not greater importance to the design process than the automobile.

Economic Development - Use the opportunity to attract key targeted industries to the downtown. Link job development to not only to the neighborhoods, but also to the curriculums and activities occurring at Portland's urban universities (PSU and OHSU). The scale, scope and character of the development should reflect a step-by-step long-term perspective to planning, celebrating the reality of Portland's weather, achieving a balance between the urban and natural environment, creating projects that stimulate broad interest and excitement, and building partnerships between the public and private sector.



Linking Eight Urban Neighborhoods

The Vision Plan is made up of a series of unique and distinct places that are knit together with a series of bridges. These capping sites are brought together by blending new development

with existing neighborhoods. Moving from North to South along the study corridor, the following projects are envisioned (see map on page 3).

Reconnecting Pearl District/Northwest

- A Northern Freeway Portal serves as the key feature along the I-405 corridor into Portland's downtown
- A Sports and Recreation Center combines a mix of parking, retail, and athletic facilities into a sports complex that covers three new city blocks.

Development of the five capped blocks in the Pearl District/Northwest neighborhood will leverage 120 housing units, 288 residents, 60,000 sq. ft of office space, 45,000 sq. ft of retail space, 285 jobs, 500 parking spaces, and 2 acres of parks/recreational space.

West Burnside

• The Bright Light District builds on

existing urban form to create a dynamic mixed-use entertainment and office center encompassing three new city blocks; serving as a surface route gateway into the downtown and the West End; and reconnecting four neighborhoods together at its core.

Development of the three capped blocks in West Burnside will leverage 40,000 sq. ft of office space, 30,000 sq. ft of retail space, 50,000 sq. ft of entertainment space, 240 jobs, 130 parking spaces, and 25,000 sq. ft of civic/exhibition space.

Reconnecting Civic Stadium/West End

A MAX Mixed-Use District along the MAX light rail provides three new city blocks of retail/office/housing that reconnect the West End business and retail area with the Civic Stadium area, while complementing the scale and design of the existing surrounding architecture and completing the light rail station located on top of the freeway.

Development of the three capped blocks in the Civic Stadium/West End will leverage 250 housing units, 600 residents, 50,000 sq. ft of office space, 25,000 sq. ft of retail space, and 250 parking spaces.



Building bridges

Reconnecting Goose Hollow/PSU

- Main Street Commons is a three-block park set atop a 450 space parking structure that reconnects the Cultural District and PSU with the Goose Hollow neighborhood and Lincoln High School by providing an outdoor gathering space, plaza, and children's playground.
- A Civic and Office Center reinforces the emerging activity in the West End and the Cultural Districts with





View of South Market Square - looking south

civic/office and housing/retail development opportunities along Jefferson and Columbia Streets as major eastwest connections to and from the downtown core.

- The Crossing & West Portal reconnects the fragmented neighborhoods of Goose Hollow for pedestrians and bicyclists with an exciting public feature - an arching bridge that sweeps above the Highway 26 interchange into the downtown. In addition, a reconstruction of the highway landscape produces a series of terraced surface water features in the Stormwater Garden, which emphasizes sustainability of natural resources.
- South Market Square supplies four new city blocks of neighborhood retail, shops, and services with affordable housing opportunities to the adjacent neighborhoods and PSU.

Reconnecting PSU/Duniway

- A PSU Expansion provides space for the University to grow with an eye toward the future of high-technology and research, integrated with housing and local employment over two city blocks.
- The Terwilliger Connector creates the ability to walk from Downtown along safe greenways to Duniway Park and beyond.
- The Broadway Round-About resolves a difficult driving experience centered around six key streets by redefining the flow of traffic through a traditional European scaled round-about, framed around the perimeter by two new blocks of housing.
- The Southern Portal signifies the freeway access from Interstate 5 into the downtown.

Development of the six capped blocks in PSU/Duniway Park will leverage, 100 bousing units, 240 residents, 230,000 sq. ft of office/institutional space, 920 jobs, 370 parking spaces, and 1 acre of park/recreation space.

 Stormwater Gardens create a natural and beautiful way to capture and use water at the West Gateway and along the south side of the I-405 between the Market Square and South Park cappings.

Development of the nine capped blocks in Goose Hollow/PSU will leverage 530 housing units, 1,272 new residents, 70,000 sq. ft of office space, 50,000 sq. ft of retail space, 330 jobs, 950 parking spaces, 3 acres of parks and recreation spaces, and 25,000 sq. ft of civic/exhibition space.



View of the South Round-About - looking northwest

A group of sites are envisioned as priorities for phase one construction. The first priority project group is the MAX Mixed-Use District that capitalizes on the intersection of the new Westside Light Rail Line extension. It re-establishes the connection between Downtown and Civic Stadium creating a seamless district between the two neighborhoods. These sites located between the Civic Stadium District and the West End District, offer excellent opportunities for intermediate investment and development. town core. The West End will also become a district with the unique ability to connect key downtown neighborhoods to the heart of Portland's cultural institutions such as the Art Museum and the Central library. Any development over I-405 should consider program improvements and preferred uses as recommended in the West End District Master Plan due for completion in late Fall 1998.

The relationship between I-405 and the West End is equally

as important as the activity occurring in what will become the Civic Stadium District. In September 1998, the City of Portland and the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission released a request for proposals with the intention of securing private sector interest in the redevelopment of Civic Stadium. This action followed up on recommendations made in the 1998 Civic Stadium Advisory

Committee report which emphasized the need to upgrade the multi-purpose facility and strengthen its ties to the neighborhood through the creation of a Civic Stadium District. The District concept has the potential to lead to the development of

Bright Light District (2nd Priority)

additional housing, retail, and commercial uses on property surrounding the stadium.

The second priority is the Bright Light District. It reconnects four neighborhoods (Pearl District, Northwest, Civic Stadium, and the West End) together along the east-west

MAX Mixed Use District (1st Priority)

This priority is of particular importance due to activities in the adjacent areas.

In 1997, the West End Steering Committee was created to identify and execute a series of policy changes and capital improvements to accelerate mixed use development in a district that will be the downtown hub for the Central City Streetcar by 2001. The West End is bordered by Market Street to the South, Couch Street to the north, 9th Avenue to the east, and I-405 to the west.

Recognizing the positive transformation intended for the West End District, a neighborhood that serves as a transition between the downtown and I-405, is critical in determining the relationship between the two areas. The West End streetcar leg will attract students from PSU; commuters, shoppers, residents, and tourists from Northwest and the Pearl District; as well as pedestrian traffic from the down-



line of the city. This particular project is seen as a significant public attraction for all the citizens of Portland. It is composed of the public entertainment center with an expansive plaza that is surrounded by an Urban Conservatory, cafés, restaurants, shops, nightclubs, offices, housing, and parking. This project also serves as a landmark element of the entire capping program.

