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The Origin of Portland, Oregon's Waterfront Park: A Paradigm Shift in City Planning (1967-1978)

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THESIS APPROVAL

The abstract and thesis of Michael Anthony Jenner for the Master of Arts in History were presented March 4, 2004, and accepted by the thesis committee and the department.

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ABSTRACT

An abstract of the thesis of Michael Anthony Jenner for the Master of Arts in History presented March 4, 2004.

Title: The Origin of Portland, Oregon's Waterfront Park: A Paradigm Shift
 in City Planning (1967-1978)

The present thesis chronicles the decision to replace Portland, Oregon's Harbor Drive, a downtown highway located between Front Avenue and the Willamette River, with Tom McCall Waterfront Park, a thirty-seven acre linear greenway, in the late 1960s and 1970s. These events provide an example of the battle against the ascendancy of the automobile and the ability of concerned citizen groups to affect city planning decisions.

This thesis briefly outlines the history of Portland's waterfront and the differing strategies the city employed to attempt to rehabilitate the area in the first half of the twentieth century. It then examines the debate over the proposed Ash Street ramp in 1961. The cancellation of the overpass project marked the first time in Portland's history that waterfront beautification advocates had influenced plans for the area. From there, the study focuses on the events of 1969 in which the Portland City Club not only caused the

cancellation of Commissioner Frank Ivancie and State Highway Commission Chair Glenn Jackson's unilateral plan to widen Harbor Drive but also lambasted the secrecy of public officials. A few months later, the Riverfront for People Committee, an organization made up mainly of young architects and their spouses, galvanized professional planners and their allies and forced a reevaluation of the function of the waterfront. These actions initiated a paradigm shift in riverfront development planning from exclusivity to a more inclusive process.

The thesis then examines the decision to close Harbor Drive in 1970 and the complex conversion of the area from a highway to a park, placing these developments within the context of transformations at Portland City Hall and in urban planning in the United States. The study then describes the creation and development of Waterfront Park in the mid 1970s and 1980s with an emphasis on the role citizen participation and the input of professionals played in the development of the park's "Final Report." Finally, the thesis examines unforeseen problems that later developed in the park and the city's response and explores the complex relationship between professional elites and public participation.

THE ORIGIN OF PORTLAND, OREGON'S WATERFRONT PARK:
A PARADIGM SHIFT IN CITY PLANNING (1967-1978)

by
MICHAEL ANTHONY JENNER

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS
in
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Portland State University
2004

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PREFACE

The present thesis describes the decision to replace Portland, Oregon's Harbor Drive, a downtown highway located between Front Avenue and the Willamette River, with Tom McCall Waterfront Park, a thirty-seven acre linear greenway, in the late 1960s and 1970s. Portland historian Jewel Lansing has argued that this transformation was not only a "stunning achievement" but was also one of the most important events in Portland's twentieth century existence. In its twenty-five year history, Tom McCall Waterfront Park has become Portland's most popular park and also a source of the city's civic pride.¹

Previously, Portland historians had not explored this subject in-depth. This, the first in-depth examination of the events that led to the decision to eliminate Harbor Drive and the process of creating Waterfront Park, grew out of the work of urban historian Carl Abbott. In *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City* (1983), Abbott described the general political and city planning transitions that were taking place in Portland during this period. In *Greater Portland: Urban Life and Landscape in the Pacific Northwest* (2001), Abbott introduced the Riverfront for People Committee and its 1969 campaign to transform the city's waterfront area.

¹ "Future leaders do well to study past, author says," *The Oregonian*, 24 October 2003, p. B1.

This thesis expands upon Abbott's work by examining the controversy over the proposed Ash Street ramp in 1961, which pitted beautification advocates, including the Oregon chapter of the American Institute of Architects, against city officials. It chronicles in more detail the formation of the City Club of Portland's Committee on the Journal Building Site and Willamette Riverfront Development and analyzes their 1969 report, which challenged the secrecy of planning for the area and offered a new philosophy for the riverfront and downtown. This thesis, furthermore, expands upon how the Riverfront for People Committee galvanized planning-oriented segments of the community and forced a reevaluation of the function of the waterfront. It also chronicles the complex conversion of the area from a highway to a park in the 1970s and examines the unforeseen problems of Waterfront Park that emerged in the 1980s and 1990s.

The thesis addresses the question of why there was a transition from exclusivity in city planning for the waterfront in the late 1960s and 1970s to increased emphasis on broader community interests and values. This change in urban planning was simultaneously occurring in other areas of Portland as well as in other American cities. This thesis utilizes the general city planning changes in Portland as well as those in Richmond, Virginia and Omaha, Nebraska in an interpretive framework. The creation of Waterfront Park provides an example of how a grassroots movement not only questioned the prevailing planning philosophy of the ascendancy of the automobile but also initiated a transformation in the city's attitude towards the riverfront and the process of citizen participation. Information for the thesis came from city,

county, and state documents, the City Club of Portland's meeting minutes and reports, the correspondence of the Riverfront for People Committee, newspaper articles, and personal interviews.

The first chapter of this work briefly outlines the history of the waterfront and the differing strategies the city employed to attempt to rehabilitate the area in the first half of the twentieth century. The second chapter chronicles the debate between city officials and beautification advocates over the Ash Street ramp project in 1961. Portland's purchase of the old *Journal* building as well as preliminary planning for the riverfront, including the formation of Governor Tom McCall's Intergovernmental Task Force for Waterfront Development in the late 1960s, is also discussed. The third chapter describes the events of 1969 in which the City Club challenged a plan by Commissioner Frank Ivancie and corporate leader and State Highway Commission Chair Glenn Jackson to create a ten-lane freeway system in the area. It also chronicles the formation of the Riverfront for People Committee and its organizational drive demanding a more inclusive decision-making process as well as the removal of Harbor Drive. The public hearing in October 1969 is also discussed.

The fourth chapter covers the decision to remove Harbor Drive and the planning for the waterfront in the early 1970s. It chronicles the "Downtown Plan," the cancellation of the proposed Mt. Hood Freeway project, and the dramatic transition that took place in city hall. A discussion of city planning changes that took place in Richmond, Virginia and Omaha, Nebraska during this period is also included. The fifth chapter describes the creation and

development of Waterfront Park in the mid 1970s and 1980s. The Conclusion briefly details problematic aspects of the park and the city's re-development plan of 2003 and raises consideration of the complex relationship between professional elites and public participation.

CHAPTER I

SETTING THE STAGE: THE DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT AS A PLANNING PROBLEM

Portland sits on the Willamette River, twelve miles south of the Columbia River. Since the city's founding in 1843 and throughout the nineteenth century, the riverfront area on the west bank provided a space for Portland businesspeople to trade with the rest of the United States and the world. By the beginning of the twentieth century, Portland had emerged as the center of power in the Northwest. Because of the city's commercial activity, its population grew steadily from just over a thousand at incorporation in 1851, to 149,000 in 1905. By the early 1910s, however, the downtown area had moved west away from the river, the shipping area was increasingly moving into northern Portland, and the downtown west side riverfront had become decrepit. Most of the wharves and docks lining the waterfront had been abandoned and were lying in a state of disrepair.¹

¹ Carl Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City* (University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln and London 1983), 11, 14-17, 19; E. Kimbark MacColl and Harry H. Stein, *Merchants, Money, and Power: the Portland Establishment 1843-1913* (The Georgian Press: 1988), 336-7, 390; Portland Parks and Recreation, City of Portland, Oregon, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment of Conditions and Issues," April 2001, 16; idem, "Waterfront Park Master Plan, Portland, Oregon," 2003, Multnomah County Library, 13-14; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, Portland, Oregon & Royston, Hanamoto, Beck & Abey, San Francisco, California, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park, City of Portland, Oregon," August 1975, Multnomah County Library, 20-21.

development of Waterfront Park in the mid 1970s and 1980s. The Conclusion briefly details problematic aspects of the park and the city's re-development plan of 2003 and raises consideration of the complex relationship between professional elites and public participation.

CHAPTER I

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¹ Carl Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City* (University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln and London 1983), 11, 14-17, 19; E. Kimbark MacColl and Harry H. Stein, *Merchants, Money, and Power: the Portland Establishment 1843-1913* (The Georgian Press: 1988), 336-7, 390; Portland Parks and Recreation, City of Portland, Oregon, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment of Conditions and Issues," April 2001, 16; idem, "Waterfront Park Master Plan, Portland, Oregon," 2003, Multnomah County Library, 13-14; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, Portland, Oregon & Royston, Hanamoto, Beck & Abey, San Francisco, California, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park, City of Portland, Oregon," August 1975, Multnomah County Library, 20-21.

