



I-35E

Parkway Design Concept Recommendation of the Saint Paul City Planning Commission



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March 11, 1983



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I. INTRODUCTION

This report provides an analysis and series of recommendations concerning the design concept for the Interstate 35E Parkway in St. Paul.

At the request of Mayor Latimer, the St. Paul Planning Commission has conducted a careful evaluation of the preliminary design concept proposed by the Minnesota Department of Transportation. Because of the long standing community concern about the I-35E Parkway, neighborhood information meetings were held in January and February. Three general information sessions were conducted for residents in the West 7th Street, Highland, and Summit Hill neighborhoods. Two additional meetings were held for residents living close to the corridor where five to seven foot wood fences are proposed as noise mitigation measures.

A formal public hearing was conducted by the Commission on the evening of March 2 in the City Council Chambers. Approximately 200 persons attended; twenty persons testified.

II. AUTHORITY FOR REVIEW

Minnesota Statutes provide for the review and approval of the preliminary design concept for all state highway projects by the local governing body, the City Council, of the affected communities. In the case of interstate projects, the statute provides that should the local governing body fail to approve the design within 90 days after submission, the Commissioner of MnDOT may refer the matter to the Metropolitan Council for its consideration. After considering the report of the Metropolitan Council, the Commissioner is authorized to decide whether to proceed.

Therefore, approval by the St. Paul City Council is not an absolute condition of roadway construction. The local review opportunity provided by statute, however, does give the City an opportunity to recommend specific design elements that will insure maximum compatibility of the roadway with our neighborhoods, local transportation system, future development plans and urban design principles.

Following approval of the design concept, detailed construction plans will be prepared by MnDOT for each stage of construction over the next few years--1983-1986. The specific construction plans will be reviewed by City staff for consistency with the approved design concept and submitted, in stages, to the City Council for its review and approval.

III. BACKGROUND

A major thoroughfare in the Pleasant Avenue corridor was first proposed in the 1940s, to carry traffic generated by southwest St. Paul and northern Dakota County. The corridor later became part of the planned interstate system, and approval for design was given in the early 1960s. Most of the right-of-way was acquired by 1967. Construction began in 1964, and much of it was completed in the section from West Seventh Street to St. Clair Avenue before the project was stopped in 1972.

In 1972, the St. Paul City Council and four neighborhood organizations jointly sued the Minnesota Department of Transportation to halt construction. They argued that the potential environmental impacts had not been adequately addressed. The stipulation for settlement required the preparation of an EIS and the holding of a location and design hearing.

In 1975, the Minnesota Legislature placed a moratorium on further freeway construction in the Pleasant Avenue corridor. In 1978, the Legislature directed the Metropolitan Council to prepare an EIS.

Between 1979 and 1981, the Metropolitan Council studied all possible corridors for the I-35E project and prepared a draft EIS which evaluated the 12 most feasible alternatives. Public hearings on the draft EIS were conducted in 1981, first by the St. Paul Planning Commission, next by the St. Paul City Council, and finally by the Metropolitan Council. Based on the recommendations of these three public bodies, the Commissioner of Transportation selected the preferred alternative--a parkway in the Pleasant Avenue Corridor with a direct connection to I-94.

The final EIS was prepared, reflecting the chosen alternative, the directly connected parkway. It was approved by the Metropolitan Council, the Minnesota Environmental Quality Board, and the Federal Highway Administration in 1982. MnDOT has now submitted the design concept to the City for approval.

The St. Paul City Planning Commission and City Council reviewed the Draft EIS during 1981, and both recommended a parkway with a direct connection to I-94. The approval of the directly connected parkway in the Final EIS means that is the alternative that must be built. The scope of the City's design review, then, is confined to those choices still to be made, within the parameters established in the Final EIS.

IV. SUMMARY OF DESIGN CONCEPT

The Interstate 35E Parkway will be built in the Pleasant Avenue corridor, along the right-of-way which was previously acquired. This corridor is below the bluff and is parallel to West Seventh Street. Currently, I-35E ends at West Seventh Street on the south, and begins again north of downtown, in the area known as the Common Section. See Figure I for corridor location.

This Interstate 35E link is to be constructed as a four-lane parkway. There will be two auxiliary lanes between West Seventh Street and the Short Line Road to accommodate short weaving distances. The speed limit will be 45 miles per hour, and trucks with a gross weight of over 9,000 pounds will be prohibited.

As in the case of other city parkways, the following vehicles will be allowed:

Autos	Small delivery trucks
Buses	MnDOT maintenance vehicles
Vans	Recreational Vehicles
Pickups	Emergency vehicles
Motorcycles	

The pavement will be constructed of bituminous, 4½" thick, to carry these vehicles, but not sufficient for heavy trucks.

A. INTERCHANGES

There is an existing interchange at Shepard Road. Interchanges are planned for West Seventh Street, Randolph Avenue, Victoria Street, St. Clair Avenue, Grand/Ramsey and Kellogg Boulevard. There is to be no direct connection to the Short Line Road.

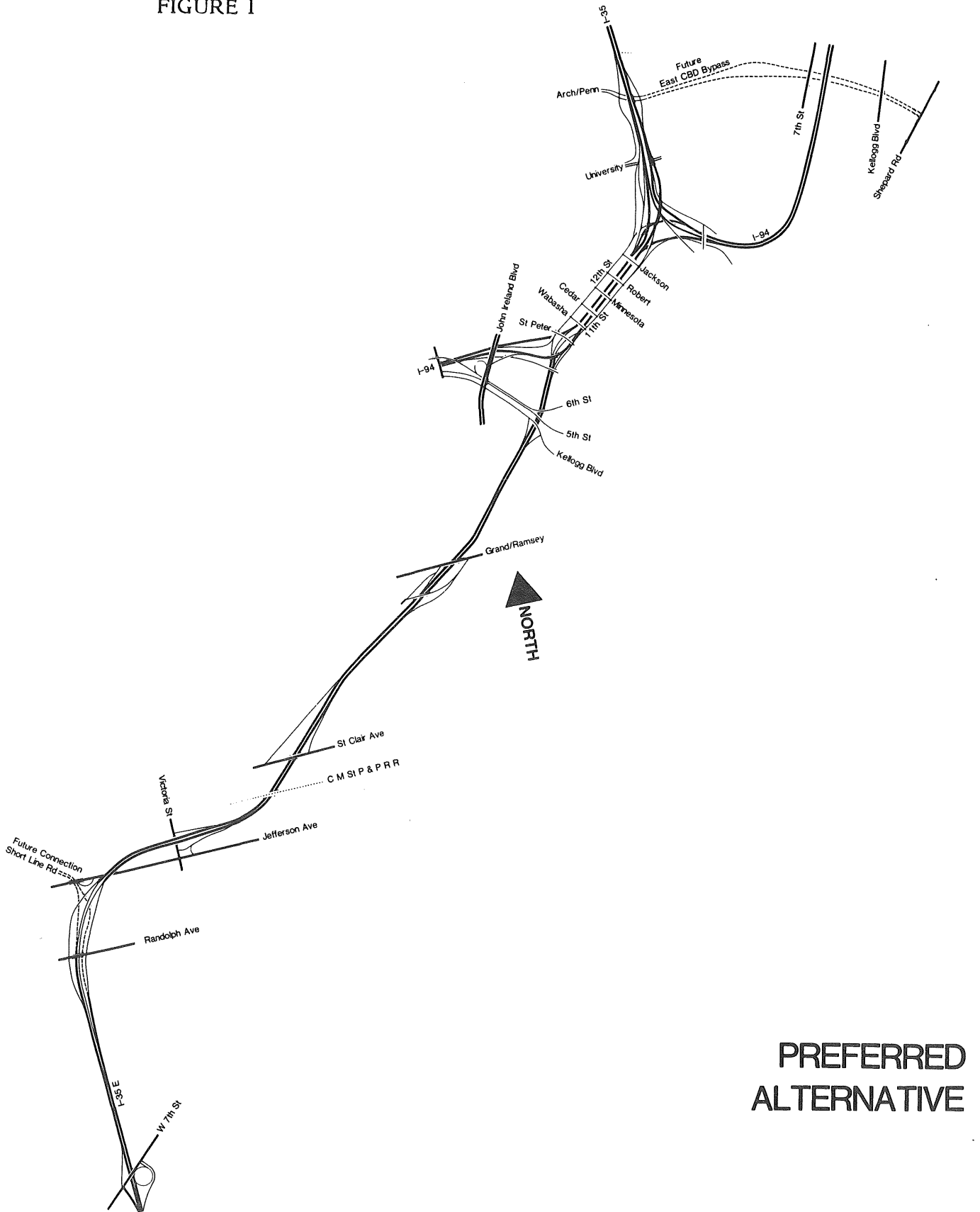
The interchange with Shepard Road will remain as is: one may exit from I-35E northbound to Shepard Road or enter I-35E southbound from Shepard Road. The West Seventh Street and Randolph Avenue interchanges will be full diamond interchanges, with all four movements possible.

The other planned interchanges will be half diamonds. At Victoria Street and at St. Clair Avenue, a driver may enter I-35E northbound or may exit from I-35E southbound. The Grand/Ramsey and Kellogg Boulevard interchanges are half-diamonds to and from the south.

The parkway will connect directly with Interstate 94, just east of the old Miller Hospital. The Common Section of I-94 and I-35E will be widened to provide additional capacity and to eliminate the weaving movements which would otherwise occur. This will involve extending each of the bridges, at Wabasha Street, Cedar Street, Minnesota Street, Robert Street and Jackson Street, with a longer bridge.

The Fifth and Sixth Street connectors to I-94 will be built at the same time as the parkway.

FIGURE 1



B. NOISE ABATEMENT

Noise studies for the EIS predicted that part of the corridor would need noise abatement to meet federal noise standards, while other sections would not. Figure 2 indicates those sections where noise walls will be constructed. Because there will be no trucks on the parkway, the walls will be five to seven feet high, and will be screened by shade trees, shrubs, and vines.

The federal noise standard is 70 decibels. With noise abatement the average noise level will be about 60 decibels; the highest level anywhere along the corridor will be 64 decibels. If the proposed noise walls are constructed, all federal noise standards will be met.

C. OTHER PARKWAY FEATURES

Where there are noise walls, they will act as a safety barrier between the roadway and nearby residences. Where there are no noise walls, a five foot chain link fence will serve this purpose. Landscaping and a bicycle and pedestrian trail are to be provided as part of the project.

The roadsides, median, and area outside the noise walls (or outside the fence) will be planted with various materials. The landscaped median begins at about Bayard (halfway between West Seventh Street and Randolph Avenue), where it will be about nine feet wide. Shrubs and ground cover will be planted on the median, from Bayard north to the bridge over Jefferson Avenue. At that point the median widens to 29 feet, so canopy trees will be used. A sprinkler system will be installed in the median to ensure the survival of the plantings there.