Among the benefits of capping the freeway at these locations first is the creation of a new source of tax revenue for the City. Currently NO taxes are collected on the space above the freeway. When private development takes place above the corridor, the taxes that are collected will be new to the city. These new funds could be used to build the public elements along the freeway that do not correspond directly or fully to the benefiting developers.

From an estimated 195,000 square feet of commercial space within the two priority areas (MAX Mixed Use District and the Burnside Bright Light District), the projected tax revenue for the city is \$625,429*.

These two priorities, as well as most of the projects in the



Vision Plan will necessitate the kind of public/private partnership for which Portland is famous.

Just as with Pioneer

Courthouse Square,

Pioneer Courthouse Square

Waterfront Park, and the Transit Mall; capping the I-405 corridor will take great commitment from the city and its citizens to achieve success. The benefits of reclaiming lost land to reconnect neighborhoods, form a stronger economic base, eliminate noise, pollution and visual blight, create exciting public spaces, and enrich the urban livability of the downtown are all traits of past community projects in Portland that are now held up as examples for the rest of the country. Like these successful predecessors, the capping of I- 405 will provide lessons that can be applied region and community-wide. This project can lead to a new generation of





Portland Development Commission

public/private partnerships and a new approach to building neighborhoods. Improving the links and connections which tie neighborhoods together (through either

Transit Mall

multi-model transportation, or specific development) is a tool that can be used in other areas of city such as Gateway, Hollywood, and St. Johns. Transforming a freeway from a barrier to a bridge by leveraging redevelopment could also assist in knitting together North Portland with Northeast along Interstate 5 as well as areas in Outer Southeast near Interstate 205. The 26 blocks reclaimed may well become a bridge that helps carry the city into the 21st century.

History of the Area: Reclaiming A Part The Past



Circa 1895

There is another Portland in the memories of many of its citizens; a Portland that was unbroken from the banks of the Willamette to the base of its West Hills. It was a Portland made of homes, classrooms, playgrounds,

and neighborhood stores. There was no tunnel through the hills to the west and there was no bisecting freeway.

In the 1950's, the Federal Government through the Federal Highway Administration implemented the National Public Infrastructure project - a program of freeway construction that was based on the belief that automobile transportation efficiency would bring about profound economic success and stem the tide of concern over preparedness for future military conflict. These beliefs affected Portland in many ways. But no where more profoundly then in 1965 when 3.6 miles of the city was carved away to make room for what is now Interstate 405. Gratefully, the decision was made at the time to sink the freeway into the earth.



Goose Hollow Circa 1905



Goose Hollow circa 1895

However, in order to accommodate the I-405 project, hundreds of historic sites with parks, trees, churches, stores, and homes were demolished. Thriving neighborhoods were cut in half. The creation of the freeway eliminated 38 blocks of the city, but more importantly than land losses was the splintering of downtown neighborhoods.



West End circa 1930

In the last thirty years, Portland has changed and evolved in a myriad of ways. The neighborhoods have continued to survive, adjusting and re-establishing their remaining centers. And since the 1980's, the population has begun to grow again. (For many years, the suburban areas of the region grew much quicker than the central city).

After 1990, people began choosing more and more to live close to the downtown core. This was due



Construction of Interstate 405 and Highway 26 interchange through Goose Hollow

in part to the results emerging benefits of the Downtown Plan and the Oregon Land Use Planning System; combined with a strong economy, changing lifestyles, and expansion of mass transit. This created a higher demand for housing for all economic levels, along with schools, parks, and jobs - all within walking distance of the downtown core. This demand stimulated a new aspiration to shape the city, which is evi-



denced by multiple plan-

ning efforts at the city and neighborhood levels.

Today the city of Portland

is continuing to shape

itself into a healthy city.

Capping the I-405 repre-

sents another step in this

unique and successful

building.

approach to community

Bridging the Divide &

I-405 through downtown Portland



Circa 1997

Beating the Odds

Capping I-405 is not the first visionary idea in Portland to push the envelope of creativity and opportunity. There are many such projects in the city that at first seemed impossible but were later completed and are now hugely successful. These projects succeeded not because of political leadership alone, but also because they captured the attention, passion, and commitment of the community. Tom McCall Waterfront Park, Pioneer Courthouse Square, and the Transit mall are three projects that "beat the odds" in Portland.

PORTLAND PROJECTS THAT "BEAT THE ODDS"

- *Tom McCall Waterfront Park* - completed 1974.
- *Pioneer Courthouse Square* - completed 1984.
- Transit Mall - completed 1985

TOM MCCALL WATERFRONT PARK

Access to the Willamette River on the West side used to be difficult, if not impossible, because of the busy fourlane highway that ran alongside it. Removed in 1974, the Harbor Drive freeway was replaced by Tom McCall Waterfront Park to reclaim the river for housing, recreation and community events. It is now a vibrant site of countless community events as well as a scenic promenade for walkers, runners, and bicyclists. It continues to extend and expand to the south with





greenspaces, housing and commercial uses.

PIONEER COURTHOUSE SQUARE

Pioneer Courthouse Square used to be the site of a public parking lot. The land was donated to the city of Portland in the 1970s, and more than 64,000 citizens helped fund the construction of the square by buying the named bricks that pave it. Known as "Portland's Living Room", Pioneer Courthouse Square is now the community gathering spot. It is the stage for activities ranging from noon rallies; to garden displays; to concerts.



Beafore



After

TRANSIT MALL

When other cities were building transit malls exclusively for buses, Portland took a unique approach in which buses and automobiles share the street providing convenient access to businesses. This was augmented by private investment providing bronze bus shelters, brick sidewalks, and extensive public art. The cornerstone of Portland's Downtown Plan, the Transit Mall is now the hub for more than 50 bus routes and MAX connections and has stimulated numerous urban redevelopment investments.



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Capping Successes

Although Portland is a leader in many areas of urban planning, the idea of capping is a very old concept. Communities have been doing it over roadways, railways, and water bodies for centuries. If the I-405 freeway through downtown Portland embodies the problems and dilemmas of our past to this city, it is the realized efforts and commitment of many other cities across the country and around the globe that offer us hope for the future.

Successful capping efforts are as diverse in scope as they are widespread in location. Exemplary projects exist in notable locations like Penn Station in New York, and the Capital Mall in Washington, D.C.; as close as Seattle, Washington; as far away as Barcelona, Spain; and as unexpected as Monterey, California, and Duluth, Minnesota.

The projects range greatly in construction cost and timeframe, depending in part on the scale of the project and on the amount of political and public support they garnered. The following projects provide a sampling of the unique bridging benefits that can be achieved through the capping process.





The Capitol Mall - Washington D.C.

FLORENCE, ITALY

The Ponte Vecchio is one of the oldest and most prestigious examples of building connections between two neighborhoods. Built on the River Arno in Florence, Italy, the bridge has supported churches, homes, vegetable markets, and shops for more than four centuries. It is a rare example of the beauty that can be found when function and form come together in a tight space.