Throughout the twentieth century, various city planning strategies for Portland were drawn up. Each of these plans had specific suggestions for how the riverfront should be utilized. The first of these was the Olmstead Plan of 1904, authored by the nationally renowned Olmstead Brothers of Massachusetts, who were paid \$10,000 to survey Portland's park potential and suggest future park plans. The Olmsteads recommended the creation of a park along the west side riverfront as a remedy for the dilapidated area. Even though the Olmstead Plan resulted in the creation of a comprehensive park system in Portland, including Sellwood Park and Mt. Tabor, no steps were made towards the beautification of the riverfront. To some Portlanders, fresh from the success of the Lewis and Clark Exhibition in 1905 promoting the lifestyle of Portland and Oregon in general, the decayed, ugly waterfront was a source of embarrassment.²

As "Stumptown's" population surpassed two hundred thousand in 1910, Edward Bennett, a colleague of Chicago's Daniel H. Burnham, who in his 1909 comprehensive plans for his hometown had called for the beautification of the lakefront, offered Portland's first far-reaching city plan for the twentieth century. His "Greater Portland Plan" (1912) sought to transform Portland into a city that one day would be a metropolis of two million people. Bennett recommended not only a reinvigoration of the central west side riverfront through the creation of a waterfront park, but also

² Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 41, 59-60; Jewel Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power 1851-2001* (Oregon State University Press, Corvallis: 2003), 249, 252, 256, 394; E. Kimbark MacColl, *The Shaping of a City: Business and Politics in Portland, Oregon 1885-1915* (The Georgian Press Company, Portland, Oregon: 1976), 270-1.

suggested the restoration of public ownership of the area. Even though the voters of Portland overwhelmingly approved the concept of the Bennett Plan in 1912, little resulted from these plans. This was due to the adamant opposition from real estate and business interests as well as an economic downturn that began in 1914. By the time the economy recovered in 1918, the age of the automobile had made Edward Bennett's plans irrelevant.³

It was not until the Laurgaard Plan of 1923 that concrete plans for remedying the downtown waterfront took shape. In his 1920 report, city engineer Olaf Laurgaard had detailed the deplorable condition of the riverfront: "...approximately seventy percent of the frontage...between Jefferson Street and the Steel Bridge has already been condemned, recommended for condemnation or torn down." Laurgaard added that the blighted area was becoming increasingly dangerous to traffic, a serious fire hazard, and was causing high insurance rates for the downtown district. He now proposed a comprehensive plan for the riverfront. Responding to the periodic flooding of the waterfront area, including the catastrophic flood of 1894 in which high waters covered 250 square blocks, reaching to N.W. 10th and Glisan and S.W. 6th and Washington, Laurgaard recommended the building of a seawall between the Hawthorne and Steel bridges. The

³ Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 59, 62-68; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 276, 284-85, 288, 301, 394; MacColl, *The Shaping of a City*, 423-31, 448-9; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 17; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 40.

Laurgaard plan, furthermore, called for a new Front Avenue interceptor sewer and pumping plant located along the new concrete seawall.⁴

In an attempt to increase property values in the waterfront area and downtown, Laurgaard proposed widening Front Avenue to one hundred feet and building a public market on the riverfront between the Hawthorne and Morrison bridges. He recommended, in addition, the creation of a tunneled belt line railway with interurban terminals along a lighted esplanade. The City Club objected to the Laurgaard Plan, however, on the grounds that the improvements would not properly conserve the aesthetic values of the river for the people of the city and would merely replace one blighted area with another. The City Club of Portland, which was founded in 1916 by nine well-educated "forward-looking" men, sought to educate and inform the community in public matters and encouraged people to get involved in local issues. They also wanted to challenge the power structure of city hall. In January 1917, in fact, the original members sponsored legislation that strengthened the initiative and referendum process.⁵

Even with the City Club's objections, Portland went forward with implementing portions of the Laurgaard Plan. Because of the scarcity of

⁴ Portland City Planning Commission, "Major Traffic Street Plan Boulevard and Park System for Portland Oregon" (Bulletin No. 7: 1921), Portland State University Library, 25 (first quote); Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 97; E. Kimbark MacColl, *The Growth of a City: Power and Politics in Portland, Oregon 1915-1950* (The Georgian Press: 1979), 501-3; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 14; idem, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 18.

⁵ Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 104; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 300 (first quote); Ellis Lucia, *The Conscience of a City: Fifty Years of City Club Service* (Portland, Oregon: The City Club of Portland, 1966), 10-14; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 14.

available financing, however, city officials chose to build the sewer plant and seawall, at a cost of two million dollars, but not the public market or the rail-line. These improvements, which were completed in 1929, led to the ripping out of the rotted and decayed wharves and docks along the downtown riverfront. Although the improvements assuaged Portland's sewage problem and protected the downtown area against the high floodwaters of 1932, they did not improve Front Avenue property values, which declined by an average of 38 percent in the decade between 1926 and 1936.⁶

Planning for Laurgaard's Public Market Building began in 1926 at the initiative of a Seattle developer. The building was to replace the farmers' market along S.W. Yamhill Street. Although the old market had been financially successful, it lacked parking as well as sufficient street access. Due to a series of financing complications, however, the planned public market on the waterfront was stalled until 1931, when the Portland Chamber of Commerce board of directors unanimously approved the construction of the building. Later that year, despite the adamant opposition of Commissioner Ralph Clyde, who was the leading liberal in city hall, Mayor George Baker, along with commissioners John Mann and Earl Riley, voted to assume ownership of the project and to issue utility certificates to finance it. The council even attached an emergency clause to the ordinance that enabled it to

⁶ Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 316-17; MacColl, *The Growth of a City*, 501-3; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 14; idem, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 18; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 21.

go into effect within one month, thus eliminating the possibility of a popular referendum halting the project.⁷

Indeed, opinion in Portland was deeply divided over the location of the planned building. Importantly, the market businesspeople as well as the petitions of 18,000 market customers were opposed to the move, arguing that the proposed building along the waterfront was too far away from the retail core. Despite serious opposition to the scheme, the city council took-out a \$775,000 Reconstruction Finance Loan for the Market Building in 1932. Later that year, however, Baker, who was the first four-term mayor in Portland's history, commissioners Mann and Riley, Olaf Laurgaard, and contractor C. Lee Wilson were investigated for their involvement in the project. The officials were accused of taking bribes and paying \$200,000 too much for the riverfront site. Even though the charges against the men were later dismissed, Portlanders recalled Mann and almost recalled Baker.⁸

When it opened in 1933, the two-square block Public Market Building was advertised as the largest municipal market structure in the world and included one hundred shops and three hundred stalls with some two miles of counters. Ironically, approximately two hundred produce vendors protested against the new building by forming an alternative cooperative market on

⁷ Commissioner Ralph Clyde, who had called the Public Market Building project a "White Elephant in the making," served on the city council for sixteen years until his death in 1943. In 1931, the council passed a resolution sponsored by Clyde to study the possibility of creating a municipally owned electric power system in Portland. Even though the resolution had much support, the council in 1933, by a three to two vote, refused to refer the matter to the voters. Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 319, 322-23, 325, 526n131 (first quote, 526n131); MacColl, *The Growth of a City*, 421-23, 488-99.

⁸ Ibid.

S.W. Yamhill Street. The financial rewards from the white elephant never materialized and in 1934, city officials refused to buy the structure from the privately held Public Market Company on the grounds that the firm had mismanaged the project so badly that the city would not be able to sell the municipal bonds to finance the project. The Public Market Company then sued Portland and the RFC for not making good on the contract. In 1942, the Oregon Supreme Court ruled the city liable for damages plus interest; Portland appealed the decision.⁹

On January 1, 1943, the Public Market Company closed the building. After that, the U.S. Navy leased the Public Market during World War II to store shipbuilding materials. In 1946, with the Second World War over, the property was sold to the *Oregon Journal* for \$750,000 and was converted into a printing plant. That same year, the Oregon Supreme Court ruled that although the city was not the owner of the property, it was liable for damages for failure to carry out the conditions of the original contract. In 1947, the lawsuit over the waterfront building was finally settled as the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal from the city, forcing Portland to pay over a million dollars to the RFC and the Public Market Company.¹⁰

By the early 1930s, Portland faced the dilemma of what to do with the land between Front Avenue and the seawall. The Bartholomew Plan of 1932, prepared by Harland Bartholomew and Associates, recognized as one of the

⁹ Ibid.; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 108; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 15; idem, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 19.

¹⁰ Ibid.

leading planning consultant firms in the nation, attempted to appease groups like the City Club that demanded a waterfront park to revitalize the riverfront area and increase property values in lower downtown and interests desiring construction of a rail-line. Bartholomew suggested the widening of Front Avenue, the building of a tunneled rail-line, and the creation of an underground parking garage for 2,500 cars. The report also recommended the creation of a park with mixed uses in the two hundred foot wide space between Front Avenue and the Willamette River seawall. Both the city council and Portland Planning Commission ignored Bartholomew's call for a waterfront park, despite having paid \$24,000 for the study.¹¹

Proceeding on its own accord in 1935, city officials made concrete plans for improving Front Avenue and the downtown waterfront. It now approved construction of a highway along the harbor wall with underpasses at the bridges. Harbor Drive would be an express six-lane highway with connections to Barbur Boulevard to the south, and to the three bridges lining the waterfront. At the Public Market Building, however, the width of the white elephant cut Harbor Drive down to four lanes. Front Avenue, which was to be widened by twenty feet, would be utilized as a service street. A narrow strip of park would be built between Front Avenue and Harbor Drive and an esplanade would be erected on top of the seawall. Not surprisingly, the City Club objected to the proposed plan in their 1937 report, "The Development of

¹¹ Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 104-08; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 322, 394; MacColl, *The Growth of a City*, 499-501, 521-2; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 14; idem, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 17.

Front Avenue," which recommended utilizing the waterfront area between the Morrison and Burnside bridges as a park. Furthermore, it suggested expanding Front Avenue to facilitate the movement of traffic to the west side business district. The City Club Committee, however, was uncertain about how to finance such a plan. Ultimately, the City Club proposal would turn out to be similar to the plan enacted in the 1970s that resulted in the creation of Waterfront Park and the Front Avenue artery.¹²

By 1940, however, both Portland and the State Highway Commission were moving forward with the plans from 1935 for the ten-lane highway system. The total cost of the project was estimated at just over four million dollars, with the highway commission providing nearly three million dollars. To pay for the remaining \$1.25 million, city officials put forth an initiative in May 1940 calling for the voters to pay the balance. It was believed by city officials that the Front Avenue Bond Issue would rehabilitate the waterfront area, stabilize property values in the downtown area, and relieve traffic congestion. On May 17, 1940, Portland voters approved the bond issue with 65 percent voting in favor. The dream of a west side waterfront park appeared dead. The construction of Harbor Drive, which opened in 1942, resulted in the demolition of seventy-nine houses and other buildings. Furthermore, the widening of Front Avenue caused the razing of numerous buildings from Portland's pioneer days. Harbor Drive allowed only a 16-foot sidewalk next to

¹² "The Development of Front Avenue," *Portland City Club Bulletin* 17 (Portland: City Club of Portland, 12 March 1937), 143-146.

the river with a row of trees. The esplanade was not only dangerous to access but was noisy as well.¹³

By the beginning of World War II, Portland's population had grown to 305,000. During the Second World War, however, the city's size exploded as approximately 72,000 workers and their families flooded the area in search of war-related jobs, particularly in the Kaiser shipyards. Kaiser was responsible for hiring nearly 70 percent of Portland's total war labor force. This great influx of people caused an enormous strain on both housing and traffic. Yet during World War II, the War Production Board prohibited all highway and street construction unrelated to the war effort. In a 1944 survey of Kaiser's 91,000 Portland workers, approximately 52 percent wanted to remain in the area after the war. City leaders were concerned that when the war ended Portland would suffer from massive unemployment. To combat this situation, City Commissioner of Public Works William A. Bowes appointed the Portland Area Postwar Development Committee (PAPDC) to help plan for the post-war period.¹⁴

In 1943, the PAPDC hired nationally renowned city planner Robert Moses, who was the New York City Park Commissioner, to plan for public works projects in the years following the war. Later that year, Moses published *Portland Improvement*, which proposed a \$60 million construction program to employ approximately 20,000 workers in the first two years after

¹³ Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 216; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 335; MacColl, *The Growth of a City*, 507-18; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 15; idem, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 18.