At Grand/Ramsey, the median gradually narrows because of the narrow right-of-way width in the downtown section. The parkway is depressed in this area so that Kellogg Boulevard and Fifth and Sixth Streets bridge over it. As the roadway nears Kellogg Boulevard and continues to connect with the Common Section, retaining walls will be used. A greenway edge will be provided along the tops of the walls, which will produce a terraced effect in the area near the Irvine Hill Condominiums. This treatment was chosen to preserve as much valuable downtown land as possible and to minimize the barrier effect caused by the roadway.

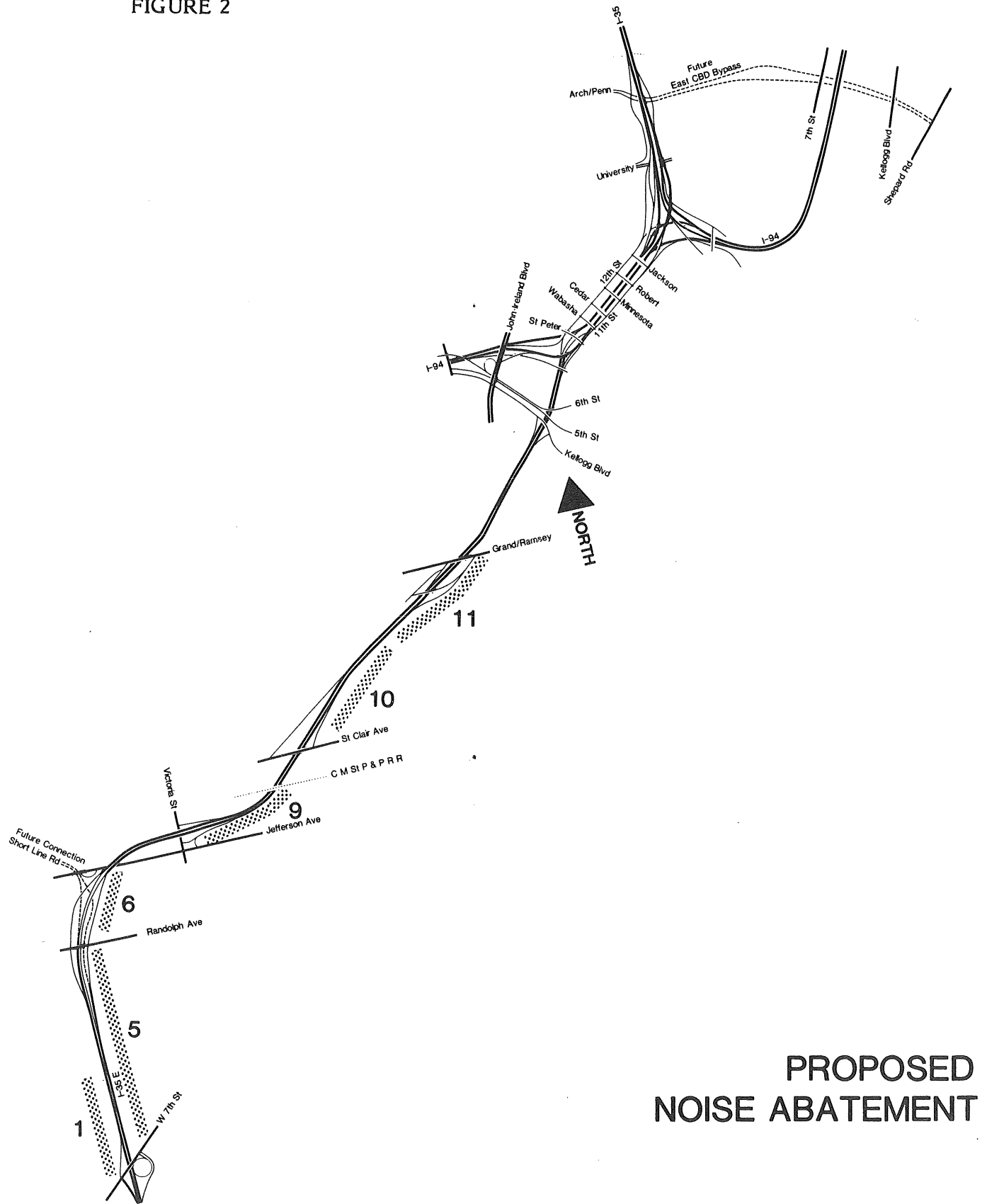
The bicycle and pedestrian trail will run the length of the corridor. As much as possible it will be constructed as a separate facility, just outside the noise wall or chain link fence but within the right-of-way. In some locations this is not possible, so the trail is directed to frontage roads and to city streets. The trail will be an eight foot wide strip of bituminous and will be striped to divide opposing traffic. Figure 4 shows the trail's route.

When construction is completed, MnDOT will maintain all landscaping inside the wall/fence line and the noise walls. The city will have maintenance responsibility for plantings outside the wall/fence link and for the bicycle and pedestrian trail. The annual cost to the city of this maintenance will be about \$10,800 (in 1982 dollars).

Three pedestrian bridges are also planned to cross the corridor, at Bayard Avenue, Duke Street, and Walnut Street.

The Parkway will have specially designed lighting standards which will be 35 feet high instead of the usual 40-45 feet. The "box" type fixture will be used to minimize spillover into adjacent neighborhoods. Almost all of the light will fall on the right-of-way.

FIGURE 2



PROPOSED NOISE ABATEMENT

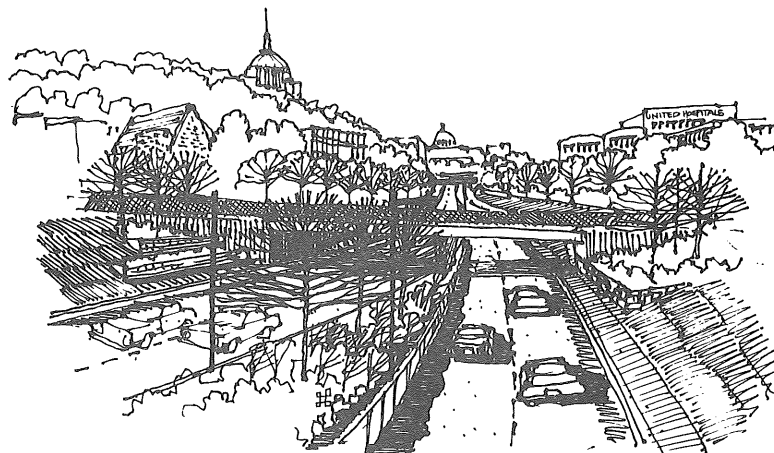
FIGURE 3 LANDSCAPE PLANTINGS



View to Parkway looking north on Vance Street.



View to Parkway looking west on Michigan Avenue.



View of Parkway looking north at Grand/Ramsey Bridge.

V. ISSUES

A. INTERCHANGE LOCATION AND DESIGN

During the public review process, the Commission received questions from some residents concerning the need for specific interchanges. To address these questions, the vehicular volume and destinations for proposed interchanges at St. Clair, Victoria, and Randolph were examined in detail.

The volumes on each ramp were assigned to the year 2000 highway network to note the routing and the number of trips to each zone of origin and destination. As a result, both the origin of trips using a ramp as well as the zone of destination from the ramp were analyzed. The analysis was limited to one-directional trips (i.e., southwest bound off ramp at St. Clair), since a similar pattern of trips in the reverse direction (northeast bound on-ramp at St. Clair) would occur.

The trip destination numbers indicated on Figures 5, 7 and 9 indicate terminations of vehicles which would exit the particular ramp being described. They do not indicate all new trips into a neighborhood. In fact, almost all of these trips exist today. Drivers are just using local streets rather than the Parkway.

Similarly, the numbers shown for various roadways on Figure 10 reflect Randolph northbound exit demand. They do not indicate that roadways will increase by that amount of traffic. Again, many of these trips exist today.

1. St. Clair Avenue (Figure 5)

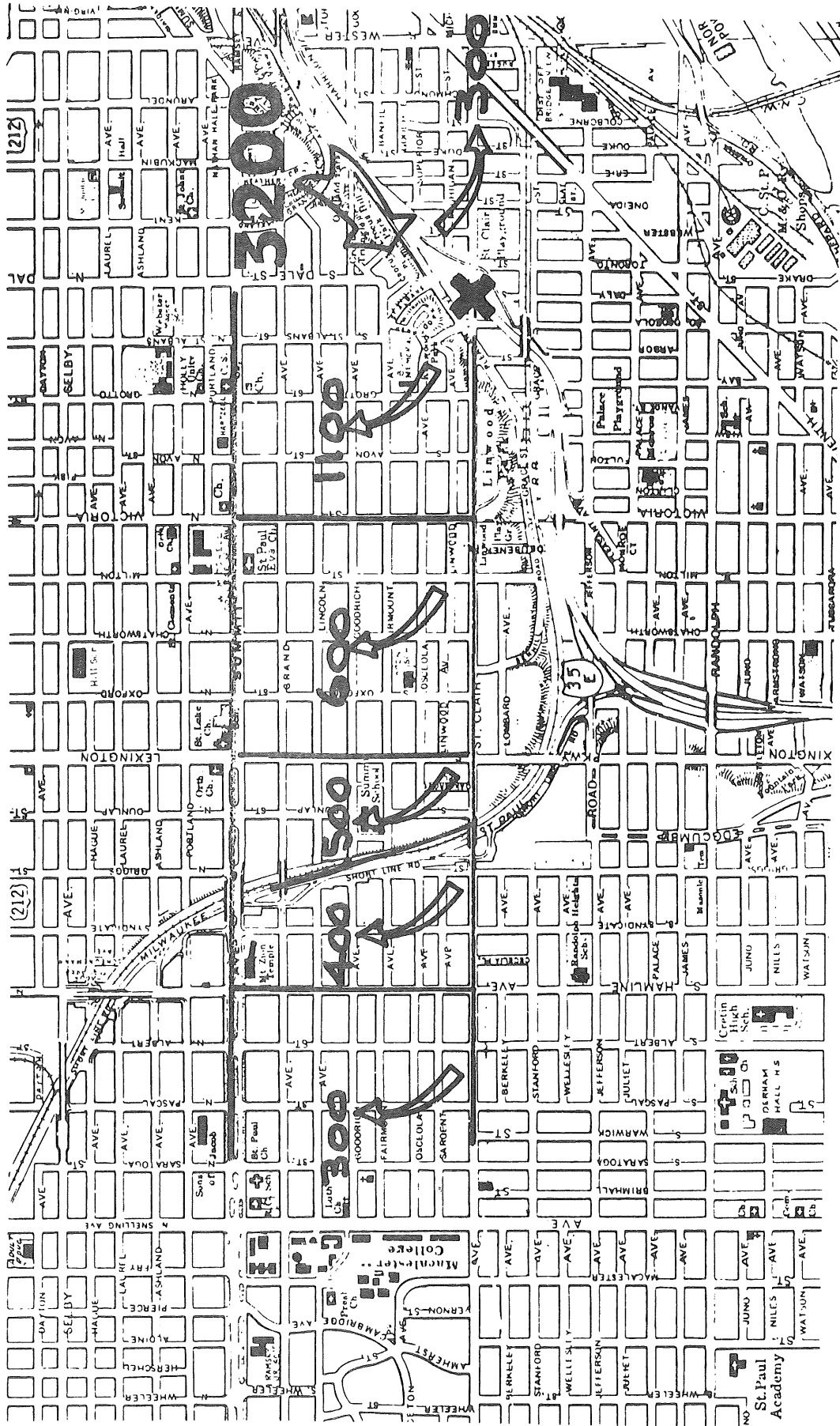
The St. Clair interchange is a half diamond. A driver may enter I-35E towards downtown (northbound) or may exit from I-35E on downtown (southbound). No vehicles, therefore, could use the St. Clair interchange to travel to or from Dakota County.