Ponte Vecchio - Florence, Italy

BARCELONA, SPAIN

The Ronda De Dalt in Barcelona is an approximately 26 mile ring road that connects neighborhoods along its route with numerous structural coverings that provide public facilities,

housing, parks, play spaces, parking, and pedestrian pathways over the depressed freeway. Built in response to the 1992 Summer Olympics, the Ronda De Dalt embodied the latest Spanish engineering, architecture, and urban design. It is similar in width, depth, and context to I-405 and was completed in approximately 10 years.



Ronda De Dalt - Barcelona, Spain

DULUTH, MINNESOTA

In 1992, the city completed the construction of four tunnels that added 13 blocks to Duluth's downtown. The Interstate 35 Extension project used capping to create a variety of pedestrian linkages and community amenities which reconnected downtown Duluth to Lake Superior. The effort saved several historic buildings, added a two-and-a-half acre platform park and created new urban green spaces including the Duluth Rose Garden. The total project cost approximately \$220 million to build. Since its completion, the project has stimulated an estimated \$800-\$900 million in private investment and caused land values to double.



Lake Park - Duluth, Minnesota

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Freeway Park is a 5-acre oasis in the center of downtown Seattle built on one of the freeway overpasses of Interstate 5. Waterfalls and fountains mute the roar of the eight-lane freeway below it and lush plantings provide a green respite and a pleasant pedestrian connection between First Hill and downtown, cut off when I-5 was built. Completed in 1976, The construction of Freeway Park cost approximately \$9.6 million.



Freeway Park - Seattle, WA

Seattle returned to Interstate 5 in the early 1980s, to develop a stateof-the-art convention center. The 1.2 million square foot structure encompasses nearly 4 city blocks, about 300-400 feet of which covers the freeway. Like Freeway Park, the Convention Center provides a major connection between clowntown Seattle and First Hill.



Convention Center -Seattle, Washington



Landscaped Lids - Mercer Island, Washington

Two landscape lids were created on either end of a seven-mile stretch of the I-90 freeway from Seattle to Mercer Island. The lids cover about 20 percent of the project's land length and account for 28 acres of parks that help reunite the neighborhoods that had been ripped apart by freeway construction. The lid features a 12-mile bike path lined by grass fields which connect several sports fields and play mead-ows. It is estimated that the parks cost \$300 million.

BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Built in 1984, Copley Place, is an office and retail project designed to reconnect two neighborhoods in Boston's Back Bay. The entire project comprises 9.5 acres, a portion of which is built on the air rights above the Massachusetts Turnpike, the Copley Square exit, and railroad tracks. The mall portion of the development totals 3.7 million square feet.



Copley Place - Boston, Massachusetts

The Central Artery/Tunnel Project provides a solution to Boston's traffic problems and reconnects neighborhoods

that were severed by the construction of the elevated, six-lane freeway that runs through the center of historic downtown Boston. The Central Artery will be replaced with an eight-to-ten-lane underground expressway (Interstate 93), directly beneath the existing route. It will mitigate the barrier created by the old elevated highway, reconnect the neighborhoods that were severed by it, and improve the quality of life in the city beyond the confines of the new highway. Approximately 30 acres of land will be available for parks, playgrounds, housing and commercial development. Seventy-five percent of the new space is planned to be maintained as public spaces.

A State of the second



Central Artery - Boston, Massachusetts

A Grassroots Approach

In the State of the City Address in February of 1998, Mayor Katz looked to Portland's next 25 years and called upon planning efforts for another set of projects for the central city. The Mayor spoke of the importance of capturing retail, office, and housing opportunities in the Rose Quarter, as well as looking to the west at Goose Hollow/West End as a chance to reclaim land for jobs and housing that was lost during the construction of the I-405 ditch. Capturing these central city possibilities will further keep growth pressure off of existing residential neighborhoods.

Moving forward, the Mayor challenged citizens to think about the creation of a bold new vision for the downtown core-- capping of I-405 in downtown Portland from Fourth Avenue to Glisan Street to reclaim key portions of the 38 blocks lost when the freeway was constructed in 1965. The LAF and the ASLA accepted her challenge.

Each year when the ASLA visits a city, they leave more than money after their stay. They have a wonderful tradition of teaming up with their hosts to organize a pro-bono CAT project to tackle the toughest contemporary planning and design issues affecting the region. This year, as the 1998 urban CAT project, the ASLA worked with the city of Portland and its partners to study the potential for reconnecting neighborhoods and reclaiming land above and surrounding I-405.

Working with the Mayor's office, a Technical Team comprised of Portland's leading designers, engineers, and planners was assembled to conduct the study. The 30-member Team lent over \$200,000 in pro bono services to the effort.

A formal Community Agreement was signed at the outset of the project by the Mayor's Office, LAF, ASLA, affected neighborhoods, business interests, city agencies, and the State of Oregon agreeing to work together on a three-step process over a 6month period to achieve a vision for the corridor.



Mayor Katz at Community-Wide Open House

City of Portland Community Agreement to Facilitate the Reclamation of a Downtown Portland I-405 Freeway Ditch and Improve the Surrounding Neighborhoods Entered into on May 14, 1998 by Portland Development Commission Pearl District Meighbor low Foothills League locus li Tracy Ritter id Allred Neighbors West Northwest West End Working Group CHI Williams cican Society of Landscape Architects

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Citizen's Vision

STEP ONE - RESEARCH ON THE REAL THING

The Team collected research data from over 20 places where similar built and un-built projects had been undertaken. The key topics of research included the purpose of each project, the cost, the benefit and timeframe for completion.

They also researched past Portland projects that at first seemed quite impossible, but were successfully completed. Portland has long been recognized for its unusual ability to make things happen when others would think them impossible. It was important to understand what

distinguished the Portland success story from other efforts. After evaluating past projects, it was evident that Portland benefited greatly from an informed and inspired citizenry willing to overcome seemingly insurmountable odds to make things happen. This past precedent became the basis for creation of a unique citizen based input process. In a sense, it was to be through the shared insights and values of the community that a plan would emerge, expressing the personality of place.

To kick off the input of citizen participa-

tion, all the background research was distilled into a series of informational wall size display panels. Almost 1,000 people gathered in Pioneer Courthouse Square for a Community-Wide Open House on July 2, 1998, to begin the process of reconnecting their neighborhoods.



32-foot long storyboard display



Model of I-405



Model and aerial of I-405 corridor



Comment board

r 5th /

Aerial of I-405 corridor

STEP TWO - INPUT & IDEAS

The open house panel display proved an effective backdrop for discussion of community issues and ideas during three community design workshops that took place over the course of a month. The workshops focused discussion on issues and concerns at the neighborhood level. Over 200 attendees divided into teams to brainstorm critical problems caused by the freeway as well as goals and priorities. A summary of the key highlights follows.