¹⁴ Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 125-30, 131-38; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 339, 342, 347; MacColl, *The Growth of a City*, 571-84.

the war. At its core, *Portland Improvement* was a traffic engineer's solution to a complex urban problem. With reference to the downtown waterfront, Robert Moses recommended that the riverfront be developed into an attractive park. This included the planting of trees, beds for roses and other flowers, and landscaped malls. Moses' plan kept the existing ten-lane highway system, however. The total construction and land cost of Moses' proposal was \$2.5 million. Moses also proposed a twenty block civic center along Front Avenue, between S.W. Salmon and Columbia streets. Nevertheless, neither of Robert Moses' proposals for the west side riverfront became reality as Portland voters defeated bond measures to pay for the plans.¹⁵

In 1949, the State Highway Commission, despite the opposition of the city council, eliminated the numerous parking strips and other undeveloped areas located between the harbor wall and Front Avenue and replaced them with landscaped parks. The council had argued that they did not have the funds to maintain the park areas. In the 1950s, the highway commission fought to convert Harbor Drive from an expressway to a limited-access freeway with as few impediments to traffic flow as possible. The commission fought intersections across Harbor Drive and made plans to eliminate signals and crossings. In the mid-1950s, the highway commission began building a series of overhead ramps to better facilitate traffic flow between the highway and the west side business district. Although the \$960,000 project linked

¹⁵ Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 138-40; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 334-35, 394; MacColl, *The Growth of a City*, 587-91; Robert Moses, *Portland Improvement* (New York City: 1943), 7, 11, 22, 26, 38, 40; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 15.

Harbor Drive with S.W. Market, Clay, Columbia, and Jefferson streets, it further obscured the esplanade and the Willamette River. In 1957, the Front Avenue Project was finally completed. Barbur Boulevard was now linked to Interstate Avenue via Front Avenue and the Steel Bridge. The project had taken seventeen years, with a five-year hiatus during World War II, to complete.¹⁶

By the late 1950s, the inability of pedestrians to safely cross the ten-lane riverfront highway to access the esplanade was increasingly becoming a concern. For most of the year, the waterfront esplanade was scarcely utilized. During the Rose Festival, however, thousands of Portlanders flooded the area, particularly the section between the Burnside and Morrison bridges. A major attraction of the festival was the numerous U.S. Navy and Royal Canadian Navy ships moored along the seawall that annually visited the Rose City. In 1959, it was estimated that 160,000 people boarded these ships for tours while an additional 500,000 people visited the esplanade to see the ships.¹⁷

In the fall of 1959, Mayor Terry Schrunk argued that in order to better handle the Rose Festival crowds two pedestrian bridges linking downtown with the esplanade be built: one between the Burnside and Morrison bridges and another between the Morrison and Hawthorne bridges. Shrunk stated, "The full enjoyment of [the riverfront area] can only be accomplished in safety through the use of overpasses...." It was estimated that each of the pedestrian bridges would cost \$15,000. Some city officials, however, objected to Shrunk's

¹⁶ MacColl, *The Growth of a City*, 513-18.

¹⁷ Terry Schrunk to Milo McIver, 16 June 1959, Ernest Bonner, personal files.

plan. City Traffic Engineer W.J. Weller, in a letter to the Highway Engineering Coordinator Fred Fowler, argued that the bridges would be a waste of money because not only would they not be able to handle the volume of pedestrians during the Rose Festival, but also, unless a fence were installed along Harbor Drive, indiscriminate pedestrian crossing of the highway would continue. In the end, however, Mayor Schrunk was able to get one pedestrian overpass built in 1960, the Bailey Bridge, at the foot of Morrison Street.¹⁸

Between 1900 and 1959, Portland struggled in its attempts to plan for the utilization of the west side downtown riverfront. Furthermore, despite numerous recommendations from outside planners to build a park along the waterfront, including the Olmstead Plan of 1904, Bennett's "Greater Portland Plan" (1912), the Bartholomew Plan of 1932, and Moses' *Portland Improvement* (1943), city officials instead moved forward with improved infrastructure projects, the building of the white elephant, and the construction of a six-lane highway. When Harbor Drive was completed in 1942, a sixteen-foot esplanade precariously hugged the river's edge. By the 1950s, it was increasingly apparent that the public space allocated for the annual Rose Festival was inadequate.

¹⁸ Ibid. (first quote); W.J. Weller to Fred T. Fowler, October 21, 1959, Bonner, personal files; Portland City Council, Minutes, May 31, 1961, Portland City Archives, 177.

CHAPTER II

GOVERNOR TOM McCALL AND PRELIMINARY PLANNING FOR A RIVERFRONT PARK

As the 1960s began, Portland officials moved forward with plans to build another vehicle ramp linking Harbor Drive with the downtown core. Even though the proposed four-block long, thirty-foot high Ash Street ramp, situated between the Morrison and Burnside bridges, would have also been utilized as a pedestrian bridge to better accommodate the Rose Festival crowds, the project threatened to further obscure the downtown west side waterfront. The push to build the overpass was heavily influenced by a 1959 study by the Portland Traffic Engineering Department, which showed that the intersection at Oak Street, two blocks south of Ash Street, where northbound S.W. Harbor Drive traffic turned into the downtown area, "involved very hazardous traffic movement." On January 25, 1961, the State Highway Department held a public hearing at the Portland City Council Chambers regarding the Ash Street overpass where there were no serious objections to the project. On May 3, the city council passed Ordinance 113497, which authorized an agreement between the highway commission and the city to build the overpass.¹

¹ Portland City Planning Commission, "Ash Street Ramp Report and Recommendations," 24 July 1961, Portland City Archives, 4-6.

When the city attempted in mid-May to contract out the work to build the Ash Street ramp, however, a ground swell of opposition emerged. The fight against the overpass was endorsed and highly publicized in both the *Oregonian* and the *Oregon Journal* starting on May 19 and continuing into June. Both daily newspapers urged the highway commission and city council to consider alternative plans, such as an Ash Street underpass. Opponents of the ramp wanted to save the last unobstructed section along the esplanade of the downtown waterfront, one that was utilized as an integral feature of the Rose Festival week as thousands of Portlanders visited the navy ships moored along the riverfront. Opponents of the project argued, furthermore, that the overpass would obscure the soon to be completed renewal of Skidmore Fountain park, begun in 1959, as well as historic riverfront property along Front Avenue. In its May 26 editorial "Save a Stretch of River Front," the *Oregon Journal* argued that, "an elevated highway structure would be a cruel companion for these features." The editorial ended with a call to arms to pressure city officials to reconsider the plan.²

On May 31, the city council held a hearing to listen to protests against the Ash Street ramp. Proponents of the overpass were led by Portland Highway Coordinator Fred Fowler, who argued that alternate plans for an Ash Street underpass had been deemed unfeasible due to it being too steep, too susceptible to flooding, and too close to an intercepting sewer. Furthermore, he stated that with the soon to be opened I-5, connecting Salem

² "Save a Stretch of River Front," *The Oregon Journal*, 26 May 1961, 6; Dan & Mary Lou McGoodwin, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 20 October 2003.

and Portland, an additional 7,000 vehicles per day would utilize the Oak Street interchange. If the Ash Street ramp were not built, Fowler argued, an impossible traffic situation would ensue. Opposing any delay of the project, he insisted that other than during the Rose Festival, there had not been a "corporal's guard" utilizing the esplanade area. "We must decide between our desire to live in the past and our desire to improve conditions and go forward for a greater Portland," concluded Fowler, "In this decision lies the answer to whether downtown Portland will survive."³

Opponents of the Ash Street ramp were led by Dan McGoodwin and Lewis Crutcher of the Civic Design Committee of the Oregon Chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). The AIA's Oregon chapter was founded in Portland in 1911, reflecting the large number of architects drawn to the rapidly growing area, especially following the Lewis and Clark Exposition of 1905. An exodus of architects from the area, however, occurred during the building slump of the 1910s and particularly during the Great Depression of the 1930s. As the Northwest's economy rebounded after the Second World War, architects were once again drawn to the area. AIA member Dan McGoodwin, who had moved to Portland after serving in the U.S. Navy during World War II, had refurbished a building at S.W. Ash Street and 10th in the late 1950s, which he believed would have been adversely effected by the proposed overpass. "I believed it was my civic duty as an architect to fight for the beautification of the city," recalled McGoodwin. Lewis Crutcher, who had

³ Portland City Council, Minutes, 31 May 1961, Portland City Archives, 173.

moved to Portland from his hometown of Seattle in 1951, was widely respected as a “crusader” for the rehabilitation of aging cities. He had also assisted in redesigning the Skidmore Fountain area. In 1966, Portland architects presented Crutcher with an Award of Commendation for “his courageous dedication combating civic ugliness....”⁴

Both McGoodwin and Crutcher insisted that not only must an acceptable alternative be found to avoid “defacement of a great asset,” but that the idea for an underpass, contrary to Fred Fowler’s opinion, was in fact feasible. Portland had bungled chance after chance to take advantage of the beauty of the Willamette River, McGoodwin stated, and the Ash Street overpass, if built, would be another sad chapter in this history. Crutcher stated that this was a battle between people and machines and that contrary to the beliefs of many in city hall, “that is our waterfront.” He summed up his argument by advocating mass transit over “giving priority to automobiles and sewage.” After loud applause from the audience, Mayor Terry Shrunk admonished that, “[d]emonstrations are not appropriate in the Council. This is not a popularity contest or anything of that nature.”⁵

Terry Shrunk, who served as mayor for sixteen years (1957-72), was a Multnomah County sheriff for eight years and before that was a Portland fire captain. In April 1956, the *Oregonian* launched an exposé accusing the

⁴ Dan & Mary Lou McGoodwin, interview by Michael Jenner, 20 October 2003 (first quote); Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 22 January 2004; Richard Ellison Ritz, *Architects of Oregon* (Lair Hill Publishing, 2002), pp. v-x, 91-3 (second and third quotes, 93).