The southbound off-ramp at St. Clair is expected to carry about 3,200 vehicles per day. The typical capacity of an off-ramp is 7,000 to 9,000 vehicles per day (VPD), so the expected volume is well within the ramp's capacity.

Approximately 300 VPD are expected to proceed east on St. Clair toward West Seventh Street. The rest would proceed west. Approximately 2,900 VPD would travel west on St. Clair. Of these 2,900, 1,100 are destined for the eastern area half of Crocus Hill, bounded by Grand, Victoria, and St. Clair. Depending on the specific destination within Crocus Hill, a vehicle would proceed north on either St. Albans, Osceola, Avon or Victoria. The remaining 1,800 are destined west of Victoria but east of Snelling.

The number of vehicles using the St. Clair interchange would be negligible for destinations south of St. Clair, west of the Parkway, or north of Summit Avenue.

ST. CLAIR AVENUE
OFF RAMP DESTINATIONS



A NORTH

1 MILE

Figure 5 shows the destination distribution by areas. The bulk of the trips using the St. Clair ramps would have a destination east of the Short Line. Also, over 60% of the trips would terminate within one mile of the interchange.

The trip origin of motorists who would be exiting the Parkway at St. Clair can be divided into two groups. About 1,800 VPD or 56% of the trips would be interstate system trips of reasonable length. Here, the driver would have proceeded southbound on I-35E or westbound on I-94 past the downtown area and then southwest on the Parkway. The other 1,400, or 44% originated their trip in the Downtown core area. These drivers would enter the Parkway at Wabasha/12th Street (11%), Kellogg (14%), or Grand-Ramsey (19%) interchanges.

Traffic volumes on local streets in the vicinity of the St. Clair interchange will shift somewhat due to the Parkway accessibility provided. There are two causes for the shift. First, some of the trips originating from Downtown St. Paul will use the Parkway instead of local streets--West 7th to St. Clair, Grand Avenue, and Summit. Second, over half of the trips originate north or east of Downtown. Currently these trips are on the interstate system (I-35E north and I-94 east of Downtown) and now use I-94 to Dale and Lexington to reach the Summit Hill neighborhood. With the Parkway, these trips will enter Summit Hill from the south instead of from I-94.

As a result, traffic volumes will decrease somewhat on Summit, Grand, St. Clair, (Parkway to West 7th), Lexington (north of St. Clair) and Dale (north of Grand). Traffic volumes will increase somewhat on St. Clair (Lexington to Parkway), Dale (south of Goodrich), and St. Albans (south of Fairmount). Forecasted traffic shifts are presented in Figure 6.

It is important to note that all of these trips are basically trips generated by the residents of these neighborhoods. For many, travelling to and from downtown will be quicker, safer, and more convenient on the Parkway than using St. Clair/West 7th, Grand, or Summit. For those persons desiring to travel to and from the east or north of downtown, such as those working at the 3M complex, access to the Parkway at St. Clair will be much more convenient than using Dale or Lexington to I-94.

Although the Commission sees no problems resulting from traffic volume shifts on St. Albans, Osceola, Avon, and Victoria, the neighborhood is clearly concerned. Therefore, these streets should be monitored after the Parkway is opened. While the Commission does not believe modifications such as turning these streets into one-way streets is warranted, this option should remain open and can be explored in the future by District 16 working with city staff.

St. Clair is a designated collector street with a current traffic volume of 6,400 VPD between Lexington and the Parkway. This is forecasted to increase to 8,200-9,000 VPD. Crossing St. Clair as a pedestrian to reach Linwood Park is a concern today for Summit Hill residents, especially those with small children. The location of Linwood Park, separated as it is from the neighborhood by a collector street, is not an ideal situation. The Parkway interchange at St. Clair will not help the situation, nor would eliminating the interchange eliminate the problem that already exists. Although the introduction of flashing warning lights or stop signs, on St. Clair has been suggested, the Commission believes that these devices are not effective as safety measures and can give a false sense of security to pedestrians. Provision of a traffic signal at St. Clair and Victoria should be evaluated by the Public Works Department in conjunction with the District 16/Summit Hill Association.

FIGURE 6 ST. CLAIR INTERCHANGE
SHIFTS IN LOCAL TRAFFIC VOLUMES

	<u>Vehicles Per Day</u>	
	<u>Today</u>	<u>With Parkway</u>
<u>SUMMIT</u>		
Lexington-Victoria	9,900	7,900
Victoria-Dale	10,500	8,500
Dale-Western	10,400	8,400
Ramsey Hill	5,500	4,500
<u>GRAND</u>		
Lexington-Victoria	11,500	11,000
Victoria-Dale	10,900	10,000
Grand Hill	6,400	6,000
<u>ST. CLAIR</u>		
West 7th to Parkway	6,200	4,000
Parkway-Victoria	6,400	9,000
Lexington-Victoria	6,400	8,200
Lexington-Short Line	6,600	7,800
Short Line-Hamline	6,600	7,000
Beyond Hamline	No Change	
<u>LEXINGTON (No Short Line Connection)</u>		
West 7th-Randolph	12,000	6,000
Randolph-Jefferson	13,000	15,000
Jefferson-St. Clair	13,000	13,000
St. Clair-Grand	16,000	13,000
North of Summit	19,000	15,000
<u>DALE</u>		
Fairmount-Goodrich	1,500	2,000
Goodrich-Grand	2,200	2,200
Grand-Summit	7,500	7,000
Summit-Selby	11,900	11,400
<u>ST. ALBANS</u>		
Parkway-Fairmount	1,950	2,500
Fairmount-Grand	925	No Change
<u>AVON, GROTTO, OSCEOLA</u>		
	300-500	No Change
<u>VICTORIA</u>		
	2,400	No Change

2. Victoria Street (Figure 7)

The Victoria Street interchange is a half diamond similar to St. Clair. Only a southbound off-ramp from Downtown and northbound on-ramp to Downtown will be constructed.

About 2,200 VPD would be expected to use the Victoria Street off-ramp. This volume is also quite low with respect to the ramp capacity. A very few motorists (less than 100) would elect to proceed northbound to the immediate neighborhood near Benhill Road. The number is small and is not shown on Figure 7. Destinations in the Summit Hill area would be more conveniently served by the St. Clair ramp.

Approximately 2,100 VPD would use the Victoria interchange to access the neighborhoods south of the Parkway on Victoria. Of these, 100 VPD would proceed back east on Jefferson toward West Seventh Street. About 900 vehicles would go west on Jefferson with about 200 terminating before the I-35E Parkway and 700 proceeding beyond. An estimated 1,200 VPD are expected to travel southbound on Victoria with 400 arriving at their destination before Randolph. Of the 800 VPD proceeding beyond Randolph, 200 would terminate west of Victoria and 600 east of Victoria.

The volume of traffic and the area to be serviced by the Victoria interchange is less than either St. Clair or Randolph. As many as 80% of all trips will terminate within one mile of the ramp.

The trip origin of Victoria off-ramp vehicles is expected to be 1,400 VPD or 64% interstate system trips originating north or east of downtown and 36% (800 VPD) coming from downtown and entering the Parkway at Wabasha/ 12th Street, (17%), Kellogg (10%), or Grand-Ramsey (9%).

As with the St. Clair interchange, the Victoria interchange will produce shifts in local street volumes (Figure 8). Persons living south of the Parkway now must travel north on St. Albans/Dale and Lexington to access I-94 if they desire to go north or east of downtown. Persons desiring to go downtown currently use Jefferson or Randolph to West 7th. With the Victoria interchange, these persons will now use the Parkway. As a result, trips from this neighborhood on Lexington and St. Albans/Dale, Jefferson (east of Victoria), and West 7th will decrease somewhat. Trips on Victoria will increase somewhat. Total trips on Randolph will remain about the same. While downtown oriented traffic on Randolph east of the Parkway will decrease, traffic using Randolph to access I-35E to and from the south will offset this decrease.

3. Randolph Avenue (Figures 9 and 10)

A full interchange will be constructed at Randolph with on and off ramps for both northbound and southbound traffic. Northbound and southbound traffic differ substantially and were examined separately.