CRITICAL ISSUES

- Has split downtown in half
- It's a scenic blight on the landscape
- Prohibits PSU expansion
- Not a pedestrian friendly environment
- It's dirty, loud, dangerous, forbidding
- Feels like a "moat"
- It's too windy
- It disrupts neighborhood identities
- It's a waste of prime real estate
- Causes increased stormwater runoff and pollution
- It separates neighborhoods it's a barrier
- Degrades neighboring areas, it's unnatural
- It's a heartless place
- It's a concrete river
- Degrades adjacent property values

GOALS & BENEFITS

Reconnecting Neighborhoods

- Rejoin Goose Hollow and Portland State University
- Develop a stronger identity for neighborhoods
- Reunite neighborhoods for mutual benefit
- Reconnect west neighborhoods with downtown
- Create gateways at I-405/26 highway interchange
- Improve Civic Stadium/Pearl District/West End Plans

Expand Multimodal Access

- Create a vital walking and biking environment
- Reduce demand for parking
- Complete MAX station for better transit use
- Provide pedestrian routes for access to streetcar
- Retain function/capacity of I-405
- Continue the street grid for connectivity
- Manage east-west traffic through corridor

Provide safe and comfortable north-south routing

Explore Economic Benefits and Expand Options

- Approach entire project as a gameboard
- Respect and support lightrail, streetcar, PSU
- Don't cap entire corridor
- Maximize real estate-development potential
- Trade space on I-405 for land in other parts of the city
- Create high-tech employment opportunities
- Sports and entertainment needs for parking
- Use space to expand tax base

Enhance Cultural Diversity and Social Fabric

- Improve social viability of downtown
- Replenish ethnic flavors
- Create opportunity for social services
- Provide magnet places for people to gather

Expand Housing and Mixed Use

- Provide indoor recreation
- Assist redevelopment along highway corridor
- Increase housing density
- Encourage a balance of jobs to housing
- Create an environment to live and work
- Create mix of affordable and market rate housing
- Create housing for families and students
- Develop terraced housing blocks with greenspace
- Build a new neighborhood grocery near PSU

Emphasize Expansion of Greenspace

- Year-round recreation for neighborhoods
- Parks that serve housing and employment
- Create open, play spaces, gardens, greenbelts
- Amenities for kids, such as parks and playgrounds
- More fountains and water features



Example section of one small group workshop map



Example section of one small group workshop map

- Beautification "clean, green, accessible to all"
- Develop I-405 stormwater slough
- Maintain connections to natural features, landmarks.
- Preserve views of mountains
- Provide recreation in Pearl District and Northwest
- Create Public Space for Civic Activities
- Create year-round destinations for people
- Add public attractions, magnets, art museums
- create a landmark focal points like Pioneer Square
- Create public greenhouse or urban conservatory

PRIORITIES SUMMARY

- Burnside as magnet
- Mixed-use development on MAX
- New housing for neighborhoods
- Extend park blocks
- New parks and greenspaces
- Portland State University expansion
- Goose Hollow bike and ped links
- Pearl District/Northwest parking
- I-405 stormwater slough
- Maintain views at Hwy 26/I-405 interchange

Eighteen corridor-wide vision concept maps were created by the participants. The Team synthesized the maps for commonalities and differences before creating a Thematic Composite map that illustrated the "consenfrom the public

sus" elements from the public.

The Thematic Composite map was reviewed and approved at a Consensus Building Workshop held at City Hall on July 28, 1998, at which about 60 participants, many of whom had attended previous events, debated the merits and concerns of various elements before reaching agreement. As a group, citizens walked through the thematic elements of the map discussing what should happen over the freeway. Consensus was reached on two areas as priorities for early action: 1) the area adjacent to the light rail tracks, and 2) the area around Burnside.



Consensus Building Workshop Thematic Composite Plan

STEP THREE -CAPPING RECOMMENDATIONS

Results from the Consensus Building Workshop provided the framework for the basic plan. In addition, the plan incorporated existing codes, guidelines, and policies relating to parks, transportation, development, and planning.

Neighborhood and district plans indicated that proposed development of the I-405 corridor on parcels adjacent to Civic Stadium, the West End, and Goose Hollow should be compatible with other development efforts and further stimulate private sector investment.



West End Concept plan (Zimmer, Gunsul, Frasca)

Recognizing the positive transformation intended for the West End District, a neighborhood that serves as a transition between the downtown and I-405, is critical in determining the relationship between the two areas. The West End streetcar leg will attract students from PSU; commuters, shoppers, residents, and tourists from Northwest and the Pearl District; as well as pedestrian traffic from the downtown core. The West End will also become a district with



Listing objective



Analyzing the maps

the unique ability to connect key downtown neighborhoods to the heart of Portland's cultural institutions such as the Art Museum and the Central library. Any development over I-405 should consider program improvements and preferred uses as recommended in the West End District Master Plan due for completion in late Fall 1998.

Engineering requirements defined the final details for the plan throughout the corridor. The Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405 Vision Plan for the I-405 corridor accomplishes the following revitalization goals:

Connectivity - The primary purpose of the plan is to reconnect of the neighborhoods of downtown. Eight key neighborhoods (Northwest, Pearl District, West Burnside, Civic Stadium, The West End, Goose hollow, PSU, and Duniway) could be reconnected using currently vacant air space. The emphasis is on renewing both east/west as well as north/south connections.

Multi-Modal Transportation - While accepting the presence of the automobile, alternative forms of transportation will be promoted. Mass transit, bicycles, pedestrians and citizens with disabilities are of equal if not greater importance to the design process than the automobile.

Economic Development - Use the opportunity to attract key targeted industries to the downtown. Link job development to not only to the neighborhoods, but also to the curriculums and activities occurring at Portland's urban universities (PSU and OHSU). The scale, scope and character of the development should reflect a step-by-step long-term perspective to planning, celebrating the reality of Portland's weather, achieving a balance between the urban and natural environment, creating projects that stimulate broad interest and excitement, and building partnerships between the public and private sector.

From the wealth of information and input provided by the community, the Team recommended reclaiming five key locations resulting in the construction of 26 of the original 38 blocks that were eliminated when the freeway was constructed in 1965. The recapturing of this land could lead to 1,000 housing units (2,000 residents), 650,000 square feet of commercial space (generating 1,800 permanent new jobs), 2,200 parking spaces, 6 acres of parks, 2 acres of indoor recreational uses and 50,000 square feet for civic/exhibition uses.

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BRIDGING THE NEIGHBORHOODS

The basic approach to the plan is to strategically place a series of caps to reconnect several historic and emerging neighborhoods and districts that are adjacent to I-405. Many of the neighborhoods to be reconnected are undergoing a transformation of their identity or are in need of additional opportunities to grow around their existing environment. Regardless of where they are at in their maturation process improving the physical relationship with their geographic neighbor is important.