⁵ Portland City Council, Minutes, 31 May 1961, Portland City Archives, 174-76; Dan & Mary Lou McGoodwin, interview by Michael Jenner, 20 October 2003.

Teamsters union, who were supporting Democrat Schrunk against incumbent Republican Mayor Fred Peterson, of attempting to take over law enforcement and government in Multnomah County, and eventually in Oregon. That summer, Schrunk was accused of taking a bribe from the Teamsters while he was sheriff in 1955. Even with these accusations, he trounced Peterson in the fall election, becoming only the fourth Democratic mayor in the city's first eighty-five years. In March 1957, shortly after Schrunk took office, a state grand jury indicted him for bribery and perjury. At the perjury trial in June, however, he was found not guilty. Portland historian Jewel Lansing has suggested that the "negative publicity [and] humiliation...of the trial" changed Schrunk from an "'open, easy-going liberal' to a 'much more suspicious, cautious, and conservative' person."⁶

Veteran Commissioner Ormond Bean, who was not only an architect but also had been president of the AIA's Oregon chapter during the mid-1920s, agreed with McGoodwin and Crutcher and moved to postpone a decision on the project for thirty days for further study. During his long career in city politics, Bean was often the leading liberal on councils that were dominated by conservatives. During the 1930s, for example, Mayor Joseph Carson, Jr., along with commissioners Earl Riley and the "Red-baiting" Jake

⁶ Jewel Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power 1851-2001* (Oregon State University Press, Corvallis: 2003), 356, 367-74, 387 (first and second quotes, 374); Carl Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City* (University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln and London 1983), 168-69; E. Kimbark MacColl, *The Growth of a City: Power and Politics in Portland, Oregon 1915-1950* (The Georgian Press: 1979), 653; "Mayor Schrunk Refuses Fifth Term Bid," *The Oregon Journal*, 28 February 1972, 1; "Controversy Marks Schrunk's Reign," *The Oregon Journal*, 28 February 1972, 4; "Ex-Portland mayor Terry Schrunk, dies," *The Oregonian*, 5 March 1975, 1; "Ex-Mayor Terry Schrunk Dies," *The Oregon Journal*, 4 March 1975, 1; "Farm Boy To Fireman To Mayor Of Portland," *The Oregon Journal*, 4 March 1975, 2.

Bennett often outvoted Bean and fellow progressive Ralph Clyde to “keep the New Deal out of Portland.” Commissioner Mark “Buck” Grayson, who had served as Bean’s administrative assistant for ten years before being elected to the council in 1959, joined his former boss in approving the postponement.⁷

Commissioner William Bowes, a staunch conservative who served on the council for thirty years (1939-69), the longest tenure in Portland’s history, and who modeled himself after Robert Moses in proposing engineering solutions to city problems, such as the Ash Street ramp, responded angrily to Bean and Grayson’s motion. “Autocrat” Bowes, whom city historian Carl Abbott described as suffering from an “arrogance of success,” referred to the *Oregonian* as an “ivory tower” institution and to the opponents of the project as “Sidewalk Superintendents” and “long-hairs.” He argued that if the city did not go forward with the ramp construction, the highway commission would abandon the project and send the money elsewhere. Fred Fowler responded that the proposed motion was a useless delay. Bowes along with “longtime ally” Stanley Earl (1953-70), as well as Mayor Shrunk agreed, voting

⁷ Jewel Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 324, 328, 332-34, 352, 353, 357-59, 362, 365-66, 379-80, 382, 383, 390-91 (first quote, 328); Carl Abbott, *Portland: Gateway to the Northwest* (American Historical Press: Tarzana, California: 1997), 110-11 (second quote, 110); Portland City Council, Minutes, 31 May 1961, Portland City Archives, 181-82; “Bean Once 100 Pound Quarterback,” *The Oregon Journal*, 26 June 1960, 2; Ex-city official Bean, 89, dies,” *The Oregonian*, 15 February 1975, 1; “Ormond Bean leaves long civic record,” *The Oregonian*, 15 February 1975, 18; “Bid Shunned By Grayson,” *The Oregonian*, 16 January 1970, 1; “Grayson Favors ‘Wide Open’ Contest,” *The Oregonian*, 16 January 1970, 14; “Mark Grayson dead at 73,” *The Oregon Journal*, 25 July 1981, 2; Carl Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 111-12, 117, 157, 159; E. Kimbark MacColl, *The Growth of a City*, 494, 532, 534, 536, 589.

down the motion, thus moving forward with construction of the Ash Street ramp.⁸

The reaction to the city council's vote was swift and aggressive. In its editorial on June 2 entitled "Beauty Be Damned," the *Oregonian* argued that the protesters received "short shift" by the council's refusal to grant a thirty-day reprieve. Furthermore, the newspaper pointed out that, contrary to Fred Fowler's statements, an idea for an underpass at Ash Street was actually quite feasible: not only had the Portland City Planning Commission proposed two underpasses beneath Harbor Drive in 1952, but the grading problem could be solved by simply raising the grade of Front Avenue a few feet to provide the necessary clearance for the underpass. The newspaper also called for the public to get involved and stop the project. If not, they declared, "...this will be the last Rose Festival when Navy ships will stand out bravely against the seawall. Next Rose Festival they will be blotted out by a concrete

⁸ Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, 22 January 2004 (first quote); Carl Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 141-42, 159-60, 172-73, 207 (second quote, 159); Portland City Council, Minutes, 31 May 1961, Portland City Archives, 182-84 (third, fourth, & fifth quotes, 183); "Earl's Death Creates Big Gap In Old Guard," *The Oregonian*, 5 March 1970, sec. III, p. 8 (sixth quote); Jewel Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 334-35, 338, 348-50, 352-53, 362, 365, 368-69, 373-74, 380, 383, 389-90, 396; E. Kimbark MacColl, *The Growth of a City*, 584, 589, 592, 594, 602, 644; "OK Given Harbor Car Ramp," *The Oregonian*, 1 June 1961, 1; "City Commissioner Blasts Opponents Of Waterfront Ramp," *The Oregonian*, 1 June 1961, 22; "Seizure Takes Life Of William Bowes," *The Oregonian*, 19 October 1969, 1; "Wm. Bowes Dies At Home," *The Oregonian*, 19 October 1969, 31; "Commissioner Earl Succumbs To Seizure," *The Oregonian*, 5 March 1970, 1; "Attack Kills City Official Stanley Earl," *The Oregon Journal*, 5 March 1970, 1; "Councilman Earl Rose Through Ranks Of Portland Labor," *The Oregon Journal*, 5 March 1970, 4. Commissioner Bowes took particular offense to the *Oregonian's* May 29 editorial "Mr. Fowler's charge," which stated, "Like the brave horsemen in the Charge of the Light Brigade, [Fowler and Bowes] press on, covering more and more ground with pavement and ramps and viaducts and cloverleaves, undismayed by the certain knowledge their fate will be the same as that of the gallant Six Hundred." Alfred Lord Tennyson, in his poem "The Charge of the Light Brigade," (1864) memorialized a suicidal charge by British forces in the Crimean War. "Mr. Fowler's 'Charge'," *The Oregonian*, 29 May 1961, 10; "The Charge Of The Light Brigade by Alfred, Lord Tennyson," www.nationalcenter.org/ChargeoftheLightBrigade.html [accessed January 27, 2003].

monstrosity." The *Oregonian* also printed Commissioner Bowes' council statement in its entirety.⁹

Opposition to the Ash Street ramp project continued to mount in the first half of June; in fact, a large group of protesters visited the highway department and Bowes' office to object to the city council's decision to go forward with the project. On June 13, Bowes was forced to authorize the planning commission to review the studies of the highway department and Highway Coordinator Fred Fowler regarding the ramp as well as examine Dan McGoodwin and Lewis Crutcher's underpass idea. The commission was instructed to complete its report in time for presentation at the highway department hearing in Salem on July 28.¹⁰

On July 25, the planning commission published its findings in "Ash Street Ramp Report and Recommendations." The commission had concluded by a unanimous vote that neither the Ash Street overpass nor the alternate underpass should be built before further studies could be conducted. It also stated that the ramp would have only dealt with the immediate traffic problem but would not have been a long-range solution. The commission concluded that a future plan should not harm the waterfront area between the Morrison and Burnside bridges, should be more cost effective (the cost of the underpass was estimated at nearly \$2 million compared to \$500,000 for the overpass), and should successfully deal with long-term traffic problems. The report stated that only after the highway department's Origin and Destination

⁹ "Beauty Be Damned," *The Oregonian*, 2 June 1961, 22.