FIGURE 7

VICTORIA STREET
OFF RAMP DESTINATIONS

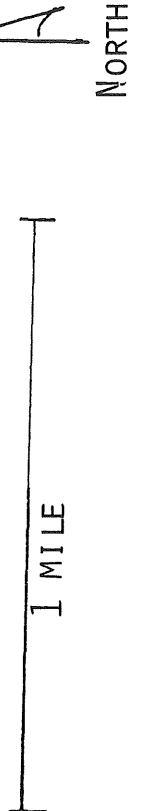
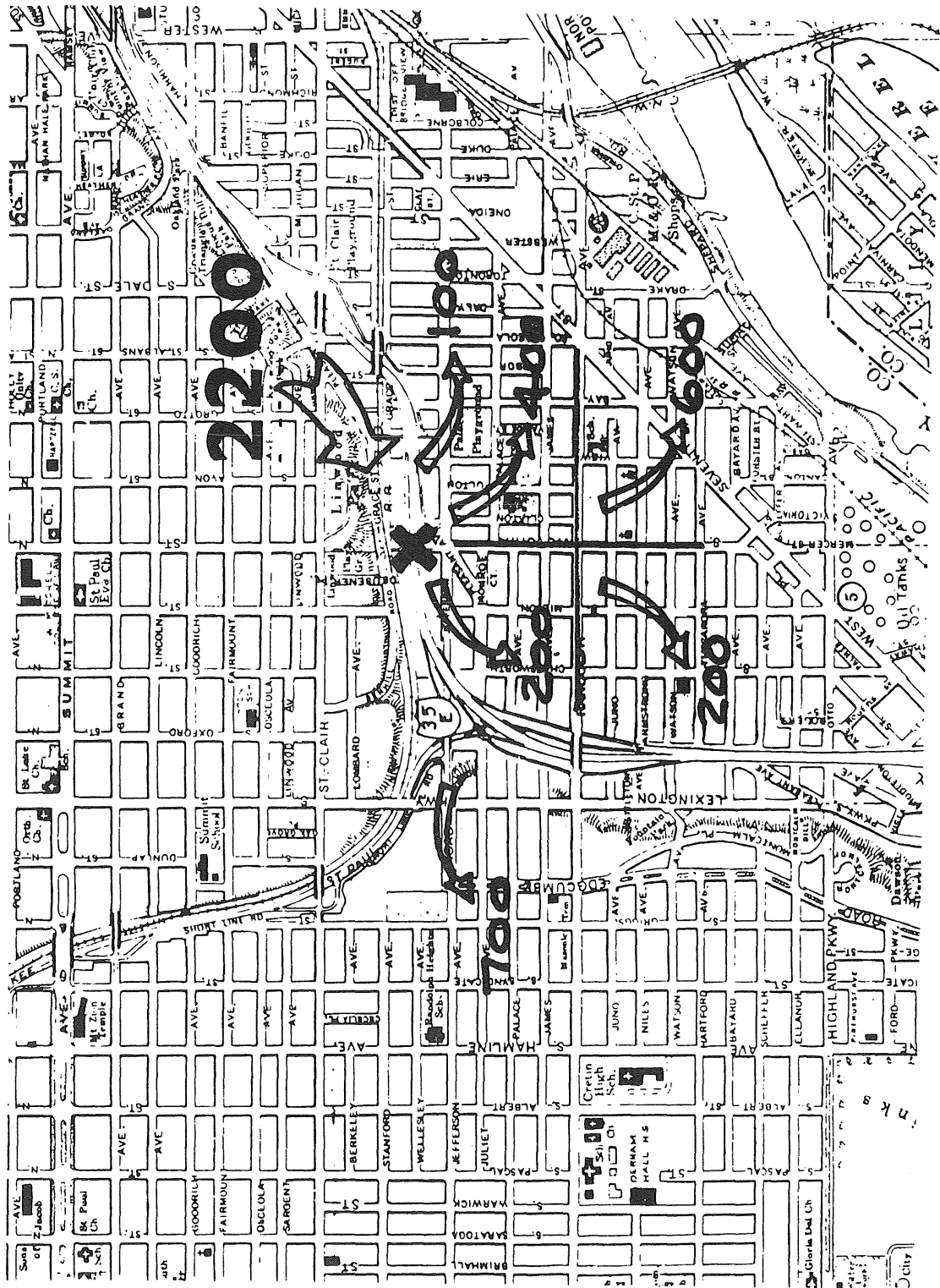


FIGURE 8 VICTORIA INTERCHANGE
 SHIFTS IN LOCAL TRAFFIC VOLUMES

	<u>Vehicles Per Day</u>	
	<u>Today</u>	<u>With Parkway</u>
<u>VICTORIA</u>		
West 7th-Randolph	2,600	3,000
Randolph-Jefferson	3,100	4,000
Jefferson-Parkway	NA	4,500
<u>JEFFERSON (No Short Line Connection)</u>		
East of Victoria	5,700	4,000
Victoria-Short Line	6,725	No Change
Short Line-Lexington	5,800	9,000
Lexington-Edgumbe	4,300	No Change
<u>RANDOLPH (No Short Line Connection)</u>		
West 7th-Parkway	6,200	6,000
Parkway-Lexington	6,200	20,000
Lexington-Hamline	7,200	11,000
Hamline West	7,700	7,000
<u>WEST 7TH</u>		
Parkway to Victoria	13,500	9,600
Victoria to Randolph	12,600	8,600
Randolph to Jefferson	12,100	10,000
Jefferson to St. Clair	17,000	14,000
St. Clair to Chestnut	17,000	13,000

a. Southbound Off-Ramp (Figure 9)

The ramp volume will be 3,600 VPD--well below capacity. Essentially, all traffic is expected to move west on Randolph. Trips destined east of I-35E would be expected to use Victoria.

This ramp serves a somewhat different function from that of the St. Clair or the Victoria ramps in that it serves traffic zones on either side of Randolph west to the city limits. North of Randolph and east of Snelling would be serviced by the Victoria ramp and Jefferson Avenue. West of Snelling, the destinations are dispersed uniformly.

Because the Parkway becomes a north-south route at Randolph, this interchange serves a large area of southwest St. Paul. Only about one-third of all trips would terminate within one mile of the Randolph interchange.

Trip origin for southbound Randolph off-ramp vehicles would be 2,100 VPD (58%) from I-35E north or I-94 east of Downtown. Downtown originations would be 1,500 VPD (42%) split between Wabasha/12th Street (12%), Kellogg (14%) and Grand-Ramsey (16%).

b. Northbound Off-Ramp (Figure 10)

The network used for trip assignments indicates that the demand to use the Randolph northbound off-ramp is 15,900 VPD. This exceeds the ramp capacity. Therefore, many drivers who would desire to exit at Randolph will find an alternate route to avoid congestion and delay. Basically, they will continue to use Lexington Parkway and Snelling Avenue for their north/south trips.

The high northbound Randolph exit demand is due in part to the lack of direct connection to the Short Line. Many drivers will elect to exit at Randolph, travel local streets, and get on the Short Line at Jefferson. Connection of the Short Line would decrease the Randolph exit trips substantially, as well as trips on South Snelling and South Lexington.

Figure 10 shows that the ramp will probably operate at or near capacity. Approximately 8,900 VPD will exit. The remaining 7,000 VPD of the Randolph demand will elect to exit the Parkway at West Seventh Street. It is important to note that the number 7,000 is not the West Seventh Street exit ramp volume, but only a portion of the total reflecting the over capacity demand from Randolph. Total Seventh Street ramp traffic will be more than 7,000.

The 7,000 VPD exiting at Seventh will find parallel arterials to continue northbound. About 3,000 will use Lexington and 4,000 Snelling Avenue.

An estimated 2,300 of the Randolph exiting vehicles will proceed east on Randolph. The remaining 6,700 will go westbound. At Lexington, 5,200 will turn right to go northbound with 1,400 continuing westbound on Randolph.

RANDOLPH AVENUE
SOUTHBOUND OFF RAMP DESTINATIONS

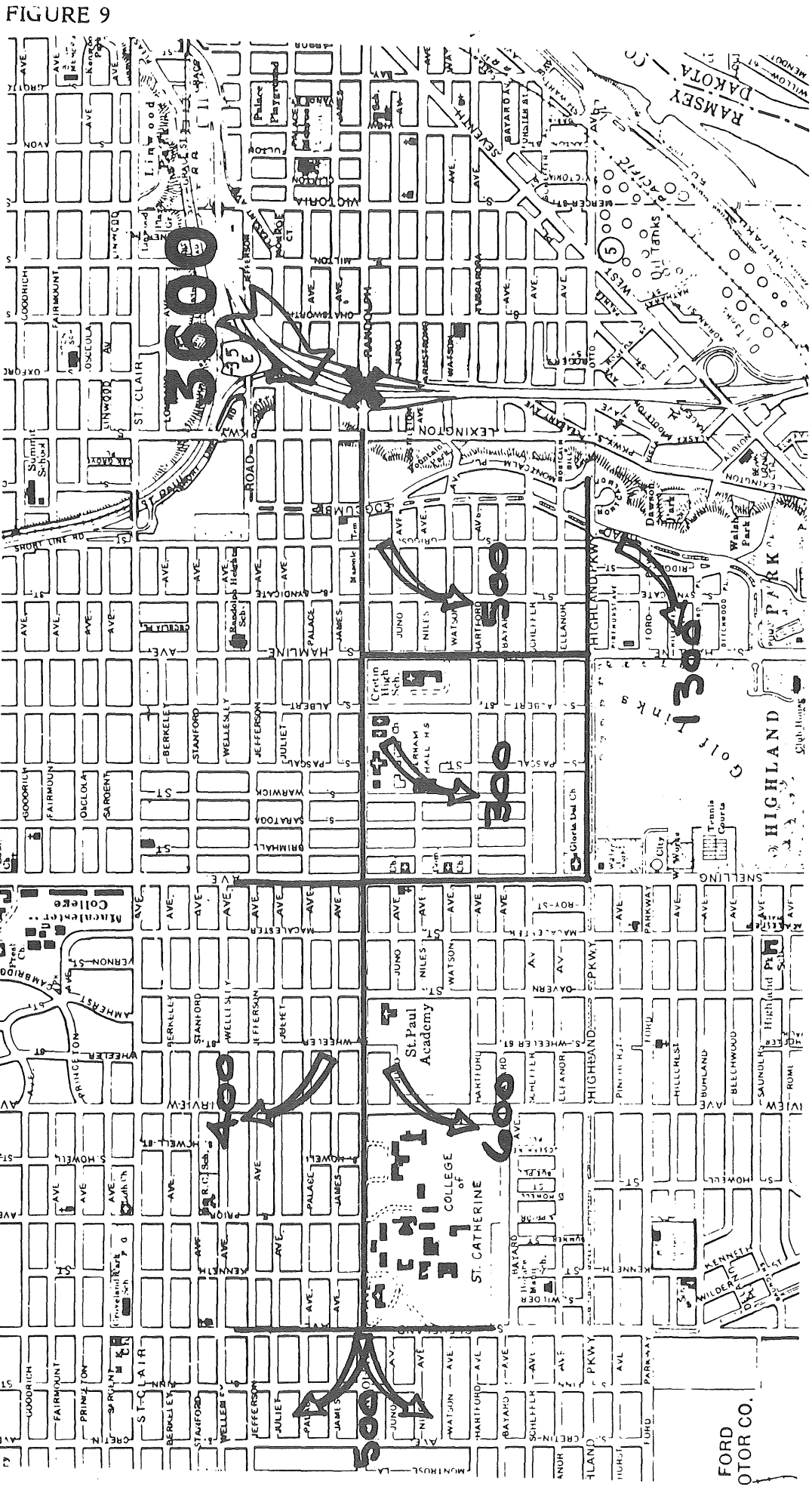
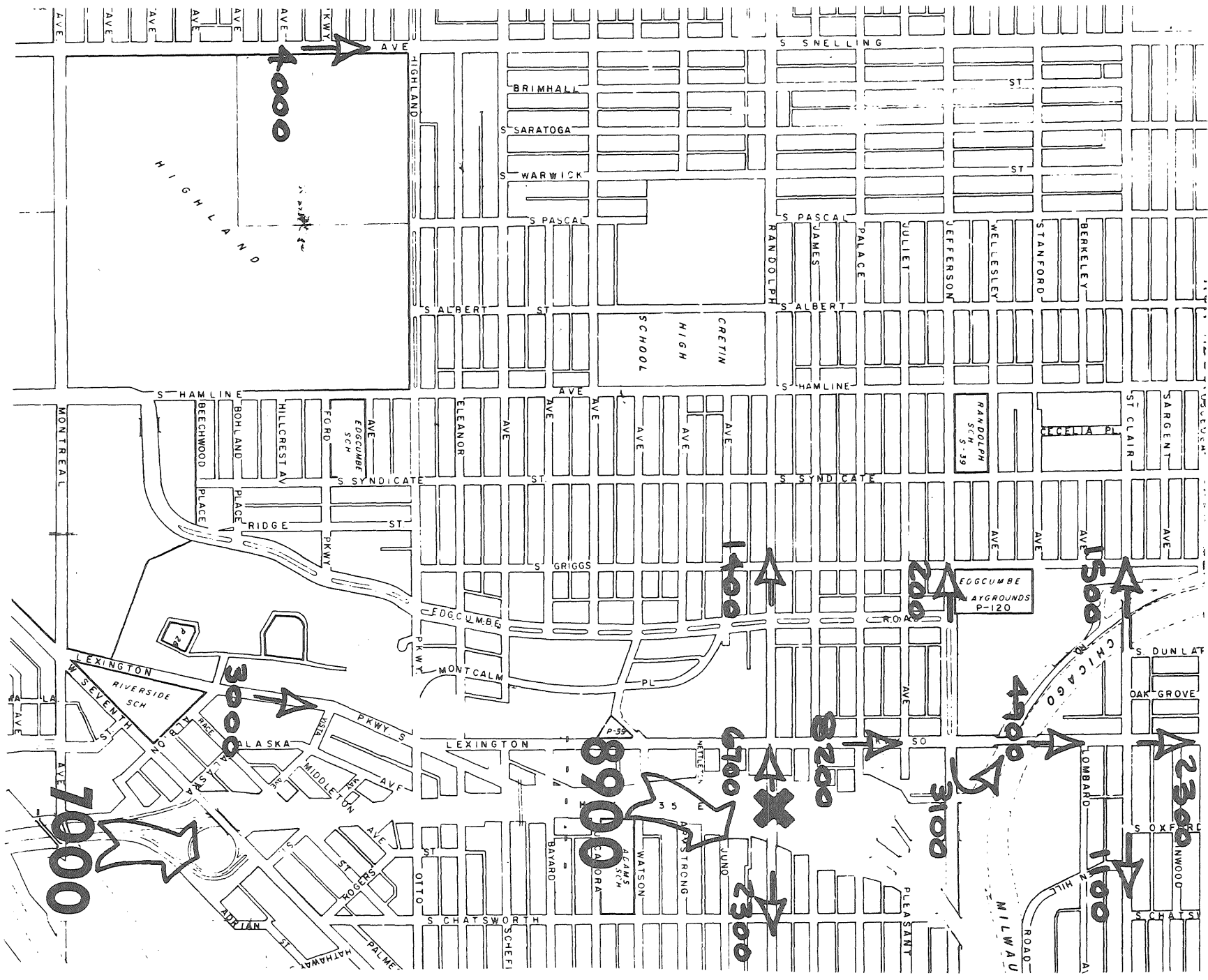