The West End would benefit from a stronger connection to the Civic Stadium District. As would the Pearl District and Northwest Portland in addition to Portland State university realizing the potential to expand the campus and connect to the West Hills and Duniway Park. Creating these connections through capping will lead to to a smoother transition among the neighborhoods.

PEARL DISTRICT TO NORTHWEST

The Pearl District and Northwest neighborhoods will increase their vitality with a stronger connection to each other. Pedestrian and bicycle traffic will be increased with a stronger sense of contact between these districts located along Everett and Glisan Streets.

WEST BURNSIDE: BURNSIDE STREET

West Burnside is the point of contact between four neighborhoods and as the gateway from the Westside into downtown. It is also the main north/south dividing line for the entire City. The intersection with I-405 should be celebrated and enhanced into a major landmark.

CIVIC STADIUM TO PEARL DISTRICT

The Portland Opera and Artist's Repertory Theater are headquartered around Civic Stadium. The Pearl District has many thriving restaurants, music venues and galleries. If these



dynamic activities were connected, they could create a new and expanded entertainment district.

CIVIC STADIUM TO DOWNTOWN

The economic vitality of the downtown core could be stitched along the light rail lines of Morrison and Yamhill Streets to capture the potential of Civic Stadium, one of the City's most significant public attractions.

HIGHER EDUCATION TO SECONDARY EDUCATION

An alliance should be created between PSU and Lincoln High School to reinforce each other's educational mission.

GOOSE HOLLOW TO DOWNTOWN

A fortified connection between the districts would create a stronger and friendlier West Side, especially along Columbia and Jefferson Streets.

GOOSE HOLLOW TO CULTURAL DISTRICT

The combination of inner city arts, civic and cultural focus could be the impetus for civic district that bridges the freeway between the new Cultural District and Goose Hollow.

GOOSE HOLLOW FOOTHILLS TO GOOSE HOLLOW FLATS

Gander Ridge could be reintegrated into the larger Goose Hollow neighborhood across the Highway 26 divide for pedestrians and bikes.

SOUTH PARK BLOCKS TO GOOSE HOLLOW FOOTHILLS

The south park blocks, a graceful anchor to the downtown core, terminates abruptly at the freeway. It would be possible to walk through much of the City in greenspace if the parks were connected across the freeway and blended into the forested hillside.

PSU TO BROADWAY

Many students live in the West Hills and Goose Hollow Neighborhood. If the route was emphasized and made safe, it could inspire more pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

SOUTH AUDITORIUM TO DUNIWAY

A connection to Duniway Park and the Terwilliger trail will open tremendous outdoor opportunities for residents of the City, while smoothing out the transportation difficulties of the Broadway and Barbur arterials.

ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

BIKE AND PED ACCESS

A key component of the plan is to promote different modes of transportation. Improving safety and experience of the pedestrian is paramount along this corridor. This will be achieved through a pedestrian friendly streetscape, extending routes to existing parks and pathways of the city. Improving the bicycle experience across I-405 is completed through the addition of bicycle lanes through the freeway corridor. An asset of the corridor is the presence of the light rail along Morrison and Yamhill Streets. This connection will be enhanced by completing the station located at 13th and Morrison. Another asset is the close proximity of the planned route of the central city streetcar along 10th and 11th Avenues. When the streetcar is complete in 2000, it will improve traffic flow throughout the central city. A critical element of the transportation system that cannot be



The Crossing

overlooked is the auto and truck traffic. Certainly, it is a goal of the project to enhance the efficiency of the freeway traffic below the capping. It is also a goal to balance the automobile experience on the local surface streets; combined with a more equitable pedestrian and bicycle oriented environment.



UNIQUELY PORTLAND

The plan seeks to create a solution to the freeway impacts that is uniquely Portland in style. This is satisfied in number of ways.

Environmentally, the plan illustrates different solutions to address the reality of Portland's weather, from the creation of places that capture and use stormwater run-off from the west hills; to ornamental fountains and water features through each development site along the corridor.

Architecturally, the plan promotes the continuation of streetscape, block and building scales to create development that is in keeping with the existing urban fabric of the downtown.

The public process is the final way by which the plan was created and how it will ultimately be implemented. The process capitalized on the uniquely Portland trait to look at



Stormwater Gardens

the long-range vision of the city from the grassroots level and to plan cost effective ways to capitalize on the city's existing resources. This also involves creating diverse partnerships to implement the plan.



GREENSPACE

The Goose Hollow Station Community Plan, approved by City Council 1996 recommended a series parks needs in the Goose Hollow neighborhood. Uses such as playgrounds and parks with other children's amenities need to be considered above I-405. In addition, the Goose Hollow plan emphasizes the creation of a pedestrian corridor on Jefferson Street. Parks uses on adjacent I-405 parcels need to reflect this objective.

The greenspace attractions along the corridor include the Northwest Sports and Recreation Center, the park, playground, and event lawn at Main Street Commons, and the South Park blocks terminus with its reconnection to Duniway Park and Terwilliger Boulevard.

Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405 will leverage 6 additional acres for parks and recreational spaces.



Playground, park, and event lawn at Main Street Commons



OFFICES

Business owners, entrepreneurs, and executives more and more prefer to live close to their offices for convenience. Consequently, the I-405 corridor is especially attractive for new office development. Growth of jobs in the central city is critical to the health of the region. In the changing global economy, a shift from an industrial manufacturing base to information and service technologies, presents a strong demand for new and different types of office space. Downtown office space will remain in high demand and the I-405 will provide a welcome relief to the lack of desirable locations for prime office development, creating the potential for urban campus style complexes as well as traditional office towers.

Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405 leverages 450,000 square feet of office space. The leveraging of this square footage has the ability to advance the Central City job goals as outlined in the Metro 2040 plan. From 1990-1996, the Central City



Civic blocks

share of job growth accounted for only 4.2% of the region's. The downtown only captured 3.2% (see chart on page 56). It is estimated that capping the freeway and redeveloping air rights will create jo opportunities for 1,800 full time employees.







Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405 Vision Plan



CIVIC

For Portland to thrive, services that the city provides to its citizens will become more and more important to preserve the sense of community they currently enjoy. The I-405 corridor, which is now the divider between several neighborhoods, provides the perfect setting to bring people back together. To increase the connection between districts, many civic areas are envisioned. The idea is that, much like parks, plazas and public amenities connect people throughout the year. They serve as the symbolic representations of the pride that residents have for their community.

Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405 leverages 50,000 square feet for civic space (i.e., public plazas, structures, and amenities).



Bright Light District



HOUSING

As the population has continued to grow and transform the city, there has been an increased focus on living in the downtown core. With increased business in the downtown and more efficient mass transit opportunities coming into place, people have found that the urban form and design in Portland provides a healthy place to live. Increased housing opportunities close to downtown are becoming increasingly attractive to professionals as well. This has stimulated a thriving housing market in the area, at a time when there is also significant need for affordable housing.