¹⁰ "Overpass Rule to Get Review," *The Oregonian*, 14 June 1961, 1.

study, dealing with traffic movement in Portland, was released in 1962 should possible consideration be given to expensive projects such as the Ash Street overpass or underpass. The commission also recommended the implementation of an interim plan, which called for minor changes in the Harbor Drive/Front Avenue highway system, to deal with the immediate problem of northbound traffic.¹¹

“Ash Street Ramp Report and Recommendations” was a clear victory for opponents of the overpass as it was an influential argument for abandoning the project. A few hours after the release of the commission’s report, Commissioner Ormond Bean declared that he would seek a postponement of the project at the next city council meeting. “Some better way of handling the traffic will be found,” insisted Bean. Commissioner Bowes was less enthusiastic, declaring that the commission had not taken a “realistic position” and that the traffic problem was so bad that the city could not afford to wait for more studies to be compiled. Meanwhile, Dan McGoodwin declared that the report represented “the best interests of the city.”¹²

The Ash Street overpass debate concluded at the city council meeting on August 3, as the council unanimously voted to cancel the May 26 agreement between the city and the highway commission, thus killing the project. Mayor Terry Schrunk now came to the aid of embattled

¹¹ Portland City Planning Commission, “Ash Street Ramp Report and Recommendations,” 1-2.

¹² “Bean to Seek Harbor Drive Ramp Postponement,” *The Oregon Journal*, 25 July 1961, 1; Dan & Mary Lou McGoodwin, interview by Michael Jenner, 20 October 2003.

Commissioner Bowes, arguing that contrary to widespread belief, it was he, and not Bowes, who had initiated the plan for the ramp. Furthermore, Schrunk added, "...I think Commissioner Bowes has been subjected unmercifully to the most unfair, unrealistic criticism." Even after the vote to cancel the project had been cast, an acrimonious exchange between Everett "Barney" Franks, the president of the Oregon chapter of the American Institute of Architects, and Mayor Schrunk ensued. Franks volunteered that he applauded the city's new emphasis on "human values." Schrunk responded, "Did you say something about safety? Are you concerned about that? ...Beauty is nice, but it's pretty hard to enjoy it from a hospital bed." Plans for the Ash Street ramp were shelved pending further study.¹³

On February 20, 1962, the planning commission released its staff report, "Comprehensive Downtown Study—Harbor Drive Access," a follow-up study to "Ash Street Ramp and Recommendations." The commission now declared that since the opening of I-5, contrary to Fred Fowler's predictions, there had been no significant increase in the volume of traffic utilizing the northbound Harbor Drive/Oak Street turn-off. The report, however, noted that there had been a significant 17 percent increase in the usage of the Clay Street ramp. The

¹³ Portland City Council, Minutes, 3 August 1961, Portland City Archives, 463-64 (first, second, and third quotes); Dan & Mary Lou McGoodwin, interview by Michael Jenner, 20 October 2003. In 1966, the partnership of "Barney" Franks and Richard Norman was awarded first place for property improvement by the Portland Chamber of Commerce and Portland Beautification Association. The Franks and Norman Building in old town had originally been built in 1878. "Portland Beautification Group Presents Awards," *The Oregon Journal*, 31 October 1966, 8; "Norman & Stanich, AIA, Portland, Oregon," "Where the Architects Hang Their Hats," William Hawkins III, personal files.

planners concluded that there was no reason why the Ash Street ramp project should be re-examined.¹⁴

The success of the protesters in stopping the construction of the planned overpass was significant because it was the first time beautification advocates had been able to influence the plans for development of the downtown waterfront. As the *Oregonian* noted in a May 1961 editorial, "Last Chance," construction of the Ash Street ramp would have closed off opportunities of creating a viable riverfront park on the west bank of the Willamette River. The opponents of the overpass project thus not only saved the last unobstructed section along the riverfront, but they also provided a chance for beautification advocates in the late 1960s to push for a major park to line the downtown waterfront. Both the *Oregonian* and the *Oregon Journal*, in the name of civic pride, had played a critical role in informing the public regarding the status of the city and state plans for the Ash Street ramp, and in helping organize the opposition to the project.¹⁵

Mayor Terry Schrunk had suggested in a 1961 letter to the planning commission that the entire area from Market Street to the Steel Bridge and from the esplanade to at least Fourth Avenue be studied for possible rehabilitation or urban renewal. Schrunk had long championed the idea of urban renewal as a means of fighting off trends of downtown "obsolescence" by creating a "building boom." As urban historian Carl Abbott has explained

¹⁴ Portland City Planning Commission, "Comprehensive Downtown Study—Harbor Drive Access," 20 February 1962, Ernest Bonner, personal files.

¹⁵ "Last Chance," *The Oregonian*, 19 May 1961, 24.

in *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City* (1983), much of the success of Portland's urban renewal was due to the influence of Shrunk's colleague, Ira Keller, who was president of the Western Kraft Corporation, which produced cardboard boxes and other paper packing material, and chair of the Portland Development Commission (PDC) from its organization in 1958 until 1972, an agency Shrunk created to deal with "redevelopment and civic promotion." Keller, who was born in Portland, Maine, had moved out west from Chicago in 1953 in order to be closer to the pulp supplies. Two years after the mayor's letter to the planning commission, the city council formally asked the agency to study the downtown waterfront as a possible urban renewal site. Yet little action was taken in dealing with the riverfront area.¹⁶

Despite a reluctance to contemplate the creation of park space on the waterfront, Portland officials began to make plans to buy the old *Journal* Building in the mid-1960s to better utilize the downtown riverfront. The *Oregon Journal* had operated out of the 'white elephant' from 1948 until the newspaper was bought out by the *Oregonian* Publishing Co. in 1961. In the early to mid-1960s, the *Oregonian* had used the building to store newsprint and equipment and also made it available to charitable organizations. For a period, even the Oregon Historical Society had used the old *Journal* Building

¹⁶ Carl Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 209-14 (first quote); Ibid. (second and third quotes); Terry Schrunk to Portland City Planning Commission, 11 August 1961, Bonner, personal files; Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, 22 January 2004; John Kenward, "Tomorrow's Portland Today," *Greater Portland Commerce* 52, September 1968, 36-39; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 376-78; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan, Portland, Oregon," 2003, Multnomah County Library, 15; idem, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment of Conditions and Issues," April 2001, 19.

as a storage site. Increasingly, however, it became clear that something had to be done with the building. Not only did the building cause traffic problems on Harbor Drive (it was so wide that it cut the highway down from six to four lanes) but it also restricted plans for redeveloping the riverfront area. By 1967, plans were in full swing for Portland to purchase the structure. One of the first plans that emerged in August 1967 involved Lewis and Clark College acquiring the building as a gift from the Newhouse interests, who owned the *Oregonian*, who would then sell it to the city for approximately \$750,000 to have it torn down. The plan called for realigning and widening Harbor Drive to six lanes in that area while creating a park along the Willamette River.¹⁷

In October 1967, the planning commission published "Downtown Waterfront," its study of possible uses for the downtown riverfront. The commission declared three major objectives in its strategy: removal of the old *Journal Building* to eliminate the traffic bottleneck, better vehicular access to the east section of downtown, and reclamation of the riverfront through the building of a pedestrian friendly waterfront park. The planners also recommended depressing Harbor Drive, moving it slightly away from the river, and building pedestrian ramps to the greenway area. Furthermore, they called for the building of four automobile ramps to improve vehicular access

¹⁷ Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 19; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, Portland, Oregon & Royston, Hanamoto, Beck & Abey, San Francisco, California, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park, City of Portland, Oregon," August 1975, Multnomah County Library, 40; Lloyd T. Keefe to Terry D. Schrunk, 16 August 1967, Bonner, personal files; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 325, 379, 386. In the winter of 1964-65, the Willamette River crested at 32.45 feet in Portland, six inches shy of the all-time record of thirty-three feet set in 1894. The seawall, however, kept the water out of downtown. Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 386-87.

to downtown. For the riverfront park, the commission recommended utilizing the northern area, between the Morrison and Burnside bridges, for Rose Festival activities, including the annual visit by the navy fleet. For the southern section of the park, between the Morrison and Hawthorne bridges, the planning commission put forth the idea of developing a marina, restaurant, and nightclub area. The commission envisioned the waterfront park as a center of activity that, because of pedestrian accessibility to the downtown, could rejuvenate the area between Third and Front avenues.¹⁸

In February 1968, Mayor Schrunk commissioned Frank Ivancie, the commissioner of public affairs, to explore plans for the old *Journal* Building and the surrounding area, and to report back to the city council. Ivancie, who had served as Schrunk's executive assistant from 1959 to 1967, was considered the second most conservative person on the council, behind Bowes. He was also heavily reliant on the business community and on city employee unions, especially the firefighters, who funded his campaigns. In his letter to Glenn Jackson, chair of the highway commission, Schrunk suggested that long-range plans for the area should involve solving the bottleneck caused by the waterfront structure as well as extending the existing greenway along the riverfront.¹⁹

¹⁸ Portland City Planning Commission, "Downtown Waterfront Study," October 1967, Multnomah County Library; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 40; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 215.

¹⁹ In the letter, Mayor Schrunk stated that the city had explored possibilities for keeping the old *Journal* Building intact, including arcading the east side of the building facing Harbor Drive while cutting the building back to provide for more traffic lanes and utilizing the building as a jail facility. Both plans were deemed infeasible. Terry Schrunk to Glenn Jackson,

On April 11, Ivancie reported back to the city council suggesting that the best solution was the removal of the old *Journal* Building so as to provide for a mile-long riverfront park, ranging from eighty to one hundred feet wide, between the Steel and Hawthorne bridges and the widening of Harbor Drive from four to six lanes. "In my opinion," he stated, "the acquisition of the Oregon Journal Building in itself is the key to unlock the full potential of a beautiful riverfront development in Portland. At the same time, we will be able to resolve a critical traffic problem." Ivancie estimated that purchasing the white elephant would cost around \$1.3 million but added that the highway commission was willing to share acquisition and demolition costs on a fifty-fifty basis.²⁰

On the same day that Ivancie detailed his findings to the city council, the Portland City Traffic Engineer's Office, which included Fred Fowler, met with representatives of the State Highway Department to discuss the possible relocation of Harbor Drive. After considerable preliminary discussion, the group determined that a relocated Harbor Drive should be as close to Front Avenue as possible in order to ensure the maximum amount of greenway area between the highway and the Willamette River. They also determined, however, that not only would pedestrian movements across Harbor Drive be prohibited at all times, except during the week-long Rose Festival, but that any pedestrian ramps to serve the esplanade would be the city's

7 February 1968, Bonner, personal files; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 173; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 383, 387, 416.