FIGURE 9

FIGURE 10 RANDOLPH AVENUE
NORTHBOUND OFF RAMP DEMAND



Of the 8,200 traveling northbound on Lexington, about 3,100 VPD will turn right on Jefferson and then continue northbound on the Short Line. Almost all of the remainder (4,900) continue north with only a few (200) turning left on Jefferson. At and beyond St. Clair, trips distribute reasonably uniformly in all directions.

The major shifts in local traffic volumes due to this interchange will be in the vicinity of Randolph and Lexington. Traffic volumes today on Randolph between the Parkway and Lexington are 6,200 VPD. This is expected to increase to approximately 20,000 VPD due to north-south travel that will use Randolph and Lexington as an indirect connection between the Parkway and the Short Line. To handle this traffic increase and the turning movements, the signal at Lexington and Randolph will need to be modified to a three phase cycle. Parking on Randolph between the Parkway and Lexington will need to be prohibited.

If the Short Line were directly connected to the Parkway, traffic on Randolph would decrease from about 20,000 VPD to 8,000 VPD. Lexington Parkway, between Randolph and Jefferson would decrease from the current 13,000 VPD to about 9,000 VPD instead of increasing to 15,000 VPD.

Whether or not the Short Line is directly connected to the Parkway, there will be traffic increases on the Short Line. When 35E in Dakota County is completed, more traffic will be entering St. Paul over the Lexington Avenue Bridge. Trips to and from the Midway will continue to use Lexington and Montreal/Snelling as well as the Parkway and the Short Line. Traffic volumes on Snelling, Lexington, and the Short Line should be monitored closely over the next few years and alternative ways to manage this north-south demand carefully evaluated.

4. Impact of Ramp Elimination

a. Effect on Closing St. Clair Ramps

If the St. Clair ramps were deleted from I-35E, about 2,000 VPD would be diverted to I-94. These are trips that are already in the freeway system north and east of Downtown, on I-35E or I-94. The portion of these trips diverted would then use local north-south arterials, Summit, Dale and Lexington, to destinations in the Crocus Hill neighborhood, and west of the Short Line.

Although there is some double counting, as many as 2,300 VPD might use only local streets and arterials and never get on I-35E to reach destinations near Crocus Hill. The local street system becomes more convenient for travel: Summit Avenue, Grand, and St. Clair.

As many as 500 VPD additionally might choose to use Lexington from the north. This is part of the 2,000 VPD from I-35E and I-94 east of Downtown St. Paul.

Some drivers would choose to use the Victoria ramp and then local streets north and west to their destination.

b. Effect of Closing Victoria Ramps

A convenient local frontage road exists north of the Parkway corridor, between Victoria and St. Clair. The large majority of the Victoria trips would use the St. Clair ramps and this frontage road connector.

c. Effect of Closing Both St. Clair and Victoria Ramps

Well over half of the trips using these interchanges are trips currently using the interstate system to travel north and east of Downtown. Without these ramps, persons will continue to use various local streets to reach Lexington and Dale and thereby I-94. Roughly 700 VPD might divert to the Randolph interchange thereby further complicating the arterial and signal capacity. The remaining traffic, destined for downtown would continue to use east-west streets such as Randolph, Jefferson, St. Clair, Grand and Summit. Both travelers to downtown and I-94 trips would have a longer travel time without the ramps. In general, local streets will carry higher traffic. Trip safety would be reduced since parkway trips are statistically safer than local street trips.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the interchange traffic, the Commission concluded that the St. Clair and Victoria ramps serve a very localized function. They will not introduce long trips through the nearby neighborhoods. They will provide convenient access to the parkway for destinations to and beyond downtown. Summit Hill and South Victoria area residents will no longer need to travel north on St. Albans/Dale and Lexington to reach I-94 for eastbound trips.

The Commission also concluded that there may well be very localized traffic problems associated with the Randolph interchange and the intersection of Randolph and Lexington.

Given these conclusions, the Commission recommends that:

- a. The interchanges at St. Clair, Victoria, and Randolph should be constructed as proposed.
- b. Traffic volume shifts on St. Albans, Osceola, Avon and Victoria should be monitored after the Parkway is opened. The option of creating one-way streets, while not deemed necessary by the Commission, should nevertheless remain open to future consideration by District 16 and the City. The provision of a traffic signal at the intersection of St. Clair and Victoria should also be evaluated by the City in conjunction with District 16.
- c. The traffic signal at Randolph and Lexington should be modified to accommodate anticipated traffic increases.
- d. Parking on Randolph between the Parkway and Lexington should be banned.
- e. Traffic volumes on Lexington, Snelling and the Short Line should be monitored closely over the next few years and alternatives for handling the north/south traffic to and from the Midway evaluated carefully.

B. DOWNTOWN ACCESSIBILITY/LOWER CATHEDRAL HILL

The Lower Cathedral Hill is the west end of downtown located between United Hospitals and I-94, John Ireland Boulevard and West 7th Street. Realigning the street pattern in this area in conjunction with the completion of I-35E has been a long standing goal of the City. In refining the design concept for both the Parkway and Lower Cathedral Hill, the Commission has considered a broad range of concerns, including but not limited to the following:

1. The desire to preserve as much land as possible in usable parcels for future development.
2. The desire to provide an attractive gateway to downtown.

3. The desire to minimize the visual intrusion of the Parkway.
4. The desire to provide both vehicular and pedestrian connections from the Upper Cathedral Hill to the Lower Cathedral Hill area.
5. The necessity to avoid impacts on the James J. Hill Mansion retaining wall and power plant.
6. The access and circulation requirements of existing development, including the United Hospitals complex.
7. The requirements of downtown circulation and accessibility to two interstate routes in the area--I-35E and I-94.

The resulting design concept for Lower Cathedral Hill recommended by the Commission (Figure 11) reflects a balance among these various concerns. An architectural concept of the gateway development potential of the area is presented in Figure 12. While it may well be several years before such development would be realized, many key elements will be provided through the completion of the parkway and the realignment of city streets.

Within this concept, Lower Cathedral Hill can provide an attractive and convenient gateway to downtown, as well as the location of new development. I-94 will continue to provide three entry points to downtown: Marion Street, 5th Street (old 9th), and 10th Street. Fifth Street becomes the major entrance point from the west, leading to a small park between Fifth and Sixth Street at West Seventh Street. The I-35E Parkway provides access to downtown at Grand/Ramsey, Kellogg, and 11th Street. Kellogg becomes the major entrance to downtown from the Parkway.