The location of the I-405 corridor along the western edge of the central business district is ideally suited to support expanded housing development at all income levels, especially with its proximity and access to the streetcar and MAX light rail line. The immediacy of the downtown core jobs and attractions offer great incentive for housing to occur, as do the rich and diverse neighborhoods that surround it.



Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405 leverages 1,000 new housing units.



RETAIL

As neighborhood populations continue to grow, the I-405 corridor offers a place for new retail business opportunities. The range of specific opportunities may include:

- retail stores for clothes, gifts, and necessities;
- local and specialty grocery stores;
- entertainment spaces for dance and performance theater;
- recreation uses such as athletic clubs and other activities;
- restaurants, pubs, and cafes; and personal services.

As we enter the next century, the I-405 capping will become more than just places for people to pass through on their way to and from downtown. The area will transform its surroundings, becoming a place for people to shop, socialize, and play close to where they live.



MAX Mixed Use District

Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405 leverages 150,000 square feet in retail space.



PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION

Lower parking ratios, shared parking, transportation demand management programs and strategically placed parking structures support pedestrian activity and transit oriented development. These programs, if balanced with reasonable parking standards for businesses, will create a viable economic environment and support long-term stability for residents and visitors alike. The necessity of the single occupancy vehicle is a fact in a city.

Without sufficient parking, businesses cannot succeed and housing developments will not occur. The vision plan, while emphasizing the mass transit and pedestrian opportunities, accommodates the car through a series of parking structures and curbside metered parking provisions. These opportunities for more parking could be an important asset should Civic Stadium undergo the



Round-About

proposed renovations which may lead to higher use and greater parking demand.

Bridge the Divide and Cap I-405 adds 2,200 additional parking spaces.




NORTHERN PORTAL

Symbolically, an entry tells visitors they are transitioning from one environment to another. This portal celebrates the urban city and the passage through its edges. It is this northern entrance that with foreground reflections of views to the west hills tells the traveler they are about to enter or exit the unique experience of the I-405 capping district.



NORTHWEST PEARL SPORTS AND RECREATION CENTER

This is an important juncture between the Pearl District and Northwest neighborhood. It provides a mixed-use complex of community scale retail on the ground floor and a recreation center and soccer field above. The center extends over the sidewalk to create a covered arcade for pedestrians. The retail component could augment a public approach to the project by increasing its economic viability. The center offers the community a safe central place for sporting activities



Cross section of freeway and sports & recreation cntr

Parking would be provided at the ground floor and adjacent to at an adjacent parking structure. Pedestrian skybridge connects new housing and office blocks to the Burnside Bright Light District, to the south.



View of edge of Northwest Pearl Sports and Recreation Center and parking garage - looking south



View of northern gateway, Northwest Pearl Sports and Recreation Center, and Bright Lights District, beyond - looking southeast





Section of Bright Light District - looking west

BRIGHT LIGHT DISTRICT

This public place links four neighborhoods together. Protected from the elements by a combination of tensile umbrella structures, it celebrates the City with a series of fountains and plazas. An urban conservatory punctuates the relationship between the City and nature. Retail shops and cafés ring the area, supporting existing entertainment activity. Burnside traffic is slowed by an oval plaza that creates a more pedestrian-oriented environment. Easy connections





View of mixed-use plaza and conservatory - looking southeast

Civic Stadium/West End







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MAX MIXED USE DISTRICT

A series of three new mixed-use structures take advantage of their proximity to the recently completed light rail system and available station platforms. Each of the buildings has ground floor retail space, with offices and housing above. The streetscape is designed to extend a clear sense of pedestrian scale from east to west across the freeway to support connectivity between Civic Stadium and Downtown.



View of transit mall at Yambill - looking southeast



View of mixed use office buildings - looking southeast



View of playground and plaza at main Street Commons

MAIN STREET COMMONS

Taking cues from the greenspace in front of Lincoln High School, this park is comprised of three diverse spaces. The first space is a children's playground whose primary function is to support families of the surrounding neighborhoods. The second space is the Main Street fountain and plaza that will create a gathering place and could be used as a location for a farmer's market. The third space is the Great Lawn, a place that can be used for organized games as well a place to just be outside for a picnic. The lawn could



View of children's playground - looking southeast

also be used for small outdoor concerts and events. Extending under the whole length of these three blocks is a parking garage. The garage can be used to support events at Civic Stadium, PSU, or the Cultural District as well as day to day downtown business parking. The garage can be entered and exited from the freeway and will reduce traffic impact on local streets.



View of event lawn



View of Main Street Commons playground, park, event lawn, and office space

CIVIC BLOCKS

The Main street Commons park is anchored at the south end by a series of three mixed use housing and civic structures. These buildings have northerly views along the corridor. This is an excellent opportunity for market rate housing. To the south of this structure are two more structures that would be a mixture of housing, office, and retail. An opportunity exists at this place to build a civic and cultural center that would be built adjacent to the Crossing and Stormwater Garden. It would strengthen the connection to the Portland Art Museum and nearby Cultural District. This would continue to reinforce Portland's growing reputation as a City that is a great supporter of the Arts.



View of water feature with civic/office building in background - looking northwest



View of water feature with civic/office building in background - looking northwest

THE CROSSING & WEST PORTAL

Serving as a portal archway to the city from I-26, the Crossing pedestrian bridge knits Goose Hollow and PSU back together. It would be solely for the use of pedestrians and bicycles. The bridge would be a light cable bridge situated to frame the view of the city as one exits the tunnel on I-26. Due to its location and its need to be light in mass, this is an incredible opportunity for a poetic and unique structure, an attraction for which Portland could become famous. It is the physical embodiment of Portland's commitment to the creation of a livable city through the recognition of the importance of the pedestrian experience and alternative methods of transportation.

Below, a sea of terraced stormwater gardens are envisioned

with marsh and wetland species plants, designed to integrate in a grand manner, the natural systems of stormwater and rain as a design statement along the freeway interchange.











View of the bike and pedestrian Crossing - looking south

STORMWATER GARDENS

A system of landscaping along the freeway would be built into the open sections to capture stormwater runoff from the surrounding hills. It would be designed and engineered through a series of terraces and aquatic gardens to filter and clean runoff. This runoff would be transformed into a series of natural ponds that would create a method for reducing rain runoff into overloaded sewer systems. The Stormwater Garden would also augment the beauty of the corridor and celebrate the weather of Portland.



View of Stormwater Garden below the Crossing

View of Stormwater Gardens at Highway 26 interchange



Early diagram of Stormwater Gardens

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SOUTH MARKET SQUARE

This capping creates four new blocks of development that would complement both PSU and the Southwest Hills area. New housing would be created along with neighborhood grocery retail support services. Pedestrian and street traffic would be augmented with the addition of local streets that support the existing Portland block system and complement the historic housing.