²⁰ Portland City Council, Minutes, 11 April 1968, Portland City Archives, 248-9.

responsibility. The group also discussed the possibility of converting Front Avenue into a one-way northbound street, with First Avenue becoming one-way southbound in order to create more space for the riverfront greenway. City and state plans to purchase the old *Journal* Building were announced on April 9, 1968.²¹

Prospects for the city and state's version of a riverfront greenway quickly came under fire from beautification advocates. On April 26, 1968, John Bolan, president of the Portland Beautification Association, challenged the greenway plan in a strongly worded letter to the city council. The beautification association, which had been created in 1960 by Mayor Schrunk to coordinate long-range plans for improving the city's aesthetic environment, included over fifty committee members representing over thirty clubs, organizations, and professional groups in the Portland area. Among the groups' initial tasks was the beautification of the waterfront. Bolan, an advertising and credit manager for the Charles H. Lilly Company, specializing in agricultural products, now insisted that for the riverfront park to have any meaning, it would need to be much wider than the proposed eighty to one hundred feet. He stated, furthermore, that because future traffic studies of the area showed diminished use, there was the potential for removing Harbor

²¹ F.B. Klaboe to Memo to the File, 11 April 1968, Bonner, personal files; "Old Journal Site Optioned," *The Oregonian*, 9 April 1968, 1.

Drive entirely in order to ensure a great waterfront park. This was the first plan that called for the complete removal of Harbor Drive.²²

On May 23, the city council agreed to buy the old *Journal* Building for \$1.3 million. The contract called for the city to make a \$400,000 down payment and annual installments of \$300,000 for three years. Commissioner Ivancie, who negotiated the sale on behalf of the city, called the transaction "...one of the most significant milestones in Portland's history." Fred Stickel, the general-manager of the *Oregonian* Publishing Company, noted that he had given the city first preference and price consideration in order to ensure the creation of a park space on the waterfront. Per an agreement with the highway commission, the state would pay half the cost for relocating Harbor Drive west next to Front Avenue. Mayor Schrunk announced that the esplanade would be named the Francis J. Murnane Parkway in honor of the recently deceased president of the Longshoremen's Union.²³

With the purchase of the waterfront structure, plans for the future of the downtown riverfront accelerated. By June, city officials were considering three possibilities. In Plan "A," Front Avenue would remain a two-way street with some minor changes. Harbor Drive would be relocated alongside Front

²² Portland Beautification Association, "History and Goals of the Portland Beautification Association," May 1960, Portland Beautification Association file, Oregon Historical Society; John J. Bolan, President, Portland Beautification Association to Portland City Council, 26 April 1968, Bonner, personal files; "Beautification Aim Of New Portland Body," *The Oregon Journal*, 18 August 1960, 5; "Beauty Unit Elects Slate," *The Oregonian*, 30 January 1968, sec. 3, p. 5; "Lilly, Miller Firms Merge," *The Oregonian*, 4 August 1970, sec. 3, p. 5.

²³ "Old Journal Building sold," *The Oregonian*, 24 May 1968, 1; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 215; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 325, 367-69, 372-74; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 15; idem, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 19; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 40.

Avenue, allowing for between eighty and one hundred feet in width between the highway and the Willamette River. Because the esplanade was twenty feet wide, however, there would be only sixty to eighty feet for landscape development; this is approximately the width of the south Park Blocks. In Plan "B," Harbor Drive would be relocated to the west and Front Avenue would be narrowed to forty-four feet for four northbound lanes only. This would allow for an additional fifty-foot area for the entire length of the riverfront park. Both Plans "A" and "B" were each estimated to cost \$500,000. Plan "C," or the cut-and-cover plan, would have followed the same general alignment as Plan "B," except that the grade would be lowered between S.W. Salmon Street and S.W. Stark Street to allow for a cut and fill tunnel section as well as a five-foot earth cover for future landscaping. This would allow for an area 235 feet wide by 1,360 feet long between Front Avenue and the Willamette River. Plan "C" was patterned after the proposed Delaware Expressway (Interstate 95) in Philadelphia and was projected to cost \$4,725,000.²⁴

On July 1, the City Club of Portland engaged in the waterfront controversy by establishing the Committee on the Journal Building Site and Riverfront Development. The panel was chaired by power section chief for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers David J. Lewis and included future commissioner and mayor Neil Goldschmidt. Goldschmidt, who in 1964 had assisted civil rights groups in Mississippi, was working as a legal aide for antipoverty and community groups in southeast Portland. The committee's

²⁴ Fred T. Fowler to Francis J. Ivancie, "Preliminary Report on the proposed West Side Waterfront Development," 28 June 1968, Bonner, personal files.

mission was to study the disposition of the old *Journal* Building, proposals and costs for utilization of the site, financing issues of each proposal, and make recommendations for best possible uses of the area. Soon after the committee was formed, however, it learned that the city had already decided to raze the waterfront structure. When they uncovered the secrecy of the city planning process, the committee moved to "more urgently" study the best possible uses of the area.²⁵

In light of these developments, the City Club committee's study was broadened to include planning activities from the Ross Island to the Steel bridges, between the river and Front Avenue. Its task was to review all plans currently being considered and to evaluate the purposes to be served by potential development. From its earliest discussions with city officials, the committee believed that development of the downtown waterfront was being designed to accommodate automobiles while little was planned for pedestrians. As the City Club concluded, "inevitably there would be conflict between the insatiable need to move automobiles and the development of the waterfront in a manner which would enhance the quality of the downtown area and the entire city." On September 6, the panel invited Lloyd Keefe, the executive director of the planning commission, to discuss these problems.

²⁵ David J. Lewis had an influential role in negotiating the 1964 Columbia River Treaty with Canada. City Club of Portland, "Interim Report on Journal Building Site Use and Riverfront Development," *Portland City Club Bulletin* 50, 8 August 1969, 21 (first quote); Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, 22 January 2004; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 174; "River-basin planner dies," *The Oregonian*, 4 October 1985, p. E4.

Keefe presented a concept for the waterfront development that seemed to offer a solution to the committee's concerns.²⁶

Keefe's proposals coincided with the efforts of Oregon Governor Tom McCall. When the Republican McCall was elected as the state's thirtieth governor in 1966, few could have predicted the enormous impact he would exert on public affairs. Fewer still could have foreseen his influence in transforming the ten-lane Harbor Drive/Front Avenue highway into Waterfront Park. Although he was born in Massachusetts, McCall grew up on his family's ranch near Prineville. He attended the University of Oregon and in 1944 enlisted in the Navy and served as a war correspondent in the Pacific. Upon returning from the war, McCall turned his attention to politics. His first major political employment was in 1949 as Governor Douglas McKay's assistant. Yet McCall's early political career was marked by a series of defeats including an unsuccessful congressional campaign in 1954 and not being named state secretary of state by Governor Mark Hatfield in 1958.²⁷

²⁶ City Club of Portland, "Interim Report on Journal Building Site Use and Riverfront Development," *Portland City Club Bulletin* 50, 8 August 1969, 21 (first quote); idem, "Meeting Memo: Meeting and edited front portion report," 7 July 1969, Bonner, personal files, 2-3.

²⁷ The position of state secretary of state was to be vacated in late 1958 by Mark Hatfield, who in November had defeated U.S. Senator Wayne Morse to become governor. Hatfield had shown interest in naming McCall to the post and had interviewed him. After the interview, McCall was confident that he would be given the position. Hatfield, however, "wanted to have a secretary of state who wouldn't cross him as [McCall] might." When the governor-elect named Howell Appling, a transplanted Texas businessperson who had managed Hatfield's gubernatorial campaign in Multnomah County, McCall was offended. He felt that "Hatfield purposely led him on." The post of secretary of state had a reputation as a reliable means to become governor. McCall and Hatfield continued to have an acrimonious relationship throughout their political careers. Brent Walth, *Fire at Eden's Gate: Tom McCall and the Oregon Story* (Oregon Historical Society Press, 1994), 128-29 (first and second quotes); Tom McCall and Steve Neal, *Tom McCall: Maverick* (Binford & Mort, 1977), 1, 9, 20, 43, 56-8.

Tom McCall's name recognition in the state did not come through politics but rather through his work as a radio and television journalist. In 1962 while working for Portland's KGW-TV, McCall made the award-winning documentary "Pollution in Paradise," a shocking exposé on the pollution of the Willamette River and an environmental call to arms. In "Pollution in Paradise," McCall referred to the river as "'an open sewer'" and named the names of some of the worst polluters. Many people credited McCall's documentary with influencing a legislative bill in 1963 that, for the first time, gave the state the power to shut down polluting companies. The next year, Tom McCall reentered politics and scored his first victory by becoming Oregon's secretary of state. Just two years later, McCall defeated Democratic nominee Robert Straub to become governor.²⁸

During his first term as governor, which began in 1967, Tom McCall emerged as a powerful advocate for environmental issues. For example, he provided unwavering support for a Willamette Greenway system. The idea for a state-owned greenway running the entire 255-mile length of the Willamette River had actually first been publicly proposed by Robert Straub during the 1966 election campaign. While the project was altered to fit more modest goals, McCall's support of the Greenway was critical to its success.