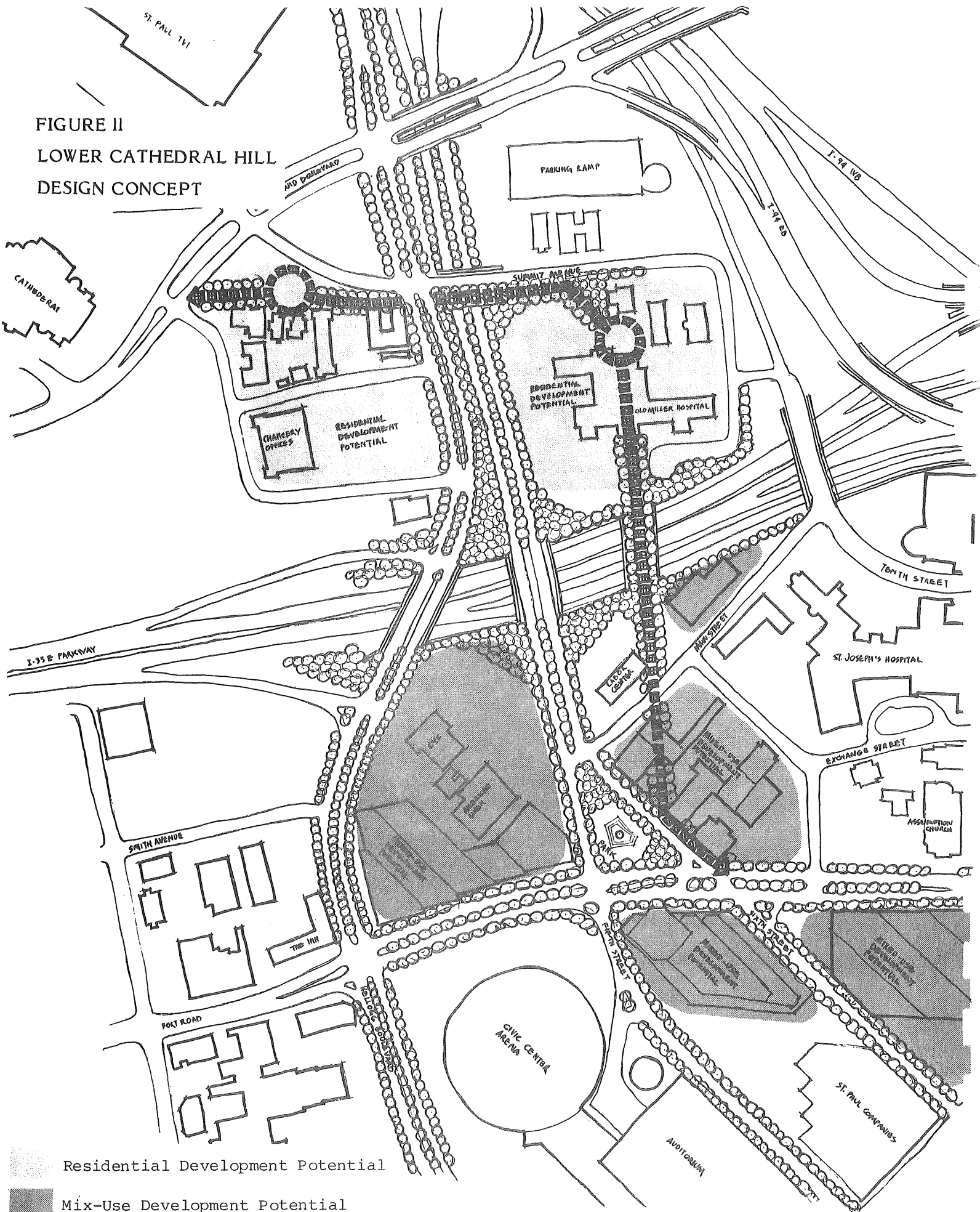
The relocation of Kellogg Boulevard is required to avoid impacts on the James J. Hill Mansion retaining wall and power plant. However, in this new location, the grade is less severe, allowing Kellogg to function as a two-way boulevard and providing a strong vehicular connection between the Upper and Lower Cathedral Hill areas.


Pedestrian connections are a particular concern. Although both the Parkway and the 5th/6th Street connection to I-94 will be depressed, minimizing the noise and visual impacts of these high volume roadways, they will present severe barriers to pedestrian movement. Sidewalks alone on Kellogg and Sixth Street will not be sufficient. Therefore, the design concept includes separate pedestrian crossings.


First, special attention should be given in the design of the new Summit Avenue bridge over 5th/6th Street to creating an attractive pedestrian link. When Miller Hospital is redeveloped as a residential community, this bridge will serve primarily as a driveway entrance to the site. It need not be as wide as a traditional city street and could be modified to a lower scale vehicular entry with the emphasis on pedestrian movement.

Second, provision of a pedestrian concourse across the parkway to preserve the pedestrian connection between the Miller Hospital area and downtown is critical. This should not be a typical pedestrian overpass but rather a special bridge wide enough to accommodate landscaping and other amenities. In the future, this bridge could be modified to provide an enclosed environment, integrated with development on either side of the parkway. In the short term, the concourse should be provided as part of the Parkway construction.

FIGURE II
 LOWER CATHEDRAL HILL
 DESIGN CONCEPT



 Residential Development Potential

 Mix-Use Development Potential


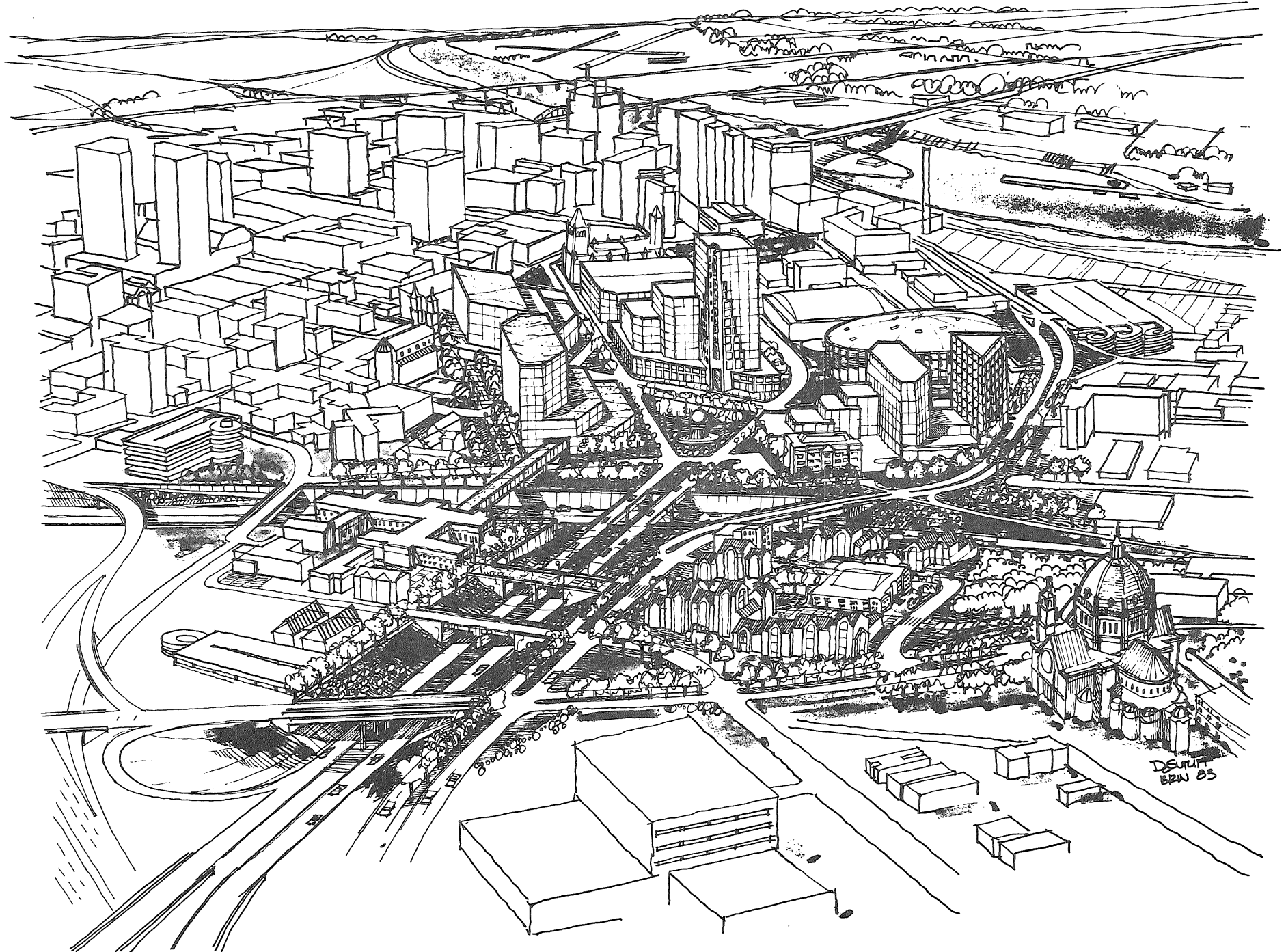
 Pedestrian Link

FIGURE 12 LOWER CATHEDRAL HILL AREA PERSPECTIVE SKETCH



Conclusions/Recommendations

1. The basic design concept for Lower Cathedral Hill depicted in Figure 11 should serve as the guideline for the construction of the Parkway and Downtown street realignment.
2. A special pedestrian concourse should be constructed over the Parkway between Downtown and the Miller Hospital area. Funding from Federal and State sources in conjunction with I-35E funding should be provided.
3. The design of the Summit Avenue bridge should incorporate an attractive pedestrian link across Fifth/Sixth Street.

C. FRONTAGE ROADS

The I-35E parkway will not have traditional frontage roads running the length of the corridor. Many local streets simply dead-end at the edge of the right-of-way. Some are cut through, via short "frontage roads" to other existing streets. Some frontage road segments have already been built along the southern part of the corridor.

In the north half of the project, there were some choices to be made about whether frontage roads were necessary. City staff (PED, Public Works and Fire Department) reviewed each local street to make sure that property access and emergency access would be adequate.

Conclusion

In most cases, frontage roads are not necessary for property access or for emergency vehicle access. There are a few exceptions to this, where long blocks or other circumstances suggest that a frontage road should be built.

Recommendation

Frontage roads should be constructed as proposed. New frontage roads would be built to connect Harrison Avenue at Western, near Jefferson School; to connect Garfield Street with Forbes Avenue near the Grand/Ramsey interchange; and to provide local access for the Irvine Hill condominiums and United Hospitals. At all dead-end streets, along the entire corridor, adequate turn-around space should be provided and should be attractively designed.

D. NOISE WALLS

Two special meetings were held regarding noise walls. The purpose of the meetings was to inform those living adjacent to the corridor of the locations of proposed noise walls, and to find out whether those residents want the walls constructed. MnDOT made presentations at both meetings, pointing out that the appearance of the walls will be quite different from most of the existing noise walls in the Twin Cities. Five to seven foot wooden walls will be constructed, similar to a privacy fence. They will be heavily landscaped.

The technical information about noise levels was also presented. Almost everyone who attended the meetings was in favor of the noise walls being built. Some people said they thought higher walls would be more effective.

The reason that five-foot walls are proposed is that heavy trucks are prohibited. The noise sources (tires and exhaust) are much lower on cars than on trucks. MnDOT staff did evaluate the cost-effectiveness of higher noise walls. They found that doubling the height to ten feet would not produce an audible difference in the noise levels at residences. Moreover, federal standards will be maintained in all locations with 5-7 foot walls.

Some residents in the area northeast of the Grand-Ramsey interchange commented that they wanted noise walls (none were proposed there). According to monitoring done for the EIS, the existing noise level near United Hospitals and the Irvine Hill Condominiums is 60 decibels. Predicted levels with the Parkway completed are 59-64 decibels. This is because the expected traffic on the Parkway will not be significantly noisier than existing traffic on Ramsey, Grand and Pleasant. Even the highest predicted noise level is well within federal standards.

Conclusion

The noise walls as proposed will be effective at reducing noise and will also provide an attractive visual screen between the traffic and nearby homes. Completing the roadway means there will be traffic where there is none today, and this is bound to increase the noise level. However, nearby residents will continue to enjoy full indoor and outdoor use of their homes.

Recommendation

The noise walls should be built as proposed.