View of PSU bousing and neighborhood retail -- looking east



View of South Market Square - looking southeast



View of South Market Square - looking southwest

PSU/Duniway







PSU EXPANSION

Portland State University would extend to the south along its current alignment with capping of the freeway. The capping would create land for academic buildings and athletic facilities. More housing for students would also be created across the extended park blocks. The capping would be done in a manner that reflects the existing character of the University.



View of PSU bousing and retail - looking south



View of PSU expansion and park blocks extension - looking southeast

SOUTH PARK BLOCKS EXTENSION

At this time, the Park Blocks terminate abruptly at the edge of the freeway. By extending the Park Blocks south, it would allow for the design of a graceful resolution at the base of the West Hills. As this park is a major element of the plan, a space would be created that celebrates the importance of these blocks to the quality of life in Portland. The new Park Blocks could be tied to the adjacent PSU extensions.

A pedestrian and bicycle connection would create a to link the City from the new Park Blocks to Duniway Park and up to the Terwilliger trail. This would allow people to walk from the downtown core to one of the major outdoor trails of Portland. It emphasizes the connection Portland has to its natural environment.



View of Roundabout - looking south west



View of Roundabout - looking southwest

BROADWAY ROUND-ABOUT

This round-about would reduce the traffic problems that currently exist as cars navigate the south end of downtown, US Highway 26, and of the West Hills in order to get to the Ross Island Bridge. By simplifying the traffic patterns, roads would become easier to navigate. The



View of Roundabout - looking northwest

round-about also serves to create a memorable and attractive gateway into the downtown. Housing and Office development would augment the form of the space, creating a more dramatic and experience.





View of Roundabout - looking northwest

SOUTHERN PORTAL

This portal creates a unique experience as one comes from the Terwilliger Curves and Marquam Bridges into the I-405 corridor. It frames the city and the new development that would be built along the corridor. Much like the North Portal, the South portal serves as a transition space for visitors into and out of the City.

Early Action Priorities

The public directed the ASLA Community Assistance Team to focus on two priority bridging areas at the Consensus Building Workshop on July 28, 1998. They include the MAX Mixed Use District (Morrison and Yamhill) which links Civic Stadium to the West End District and downtown, and the Bright Light District which reconnects for neighborhoods (Pearl, Northwest, Civic Stadium and the West End) and stimulates the creation of the western Gateway to downtown. Meetings with Portland developers confirmed the most attractive blocks to cap would be from Burnside to Taylor Street. Developers acknowledged the concept of the Bright Light District could create a synergy that would further encourage private investment not only over the freeway, but on adjacent underutilized parcels as well. These priorities were perceived to be the most beneficial capping opportunities for the immediate future.

MAX MIXED USE DISTRICT

This project lies between Alder Street and Taylor Street. Currently, light rail passes directly through this area on Yamhill and Morrison. The light rail would become the centerpiece of new development. Stations planned at the intersection of I-405 but never completed would be finished. This would add a much needed station between the Galleria and Civic Stadium. This stop would also support new development above the freeway. When the lids are complete, prototypical city blocks would be created which would be immediately understandable to developers and designers.

Streetscapes would be made pedestrian friendly. A row of metered parking would be created on the existing streets that would support ground floor retail. A parking structure would be built that could support not only the new office structures but also events at the stadium itself. The office structures would need to be designed in respect the scale of existing structures on either side of the freeway. This means the structures could easily be five to seven stories in height. This particular project would have some of the tallest buildings along the corridor increasing the efficiency for the developer. This priority is of particular importance due to activities in the adjacent areas.

In 1997, the West End Steering Committee was created to identify and execute a series of policy changes and capital improvements to accelerate mixed use development in a district that will be the downtown hub for the Central City Streetcar by 2001. The West End is bordered by Market Street to the South, Couch Street to the north, 9th Avenue to the east, and I-405 to the west.

Recognizing the positive transformation intended for the West End District, a neighborhood that serves as a transition between the downtown and I-405, is critical in determining the relationship between the two areas. The West End streetcar leg will attract students from PSU; commuters, shoppers, residents, and tourists from Northwest and the Pearl District; as well as pedestrian traffic from the downtown core. The West End will also become a district with the unique ability to connect key downtown neighborhoods to the heart of Portland's cultural institutions such as the Art Museum and the Central library. Any development over I-405 should consider program improvements and preferred uses as recommended in the West End District Master Plan due for completion in late Fall 1998.

The relationship between I-405 and the West End is equally as important as the activity occurring in what will become the Civic Stadium District. In September 1998, the City of Portland and the Metropolitan Exposition Recreation Commission released a request for proposals with the intention of securing private sector interest in the redevelopment of Civic Stadium. This action followed up on recommendations made in the 1998 Civic Stadium Advisory Committee report which emphasized the need to upgrade the multipurpose facility and strengthen its ties to the neighborhood

BRIGHT LIGHT DISTRICT

This civic plaza was seen as an ideal starting point due to its ability to positively affect adjacent neighborhoods. As a grand public attraction, it is seen as a significant place to focus attention on the potentialities of capping. As mentioned earlier in this report, this space is seen as a public plaza that would join the Goose Hollow, West End, and Northwest neighborhoods and the Pearl District together. It would spur development that could have the potential to turn Burnside into the major boulevard and orienting lines in the City. The development would include an urban conservatory that would illustrate the City's connection to the environment. Fountains and tensile "umbrella" structures would celebrate the relationship that Portland has to its weather. cafés, restaurants, and retail spaces would continue to punctuate existing and new entertainment facilities. Nearby housing, parking structures, and office development would increase the success of this capping effort.

By reorganizing the roads surrounding this area, current ramps to and from the freeway will be preserved. By adding a plaza in the center of Burnside, traffic will slowed through this section which will emphasize the importance of this piece of the corridor as well as the importance of Burnside itself.

The capping in this area is seen as fairly easy given the short spans throughout this section of the I-405 corridor. This particular capping project would require a partnership between the city and developer due to the public nature of some of the features. The urban conservatory and the plaza areas belong to the public domain. The supporting uses could be areas for of development in the private sector. As this is seen as a central attraction, it would be advantageous a single developer undertook the development from Alder treet to Couch Street. This would mean the design, conruction, and permitting of the plaza and immediately adjaent structures would be done at the same time. Any eriphery structures between Couch Street and Everett uld be ceded to another developer if necessary, although would be advantageous if this was tied into the Burnside velopment. The structures between Couch and Everett uld have additional design considerations to respond

directly to the adjacent buildings and neighborhoods.

This project would be inspiration for future capping projects. Beyond having the benefit of creating a place for all the citizens of Portland, it would allow the process of capping to become streamlined for developers. By creating a high profile capping project, the benefits of capping would be clear to all citizens, when done properly. The success of this capping project would positively impact the surrounding neighborhoods, which would have the effect of stimulating future capping projects.