²⁸ Robert Straub served as governor from 1974 to 1978 but not before losing to McCall again in the 1970 gubernatorial election. Interestingly, McCall, a Republican, all but endorsed Straub in the 1974 gubernatorial race and refused to endorse the Republican nominee, State Senator Victor Atiyeh. McCall referred to Atiyeh as a member of the GOP "wrecking crew" that had often been in opposition to McCall's policies. Straub also served as state treasurer from 1964 to 1972. Walth, *Fire at Eden's Gate*, 142-48, 158-61, 172-75, 282-83, 304-5, 409-10 (first quote, 409); McCall and Neal, *Tom McCall: Maverick*, 59-61, 69, 72, 143-44, 180; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 375.

Governor McCall also named himself to the State Sanitary Authority in order to approve tougher air and water regulations. This legislation had a profound effect on decreasing the pollution levels of the Willamette River.²⁹

One of Governor Tom McCall's greatest environmental accomplishments was the 1967 Beach Bill, which expanded public ownership of Oregon's more than 300-mile coastline up to the riparian line, thereby ending the threat of private development on the beaches. Some of McCall's other environmental accomplishments included the nation's first mandatory bottle-deposit law, a bill that required the removal of billboards, the building of bicycle paths using highway revenues, and creative energy conservation measures during the energy crisis of the 1970s. Even with his notoriety as an environmentalist, however, Tom McCall occasionally sided with economic growth and industry. Two such examples were his support of the development of nuclear power as well as his backing of high timber harvests.³⁰

McCall entered the fray over Portland's west side riverfront by convening a joint session of the Portland City Council and the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners in October 1968 to announce the creation of the Intergovernmental Task Force for Waterfront Development. The panel was to contain three representatives each from the State of Oregon, Multnomah County, and the City of Portland. Describing the meeting as one of the most important in state history, McCall enthused, "The focus is intergovernmental

²⁹ Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 375; McCall and Neal, *Tom McCall: Maverick*, 68-70, 77, 83, 97, 179-81, 183, 186-7; Walth, *Fire at Eden's Gate*, 174, 182, 183, 198-200, 221, 224, 402.

³⁰ Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 375; McCall and Neal, *Tom McCall: Maverick*, 81-3, 204-16; Walth, *Fire at Eden's Gate*, 186-91, 260-62, 319-22, 331-34, 378-80.

coordination and cooperation at its zenith. The purpose is of transcendent importance to each of our levels of government and to all our citizens."

McCall not only argued that Portland's riverfront area was the key to the success of the Willamette Greenway system, but he challenged the task force to find a way to beautify the downtown waterfront area. "We cannot afford to spawn, through inattention and inaction, a sort of Berlin Wall of layer upon layer of cement and high speed traffic which bar our citizens from what should and must be one of the most attractive, livable and useful sections of the core city," he declared. McCall pledged his personal support for the project and instructed the State Highway Commission to find a way to make the downtown riverfront area "highly accessible."³¹

McCall chose "General" Glenn Jackson as chair of the task force. As the *Oregon Labor Press* noted, it was widely acknowledged that, "no major political, economic or governmental decisions are made in Oregon without consulting Glenn Jackson." Not only was he the chair of the highway commission, a position he held for seventeen years, he was also chair of the Board of Pacific Power and Light, Co., the largest private electric utility in the Northwest. Jackson also sat on the boards of numerous corporations and organizations including Standard Insurance and the U.S. National Bank of Oregon. Jackson had made his personal fortune by transforming Camp White, an Army training center near Medford, into the White City industrial

³¹ City/County Coordinating Committee Meeting, "City/County Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes," 7 October 1968, Portland City Archives, 1-4; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 216; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 384; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 15-16; idem, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 19; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 40.

complex. Ironically, one of his notable business failures was his inability to buy the *Oregon Journal* in 1961. State representatives on the task force also included John Mosser, chair of the State Sanitary Authority, and Dennis Lindsay, chair of the Port of Portland Commission.³²

Task force participants from Portland and Multnomah County also included powerful figures. Mayor Schrunk appointed Ira Keller; Herbert Clark, president of Holman Transfer Company and chair of the planning commission; and Commissioner Frank Ivancie. On the county level, task force members included Clifford Alterman, chair of the Multnomah County Planning Commission; C. Ralph Walstrom, president of Property Counselors, Inc.; and Dr. John Phillips, vice-president of Lewis and Clark College.³³

On November 8, Governor McCall presented a state sponsored plan for the redevelopment of the downtown riverfront. It included "an underground highway, a park-like setting, pedestrian access without difficulty, and an unobstructed view of the Willamette River." The plan proposed the elimination of both Harbor Drive and Front Avenue and in their place, the construction of a depressed six-lane highway. The road would be placed fourteen feet below ground level so as to provide an unobstructed view of the

³² "'General' Glenn Jackson, Most influential man in Oregon," *Willamette Week*, 14 April 1975, 1, 4, 8 (first quote, 1); "Power company head heads power structure," *Oregon Labor Press*, 5 December 1969, Glenn Jackson file, Oregon Historical Society, 20 (second quote); City Club of Portland, "Interim Report on Journal Building Site Use and Riverfront Development," 23; Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, 22 January 2004; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 216; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 384; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 40; Sam Galbreath to J. David Hunt, 5 May 1977, 2, Bonner, personal files.

³³ City Club of Portland, "Interim Report on Journal Building Site Use and Riverfront Development," 23; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 384; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 40.

river from downtown. The highway also would be realigned away from the Willamette River, which would require the demolition of a half block west of Front Avenue to provide for a 250-foot wide, thirty acre green space on the waterfront. In addition, at least four pedestrian bridges would be built to access the riverfront park. The project was to require six to seven years to complete with a cost of approximately \$18 million. McCall argued that the state's depressed roadway plan would cost approximately \$25 million less than the cut-and-cover plan.³⁴

Five days later, traffic engineer Fred Fowler sent a detailed report to Commissioner Ivanice attacking the state's depressed highway proposal. Fowler argued that not only would valuable property west of S.W. Front Avenue be destroyed because it fronted the proposed park area, but a depressed and uncovered six-lane highway would cause enough noise and air pollution to devalue real estate in the area. Furthermore, the plan would cause serious local traffic problems. Fowler defended the cut-and-cover plan and argued that it would not cost \$25 million more than the state's depressed highway plan; in fact, it might actually cost less.³⁵

Based on the traffic engineer's recommendations, the planning commission in December 1968 published the "Downtown Waterfront Plan," which advocated the cut-and-cover plan as the best means to develop the

³⁴ City Club of Portland, Minutes, 9 January 1969, Bonner, personal files (first quote); idem. "Meeting Memo: Meeting and edited front portion report," 7 July 1969, Bonner, personal files, 4; City Club of Portland, "Interim Report on Journal Building Site Use and Riverfront Development," 21, 23; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 384.

³⁵ Fred Fowler to Frank Ivancie, "West Side Water Front," 13 November 1968, Bonner, personal files.

downtown waterfront. The commission proposed to relocate Harbor Drive immediately east of Front Avenue and tunnel the highway between Taylor and Ash streets, a distance of 2,140 feet. This project, it argued, would allow for a 235-foot wide waterfront park area between Front Avenue and the Willamette River. Furthermore, the commission's plan permitted a future extension of the tunnel section as far south as S.W. Market Street. The cost of the project was placed at approximately \$7 million, \$11 million cheaper than the state's plan. In addition, the commission argued, the noise and air pollution caused by the tunneled highway would be greatly reduced. By creating a vibrant area along the waterfront, city officials argued, the eastern downtown area could be revived and strengthened. As the year 1968 came to a close, the Intergovernmental Task Force for Waterfront Development began looking into the costs and feasibility of the city sponsored cut-and-cover plan.³⁶

In the period between 1960-1968, proponents of a waterfront park won a series of victories. In the early 1960s, riverfront beautification advocates, led by the Oregon Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and supported by both the *Oregonian* and the *Oregon Journal*, successfully stopped the construction of the Ash Street ramp, which would not only have obstructed the last open area along the riverfront, but would have eliminated the opportunity to create a viable riverfront park in the foreseeable future. The idea for a waterfront park was resurrected in 1968 when the city bought the

³⁶ Portland City Planning Commission, "Downtown Waterfront Plan," December 1968, Multnomah County Library, 1-4; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 215.

old *Journal* building and planned to have it torn down. Sensing an opportunity to beautify the riverfront, Governor Tom McCall, a long-time proponent of environmental issues, created the Intergovernmental Task Force for Waterfront Development, chaired by Glenn Jackson, to examine the issue and make recommendations. By the end of 1968, it was clear that a park along the river's edge was going to be built. The shape and size of the park, however, along with the role automobiles would play in the area, was still to be decided.

CHAPTER III

1969: THE DOWNTOWN WATERFRONT AND THE BATTLE OVER ITS USES

While the Intergovernmental Task Force for Waterfront Development studied the conflicting state and city plans for the downtown west side waterfront in the beginning of 1969, Portland officials went forward with plans to demolish the old *Journal* Building. On April 9, the city council passed Ordinance 128842, which sold the clock complex of the building to the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI). A few weeks later, the city contracted the Atlas Building Wreckers and Terminal Transfer Company for \$155,400. While the original plan between the city and state was to evenly split the costs of the demolition, \$64,575 each, Portland paid an extra \$26,250 to have part of the rubble transported and used as landfill at Powers Marine Park, located on the Willamette River's west bank near the Sellwood Bridge. The city had originally budgeted \$150,000 to pay its share of the costs. The demolition project was scheduled to begin on May 1 and was projected to take sixty days to complete.¹

¹ Portland City Council, Minutes, 9 April 1969, Portland City Archives, 644; "Demolition to Begin on Journal Building," *The Oregonian*, 22 April 1969, 14; "Journal Building Rubble OK'd for Landfill at Park," *The Oregonian*, 23 April 1969, 22; F.B. Klaboe to Francis J. Ivancie, 11 March 1969, Ernest Bonner, personal files.