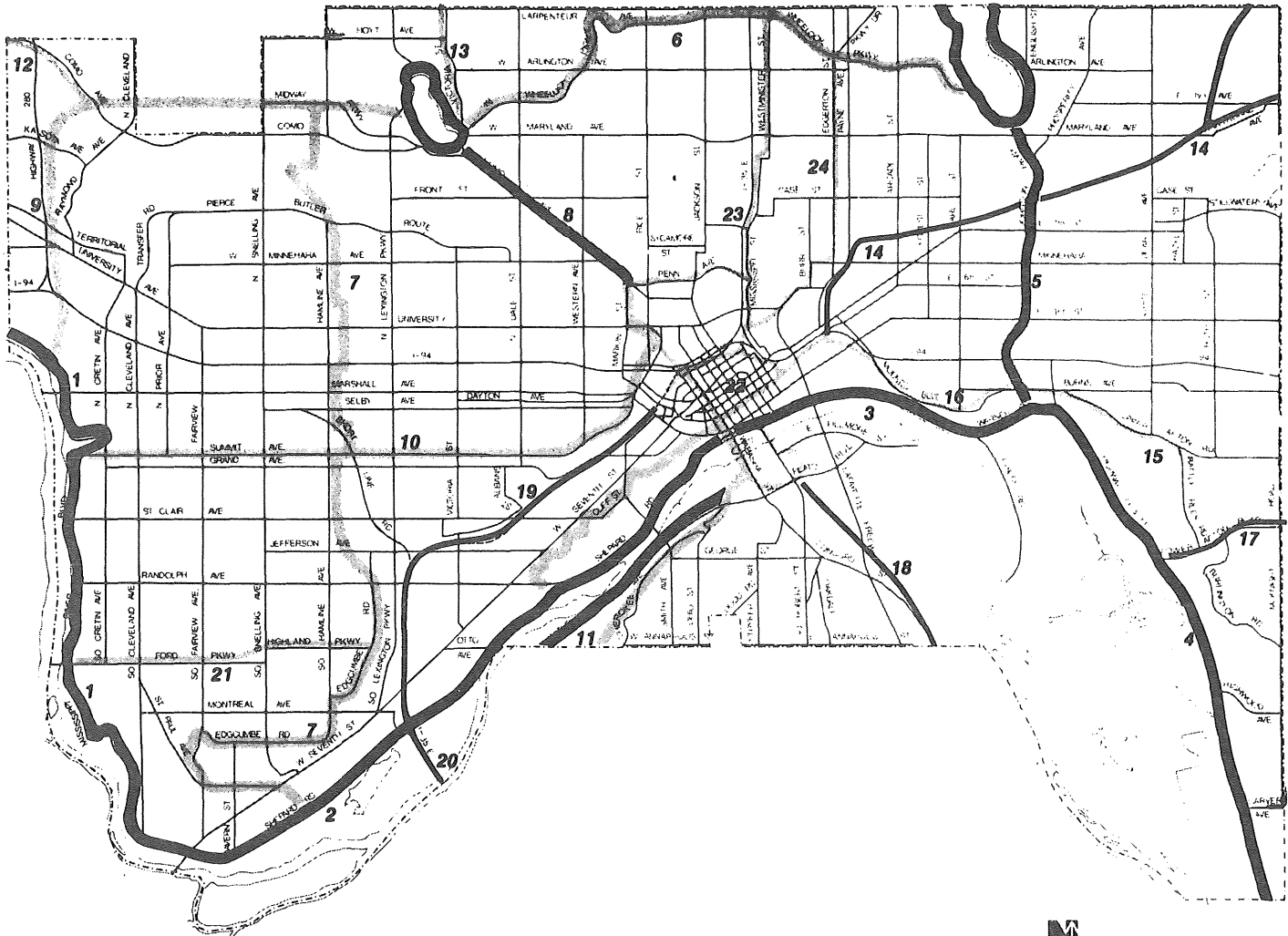
E. BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN TRAIL

The trail, which is described earlier in the report, would run the entire length of the corridor. Neighborhoods have generally been in favor of the trail during the years of planning the project. However, most of the comments received at the public meetings were negative. People from the west side of the parkway who petitioned against the pedestrian bridge (see above) have also signed a petition against the segment of the trail between West 7th Street and Scheffer. They cite the fact that the trail will run along the edge of their property, and claim that this will lead to trespassing and a variety of other crimes. There were other comments to that affect from people elsewhere along the corridor.

Currently, the corridor is not used by traffic and access to it is not restricted by fences. This has been the situation ever since the project was stopped in 1972. People use it as an ad hoc recreation area, which means the potential for trespassing and vandalism exists already. In fact, creating a trail limited to bicyclists and pedestrians should be an improvement over the current situation.

This trail is one of the bicycle routes recommended by the St. Paul Comprehensive Plan, to link Crosby Farms with other parks along the corridor and with downtown (see Figure 13). The city must take advantage of this opportunity to carry out part of a long range plan. The trail would be used both for short trips from home to a nearby park and for longer trips. It was included in the design as a parkway amenity, so that the right-of-way would benefit others in the surrounding neighborhoods in addition to motorists. The trail would be maintained by the City of St. Paul.

FIGURE 13 ST. PAUL'S PLAN FOR BICYCLE ROUTES



Primary **Secondary**

Primary Bike Routes

Secondary Bike Routes

Bike Path
Bike Lane
Shared Route

1. Mississippi River Blvd. Link
2. Shepard Road Link
3. Warner Road Link
4. T.H. 61 Link
5. Johnson Pkwy. Link
6. Wheelock Link
7. Lexington Link
8. Como Ave. Link
9. Northwest Link
10. Summit Link
11. Cherokee-Lilydale Links

12. Como Extension
13. Victoria Extension
14. Railroad Rights-of-Way
15. Upper Afton
16. Mounds/Commercial St.
17. Lower Afton
18. Southern Route
19. Pleasant Ave. Parkway Bike Route
20. Lexington Ave. Bridge Attachment
21. Highland Parkway Bike Route
22. Downtown Bike Routes
23. Westminster-Mississippi
24. Edgerton Route

Recommendation

The bicycle and pedestrian trail should be built as proposed.

F. LANDSCAPING

The concept plan for landscaping appears, in general, to meet the goal of softening the aesthetic impact of the roadway. The wide median section, north of Jefferson Avenue, should be quite attractive both to the motorist and to nearby residents. However, the south section will have a narrower median because of right-of-way limitations. When detailed landscaping plans are prepared, additional plantings along the roadsides should be provided.

Recommendation

The Minnesota Department of Transportation should involve the City's staff in preparing detailed landscape plans. Additional roadside plantings should be provided between west 7th Street and Jefferson Avenue. Special attention should be given to the Lower Cathedral Hill area in the vicinity of Kellogg and Fifth/Sixth Streets.

G. BRIDGES

Three bridges are proposed to provide pedestrian access across the parkway. Sidewalks will also be provided on all the vehicular bridges except Fifth Street. The pedestrian bridge locations are midway between vehicular bridges, at Bayard Avenue, Duke Street, and Walnut Street. The bridge at Bayard Avenue will also carry bicyclists from the west side of the parkway where the trail begins, to the east side where it continues into downtown St. Paul.

The pedestrian bridges are a standard part of any limited access roadway through an urban area.

During the public review process, comments were received regarding the bridges proposed at Bayard Avenue and at Walnut Street. Apparently, there is some long-standing opposition to the Bayard Avenue bridge. Several people commented about it at the public meetings in the West Seventh Street area, and 69 people from the west side of the parkway signed a petition against the bridge. They stated that they do not now cross the right-of-way and see no need for the proposed bridge. They believe the bridge will bring undesirables into their area, such as juveniles from the West Seventh Street neighborhood who will vandalize their property.

Residents of the Irvine Hill Condominiums suggested that the Walnut Street bridge should be moved west of its proposed location, which would be more convenient for them. They indicated that walking down the frontage road to reach the bridge would be dangerous because it would not be adequately illuminated.

The bridge was proposed at Walnut Street because it is half way between the bridges at Grand-Ramsey and Kellogg. It is also part of the mitigation agreement for the James J. Hill mansion. That is, the bridge at Walnut would connect the Hill mansion with downtown, via the existing stairway up the hill. The Commission recommends that a sidewalk and lighting should be added on the frontage road to facilitate pedestrian travel from the Irvine Hill Condominiums to the Walnut Street bridge.

There are two other issues with regards to bridges. The Lower Cathedral Hill area was discussed above. Two additional pedestrian links were suggested: the provision of a pedestrian facility on the bridge across the Fifth and Sixth Street connectors (Summit Avenue) and an additional pedestrian bridge to link the Miller Hospital area with Downtown. These would serve the pedestrian trips which now use existing sidewalks to get from the Summit Hill area to downtown. In addition, they would serve future residential development on the Miller Hospital site.

The city is very concerned with the aesthetics of both the pedestrian bridges and the vehicular bridges which are part of this project. These will in effect become part of the city's architecture for many years to come. They should be compatible with their surroundings in style and scale. This applies to all of the proposed pedestrian bridges, and to the other bridges which have yet to be constructed. In the common section, all of the bridges will be reconstructed. One of these should be especially designed to more adequately serve pedestrians travelling to and from the State Capitol area.

Conclusion

As a general principle, pedestrian bridges across a roadway such as I-35E are needed so that people on foot or bicycle do not have to go too far out of their way to cross. They help to maintain some continuity of neighborhoods. The people who have petitioned against the bridge at Bayard have a point in that there has been no such crossing during the years since construction started.

However, there has been no traffic on the right-of-way. It has been, in effect, an area used for recreation but not policed. People on foot or using trail bikes or snowmobiles could easily trespass on private property. The completion of the parkway with the bicycle trail will change this and should result in a better situation, because the only crossings will be at the pedestrian bridges.

The bridge at Bayard is located there in part to serve bicycle traffic connecting one segment of the trail to another. Without this bridge, the bicycle trail could not be completed. The bridge could be moved one or two blocks north or south and still serve that purpose. However, the petitioners are from a rather large area around the bridge location and probably would not be satisfied with a relocated bridge.

The bridges which are to be constructed, both pedestrian and vehicular, will become a part of the city's architecture. This presents an important opportunity, to design bridges which enhance the environment rather than detract from it. The city must be involved in the design process.

Recommendation

The three pedestrian bridges should be built as proposed. The frontage road leading to the Walnut Street bridge should be provided with a sidewalk and lighting. The Summit Avenue bridge should include a pedestrian facility, and a pedestrian concourse should be provided across the Parkway to connect Miller Hospital with downtown.

The city should be involved in designing all bridges to be an asset to the urban landscape. In reconstructing the common section bridges, a better pedestrian link should be created between downtown and the State Capitol area.

H. PARKWAY ASSURANCES

A major concern expressed by City residents at the public hearing was that the Parkway would be converted to a freeway in the future and the prohibition on trucks would be eliminated.