Public/Private Partnerships

MAKING IT HAPPEN

The capping of I-405 needs to be approached in the typical Portland style. This means creating a unique public/private partnership which uses public improvements and actions to maximize private investment.

The benefits of creating such a partnership for I-405 is the creation of a new source of tax revenue for the city. Currently NO taxes are collected on the space above the freeway. When private development takes place above the corridor, the taxes that are collected will be new to the city. These new funds could be used to build the public elements along the freeway that do not correspond directly or fully to the benefiting developers. For example, capping the two priority areas, MAX Mixed Use District and the Burnside Bright Light District, will leverage an estimated 195,000 square feet of commercial space. This relates to a projected tax revenue for the city of \$625,429. In fact, some developers believed the first structure built over the freeway should be completely taxable to maximize the immediate financial returns for the city.

The current development market favors land sellers over land buyers. Downtown property is being developed at a slower rate than is possible due to the inflated prices associated with economic prosperity. The land over I-405 is not privately held and therefore presents the public with the opportunity to stimulate a more aggressive market.

In September a series of meetings were held with Portland developers to determine the feasibility of capping projects gauge their level of interest in assisting in the implementation of the vision. Feedback emphasized the need to create landmark projects which assist in knitting neighborhoods together. There was emphasis that capping projects should be used to improve Portland*s position in retention and recruitment of jobs and businesses. Issues such as acquiring air rights, removal of regulatory barriers and construction of a freeway platform to build upon were viewed as critical for securing private investment. The land was over the freeway was viewed as excellent development opportunity. There was consensus that a thorough study of the economics and costs associated with capping, particularly in area between Burnside and Taylor, be completed as part of the next steps effort. Developers were very positive during these initial discussions. Capping I-405 is an idea which follows the classic Portland spirit for creating a vision for the next millennium, said Portland developer John Carroll.

Next Steps

Mayor Katz has emphasized redevelopment of I-405 as a vision for the next 25 years. The ASLA Technical Team believes that implementation of capping I-405 is going to take a monumental effort from both the public and private sectors of this city. The way to succeed in this effort is to create a clear strategy, which will guide the city through this creation of new 'land'. Using existing development standards, the concept plan can become the beginning point to the capping projects. By fostering an environment of partnership, the public and private sectors can create physical connections across the freeway that Portlanders will experience with pride. By designing a concept plan that is rooted in reality and also in the future, exciting possibilities of development are evident.

After initial review of the considerations for capping I-405 in downtown portland from 4th Avenue to Glisan Street, the ASLA Technical Team believes the following next steps occur:

- Commence predevelopment activity for parcels bordered by Burnside to the north and Taylor to the east. This includes a comprehensive economic analysis and engineering study to determine land costs, construction costs, market conditions, opportunities/impacts on land adjacent to the freeway, as well as impacts to the freeway.
- Identify potential source of funds that could be used to pay for capping. This should include a review of local, state, federal, and private sector opportunities.
- Use capping opportunity to attract designated city targeted industries to the downtown. Areas over the freeway near Portland State University and Oregon Health Sciences University should focus on biotechnology and other programmatic focuses which benefit the two programs and goals of the two educational institutions.
- Link any uses over the freeway to existing and future city policies. The development of mixed use parcels should explore strategies to attract businesses to the downtown and integrate housing into the project.

- Look to the immediate opportunity to create positive momentum for current planning efforts occurring in the West End District and the Civic Stadium District.
- Coordinate the next steps effort with the State Department of Transportation to assure capping considers the future maintenance needs of I-405.

The capping of I-405 will provide lessons that can be applied region and community-wide. This project can lead to a new generation of public/private partnerships and a new approach to building neighborhoods. Improving the links and connections which tie neighborhoods together (through either multi-model transportation, or specific development) is a tool that can be used in other areas of city such as Gateway, Hollywood, and St. Johns. Transforming a freeway from a barrier to a bridge by leveraging redevelopment could also assist in knitting together North Portland with Northeast along Interstate 5 as well as areas in Outer Southeast near Interstate 205. The 26 blocks reclaimed may well become a bridge that helps carry the city into the 21st century.

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MAPS

- 1. Central City Transportation Management Plan. Portland.
- 2. West End Concept Plan. Portland.
- 3. Central City Streetcar (Phase I) Plan. Portland.
- 4. River District Urban Renewal Area Map. Portland Development Commission. 1998.
- 5. Urban Renewal Boundaries Map, City of Portland.
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CENTRAL CITY, CITY OF PORTLAND AND METROPOLITAN AREA EMPLOYMENT							
Total Employment	1980	1990	1992	1994		1995	1996
Portland SMSA	665,563	855,655	866,251	946,896		995,700	1,042,885
Mult. County	401,186	452,482	454,246	473,395		491,900	518,492
City of Portland*	373.058	416,804	416,395	430,004		445,487	473,698
Downtown**	88.917	103,872		103,755			110,468
Central City***	132,169	147,543		148,433			155,414
	1980-1990 Growth/Share of		1990-1994		1990-1996		
			Growth/Share of		Growth/Share of		
Portland SMSA	200,092/100%		91,241/100%		,	230/100%	
Mult. County	51,296/25.6%		20,913/23%		66,010/35%		
City of Portland*	43,746/21.9%		13,200/14.5%		56,8	94/30%	
Downtown**	14,955/7.5%		117/0.1%		6,59	6/3.5%	
Central City***	15,374/7.7%		890/1%		7,87	1/4.2%	
(4) A subject of surgest Destand City Limits using Metro's zone system							

"*" Approximation of current Portland City Limits using Metro's zone system.

"**" Downtown=Metro's traffic zone #1 (census tracts 51,53,54,55,56,57)

"***" Central City=Downtown + census tracts 11.01, 11.02, 21, 22.02, 23.02, 24.02)

Source: Metro, August 1998

Agency Briefings and Roundtable Discussions

- Mayor's Growth Management Committee Briefing, May 20, 1998.
- 2. Stakeholders Forum, July 6, 1998.
- Technical Team Briefings, July 31, 1998.
 Bureau of Planning, Jeff Joslin
 Portland Office of Transportation, Laurel Wentworth
 Portland Development Commission, Les Prentice
 Oregon Department of Transportation, Dan Layden
- 4. Technical Team Briefing, August 14, 1998. Portland Parks Bureau, John Sewell
- 5. Briefing with Developers, September 8, 1998.
- Interstate 35 Duluth, Minnesota, Built Project Site Visit, September 24-27, 1998.
- Mayor's Growth Management Committee, September 15, 1998.
- AIA Urban Design Committee Briefing , September 15, 1998.
- ASLA Urban Design Committee Briefing , September 15, 1998.
- 10. Stakeholders Forum, September 18, 1998.
- 11. Briefing with Developers, September 29, 1998.
- 12. ODOT Region 1 Briefing, September 29, 1998.

Acknowledgements

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Mayor Vera Katz

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A SPECIAL THANKS TO

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