In evaluating this possibility, the Commission determined that while there is no absolute guarantee to prevent it, there are many barriers to freeway conversion:

1. The 1981 State Law providing for the construction of I-35E allows for a parkway. Parkway is defined in the Final EIS to include a prohibition on trucks. Therefore, the State Law would require amendment to allow trucks.
2. The pavement on the Parkway will be 4½ inches of bituminous, adequate to carry forecasted auto traffic but insufficient to carry heavy trucks. The typical interstate pavement is 12-14 inches. The cost of additional pavement is estimated at approximately \$2 million. If federal funds were used to increase the pavement, the environmental impact statement would require amendment, necessitating public hearings. If state funds were used, private citizens or the City could petition for an environmental impact statement.
3. The noise walls will be constructed to mitigate only forecasted traffic--autos. To accommodate trucks, the five to seven foot walls would have to be replaced with 12-15 foot barriers. Even so, federal standards might not be met in all locations.

Other physical barriers suggested to prevent conversion to a freeway were evaluated by the Commission but rejected. Lowering the bridges over the parkway was determined infeasible since emergency and maintenance vehicles using the parkway require as much clearance as a heavy truck. Introducing horizontal curves to the roadway to force lower speeds was rejected because it would require additional right-of-way. The design speed of the roadway is 50 mph providing a 5 mph safety margin for the posted speed limit of 45 mph.

Conclusions/Recommendations

The City, State, and Federal Government are all on record, very clearly and formally in the Final EIS, in agreement that I-35E shall be a parkway, with trucks prohibited.

The Commission believes that in addition to the Final EIS, there are sufficient physical and legal barriers to prevent future conversion to a freeway with trucks.

I. TEMPORARY TERMINUS AT ST. CLAIR

At the present time, the section of the Parkway between West Seventh Street and St. Clair was scheduled for completion in the Fall of 1983 or early Summer of 1984. The section would then be available for use 2½ to 3 years before the I-35E Parkway is completed and ties in to the common section. Question has been raised as to whether or not traffic should be permitted to use the section to St. Clair prior to the completion of the full system.

If the section is opened to traffic, it would carry approximately 11,000 vehicles per day between West Seventh and Randolph and about 5,000 per day between Randolph and St. Clair. A traffic signal would be installed at the northbound off ramp at Randolph where approximately 3,000 vehicles per day would desire to exit. Nearly all of this exiting traffic would turn left toward Lexington and when reaching Lexington, turn right to the north. Approximately 3,000 vehicles would flow in the opposite direction; that is, southbound on Lexington to Randolph where they would make a left turn and proceed east on Randolph to the southbound on-ramp where the traffic would then turn right. The existing traffic signal at the intersection of Lexington and Randolph would be modified and include a left turn phase for the anticipated heavy southbound left turn. On Randolph between I-35E and Lexington, parking restrictions during at least the peak traffic hours would be required.

The 5,000 vehicles per day using the Parkway between Randolph and St. Clair represents 2,500 each direction. Of the 2,500 vehicles per day exiting at St. Clair, nearly all (between 90 and 95%) would turn right and proceed toward Seventh Street. Since this volume exiting at St. Clair will consist of almost exclusively right turns, it will not be necessary to install a signal at St. Clair in the ramp terminus.

The traffic volume on St. Clair between the Parkway and Seventh will increase to about 12,000 vehicles per day. This would require some rush hour parking restrictions that could be removed once the Parkway is extended beyond St. Clair.

Even though the Parkway under this stage will not serve extremely high volumes, it would be desirable to open it and have it available for use. Some of the benefits that the City would receive by opening this are reductions in the traffic volume on South Lexington between Randolph and Seventh as well as minor reductions on West Seventh and to a lesser extent, on Shepard Road. Since travel is inherently safer on a controlled access facility such as the Parkway as compared with a City street, a reduction in the total number of traffic accidents in the corridor would result.

There appears to be an opportunity to extend the Parkway to Grand/Ramsey, probably by sometime in 1985. If this can be done, the number of vehicles exiting at St. Clair would be significantly reduced and any parking restrictions that are necessary on St. Clair could then be removed.

Conclusions/Recommendations

The first stage of the Parkway construction, from West 7th Street to St. Clair, should be opened to traffic upon completion. However, MnDOT should be requested to revise construction staging to open the Parkway to Grand/Ramsey as soon as possible.

J. OTHER CONCERNS

1. Public Works Yard Entrance

The Public Works yard (for storage of sand, salt and other materials) is located just north of the right-of-way and east of Victoria Street. The yard's only access is on Victoria, and is very close to the proposed exit ramp from the parkway. A new access must be provided.

Recommendation

The entrance to the Public Works yard should be relocated to the east end of the site. MnDOT should construct the new entrance, using the existing railroad bridge. The bridge should be retained, because an at-grade crossing would not be acceptable.

2. Slope Stability

The stability of the slope on the north side of the parkway right-of-way was one of the concerns that led to the preparation of an EIS. This issue was again raised during the public review process.

A technical report was prepared for the EIS which deals with soils, including the stability of slopes. The report analyzed the soils extensively throughout the Pleasant Avenue corridor, and concluded that with appropriate design of retaining walls, the stability of slopes can be assured. MnDOT is using this study in designing the road.

Conclusion

By following the recommendations of the soil studies in the design of the roadway, slope stability will be assured.

3. Residence at 1022 James Avenue

The owner of this home, which is just south of the Randolph Avenue on-ramp, testified at the March 2 public hearing that previous fill for the project has caved in the home's foundation. The city has asked MnDOT to investigate the situation.

Recommendation

MnDOT should investigate the situation at 1022 James Avenue and propose an appropriate remedy if it is warranted.

4. College Hill Condominiums

The College Hill Condominiums consist of 12 units located on College Avenue just west of Sixth Street. The building underwent conversion and extensive renovation about five years ago. The proposed Kellogg Boulevard interchange will be just south of the building, with Kellogg Boulevard replacing existing Sixth Street. Relocated Kellogg will be slightly farther away from the building than existing Sixth Street.

Attorneys for the College Hill Condominium owners have charged that the relocation of Kellogg Boulevard results in such adverse impacts to the building that the condominiums should be acquired by MnDOT. They also claim that the acquisition is necessary to solve a land use conflict, meaning that a residential use is not appropriate in this area.

Whether the relocation of the Kellogg interchange has adversely affected the value of the College Hill Condominiums to necessitate its acquisition is not a question that can be answered by the Planning Commission or the City. This question should be addressed by MnDOT, as the responsible agent for the project.

Recommendation

MnDOT should evaluate the claim of the College Hill Condominium owners that their building should be acquired because it will be adversely impacted by the Kellogg interchange.

VI. SUMMARY OF CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The St. Paul Planning Commission recommends the City Council approve the design concept for the I-35E Parkway with the following conclusions and conditions:

1. The roadway should be constructed as a four lane parkway from West Seventh Street to downtown with a direct connection to I-94 and auxiliary lanes between West Seventh Street and Randolph, consistent with specifications set forth in the Final Environmental Impact Statement.
2. Full interchanges should be provided at West Seventh Street and Randolph. Half-diamond interchanges to the north should be provided at Victoria and St. Clair. Half-diamond interchanges to the south should be provided at Grand/Ramsey, Kellogg and 11th/12th Streets.
3. The Commission sees no problems resulting from traffic volume shifts on local streets because of the Victoria and St. Clair interchanges. However, given neighborhood concern, traffic volume shifts on St. Albans, Osceola, Avon and Victoria should be monitored after the Parkway is opened. The option of creating one-way streets, while not deemed necessary by the Commission, should nevertheless remain open to future consideration by District 16 and the City. The provision of a traffic signal at the intersection of St. Clair and Victoria should also be evaluated by the City in conjunction with District 16.
4. The traffic signal at Randolph and Lexington should be modified to accommodate anticipated traffic increases, and turning movements. Parking on Randolph between the Parkway and Lexington should be banned.
5. Traffic volumes on Lexington, Snelling and the Short Line should be monitored closely over the next few years and alternatives for handling the north/south traffic to and from the Midway evaluated carefully.
6. The basic design concept for Lower Cathedral Hill depicted in Figure 11 should serve as the guideline for the construction of the Parkway and downtown street realignment.
7. A special pedestrian concourse should be constructed over the Parkway between downtown and the Miller Hospital area. Funding from federal and state sources in conjunction with I-35E funding should be provided.
8. The design of the Summit Avenue bridge should incorporate an attractive pedestrian link across 5th/6th Street.
9. The 5th/6th Street connectors should be designed to minimize the land area required. The retaining walls should be designed to provide the future option of decking over the roadway.
10. Frontage roads should be constructed as proposed. New frontage roads should be built to connect Harrison Avenue at Western near Jefferson School; to connect Garfield Street with Forbes Avenue near the Grand/Ramsey interchange; and to provide local access for the Irvine Hill condominiums and United Hospitals. At all dead end streets along the corridor adequate turn around space should be provided and be attractively designed.
11. The noise abatement walls should be built as proposed to a height of five to seven feet.

12. The bicycle and pedestrian trail should be built as proposed.
13. The Minnesota Department of Transportation should involve city staff in preparing detailed landscaping plans. Additional roadside planting should be considered between West Seventh Street and Jefferson Avenue and in the Cathedral Hill area.
14. The pavement of the roadway should be a bituminous composition, with a core thickness of 4½", adequate to carry autos, vans, buses, emergency and maintenance vehicles only, not heavy trucks.
15. The three pedestrian bridges should be built as proposed. The frontage road between the Irvine Hill condominiums and the Walnut Street bridge should be provided with a sidewalk and lighting. The Summit Avenue bridge should include a pedestrian facility, and a pedestrian concourse should be provided across the Parkway to connect Miller Hospital with downtown.

The City should be involved in designing all bridges to be an asset to the urban landscape. In reconstructing the common section bridges, a better pedestrian link should be created between downtown and the State Capitol area.

16. The Commission believes that in addition to the Final EIS, there are sufficient physical and legal barriers to prevent future conversion to a freeway with trucks.
17. The first stage of parkway construction from West Seventh Street to St. Clair should be open to traffic upon completion. However, MnDOT should be requested to revise construction staging to open the parkway to Grand/Ramsey as soon as possible.
18. The entrance to the Public Works yard should be relocated to the east of the site. MnDOT should construct a new entrance using the existing railroad bridge. The bridge should be retained because an at-grade crossing would not be acceptable.
19. By following the recommendations of the soils studies in the design of the roadway, slope stability will be assured.
20. MnDOT should investigate the situation at 1022 James Avenue and propose an appropriate remedy if it is warranted.
21. MnDOT should evaluate the claim that the College Hill Condominiums will be adversely impacted and, therefore, should be acquired.
22. Specific construction layouts for each stage of construction should be reviewed by City staff for consistency with the approved design concept prior to City Council approval by formal resolution.