The city's plans were temporarily complicated in May when controversial businessperson Stan Terry informed the city council that he would seek a restraining order in circuit court if the demolition of the old *Journal* Building went forward. Terry argued that the building should be utilized to relieve the crowded traffic court and help solve the downtown parking problem. Specifically, he envisioned using the first floor of the waterfront structure for a traffic court and other municipal functions. The second and third floors, suggested Terry, would be utilized as a parking facility to return needed revenue to the city's coffers. In late June, Stan Terry's plan suffered a setback as his suit was thrown out of court on the grounds that it was a "sham and frivolous." On July 1, the Atlas Building Wreckers began their work on the building.²

The next day at the city council, Stan Terry declared that he wanted to enter into negotiations to purchase the old *Journal* Building. Terry argued that tearing down the building to expand Harbor Drive was a waste of money because the recently completed Stadium Freeway had alleviated much of the traffic on the riverfront highway. He also insisted that the soon-to-be completed Fremont Bridge would further make Harbor Drive obsolete. Mayor Terry Shrunk responded that not only was it impossible for the council to sell

² In 1970, the former pinball machine operator was indicted but not convicted on charges of extortion. Four years later, Terry was convicted of three gambling offenses, including selling "pull tabs" to an undercover police officer. "Demolition Crews Keep Chipping at Old Journal," *The Oregonian*, 1 November 1969, 11 (first quote); "Terry Convicted In Gaming," *The Oregon Journal*, 21 December 1974, p. 2 (second quote); "Demolition Plans Draw Attack by Stan Terry," *The Oregonian*, 15 May 1969, sec. 2, p. 22; "Court Refuses to Block Journal Building Razing," *The Oregonian*, 3 June 1969, 9; "After Thirty Years, an Era Ends," *The Oregonian*, 2 July 1969, sec. 3, p. 10; "Stan Terry Held For Extortion," *The Oregon Journal*, 11 March 1970, 3; "Default Laid To Stan Terry," *The Oregon Journal*, 24 August 1964, 1.

the building, because it was jointly owned by the city and the State Highway Department, but the demolition had already damaged the structure beyond repair. Commissioner Frank Ivancie not only questioned Terry's knowledge of traffic volume on Harbor Drive but cut off his statement by declaring, "your two minutes are up, Stan." "It's always nice to know," Terry responded, "every time you try to do something to benefit the community, some wiseacre always wants to make fun of you." Terry closed the debate by arguing that city officials had been too secretive regarding plans to demolish the building and that proper community discussion had not taken place.³

On May 28, the City Club's Committee on the Journal Building Site and Willamette Riverfront Development met to discuss the progress being made by the Intergovernmental Task Force for Waterfront Development. Committee member Morton Spence, who was a journalist for the *Oregon Journal*, notified the panel that on May 21, Governor Tom McCall had proposed to the task force and highway department that Harbor Drive be abandoned. McCall also suggested that rerouting the traffic from the riverfront highway could be done without much difficulty. The governor had argued that the elimination of Harbor Drive was the best plan not only to realize the full potential for the waterfront park, but also to avoid the high costs of the cut-and-cover and depressed highway plans. Spence reported that the highway department had "reluctantly" accepted the governor's proposal. "The fly in the ointment is City Hall," Spence declared, "The Traffic Bureau is adamant that Harbor

³ Portland City Council, Minutes, 2 July 1969, Portland City Archives, 7-11.

Drive is essential to handle truck traffic. They turned thumbs down on the whole idea." Despite such objections, the committee agreed that the elimination of Harbor Drive constituted a viable plan and that it should be examined in their "interim report," which they planned to complete by that fall. "I believe we may still be able to wield some influence in the decision-making process," Spence stated at the close of the meeting.⁴

The City Club's belief that Portland officials were adamantly opposed to Governor McCall's plan to eliminate Harbor Drive is confirmed in a June 4 letter to the City Bureau of Traffic Engineering from traffic engineer D.E. Bergstrom. Bergstrom argued that while existing Harbor Drive traffic could be accommodated with the elimination of the highway by rerouting vehicles via S.W. First and Second avenues, 1990 traffic projections showed that this would cause serious future congestion problems. "All of these problems will be created and the only resulting benefit is an additional 44' width in the greenway area between the river and Harbor Drive," Bergstrom insisted. "In my opinion the plan is not workable." The traffic engineer further recommended to Commissioner Ivancie that he not consider McCall's plan as a viable solution.⁵

On July 3, the City Club learned that Commissioner Ivancie was planning to make a statement four days later regarding the adoption of a proposal to develop the downtown waterfront. Ivancie's proposal called for

⁴ City Club of Portland, Minutes, 28 May 1969, Bonner, personal files; Jewel Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power 1851-2001* (Oregon State University Press, Corvallis: 2003), 384.

⁵ D.E. Bergstrom to Bureau of Traffic Engineering, 4 June 1969, Bonner, personal files.

moving Harbor Drive west adjacent to Front Avenue and widening the highway to six lanes. This would have created a 150-foot wide highway with ten lanes of fast moving traffic, leaving 138-feet to be landscaped for a park, accessible only by two pedestrian bridges. Throughout his political career, Ivancie placed great importance on the role automobiles played in society. "Next to one's home," he once stated, "an automobile is the most cherished possession because it is tangible proof of the freedom in a free society."⁶

Members of the City Club's committee, most notably Chair David J. Lewis and Morton Spence, swung into action to try to stop the plan. Spence immediately contacted Glenn Jackson, chair of the task force and the State Highway Commission, to confirm the news. Jackson responded that in fact Ivancie was preparing to announce the adoption of the ten-lane highway system but that such action did not destroy the possibility of the waterfront park being built in the next fifteen to twenty years. The committee then called Ed Westerdahl, the governor's administrative assistant, who declared that at the last task force meeting McCall had negotiated a compromise plan in which he accepted the cut-and-cover idea. Governor McCall, however, had not signed off on the "Ivancie plan."⁷

⁶ "Ivancie-isms," *Willamette Week*, 21 May 1984, 8 (first quote); City Club of Portland, Board of Governors meeting, Minutes, 7 July 1969, Bonner, personal files; idem, "Journal Building Committee Paper on Ivancie Proposal to Pave Over Everything," 7 July 1969, Bonner, personal files; idem, Meeting memo from Morton Spence to members of committee, 7 July 1969, Bonner, personal files; idem, "Interim Report on Journal Building Site Use and Riverfront Development," *Portland City Club Bulletin* 50, 8 August, 1969, 25; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 384.

⁷ City Club of Portland, Board of Governors meeting, Minutes, 7 July 1969, Bonner, personal files; idem, "Journal Building Committee Paper on Ivancie Proposal to Pave Over Everything," 7 July 1969, Bonner, personal files; idem, Meeting memo from Morton Spence to members of committee, 7 July 1969, Bonner, personal files; idem, "Interim Report on Journal

The committee next telephoned John Fulton, the head of the recently created State Department of Transportation, and declared that it felt strongly that no decision on the issue should be made until public hearings were held. At the conclusion of the call, Fulton not only assured the panel that the proposed announcement would not be made on July 7, but urged the City Club to not "take precipitate action on this matter." Fulton refused, however, to commit to public hearings before a decision was made on developing the downtown waterfront. During the weekend of July 5 and 6, Lewis and Spence drafted a three-page statement, which they proposed to release to the press if Commissioner Ivancie in fact made the announcement on the seventh. Their statement declared the City Club's opposition to the "bilateral decision of Highway Commission Chairman Jackson and Commissioner Ivancie, with no effort being made to have public hearings." On Monday afternoon, the City Club Board of Governors voted five to three to adopt Lewis and Morton's statement. The committee also vowed to accelerate completion of their interim report for best possible uses of the riverfront as "an anti-Ivancie missile."⁸

Later that afternoon, Commissioner Ivancie held a press conference and declared that a decision on the development of the downtown waterfront would be made in the near future. He emphasized that any decision made by local officials would also have to be approved by the highway commission. Ivancie stated that task force members were considering three alternatives for

Building Site Use and Riverfront Development," *Portland City Club Bulletin* 50, 8 August, 1969, 25; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 384.

⁸ City Club of Portland, Board of Governors meeting, Minutes, 7 July 1969 (first and second quotes); Meeting memo from Morton Spence to members of committee, 7 July 1969 (third quote); Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 384.

improving traffic conditions and scenery in the area; none of them included Governor McCall's call for the removal of Harbor Drive. These strategies included the cut-and-cover idea, the Ivancie plan, and the proposal to widen Harbor Drive. The City Club's committee now decided not to release its press statement to the news media.⁹

In response to the uproar concerning Commissioner Ivancie's canceled announcement, Governor McCall sent a letter on July 15 to Glenn Jackson requesting "maximum clarification" of the goals for the task force. McCall stated that, assuming the cut-and-cover plan was too expensive, the minimum criteria for the waterfront area were creating a strip of highway no wider than 100-feet to handle all traffic needs, moving the highway closer to Front Avenue to ensure a green space of at least 180-feet in width, depressing the roadway so as to eliminate automobile noise, and encouraging private industries to build over the roadway so as to integrate downtown with the park area. McCall insisted that his goals for the area went beyond simply moving traffic. Furthermore, he instructed Jackson to look into the redevelopment of the west side waterfront area between the Hawthorne and Ross Island bridges so as to "truly enhance" the entire riverfront. The governor also suggested that a decision on the development of the area be made "in an extremely timely fashion." "You have a tremendous amount of

⁹ "Harbor Drive Verdict Near," *The Oregonian*, 8 July 1969, 8; City Club of Portland, Board of Governors meeting, Minutes, 14 July 1969, Bonner, personal files; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 384.

talent on your task force," McCall declared, "and I am sure that solutions can be achieved on each of these points in the early future."¹⁰

One month after David J. Lewis and Morton Spence had caused the cancellation of Commissioner Ivancie's announcement regarding the development of the riverfront, the City Club's Board of Governors voted overwhelmingly on August 8 in support of the Committee on the Journal Building Site and Willamette Riverfront Development's "Interim Report." The panel argued that there was an urgent need for the report, due to the secrecy of members of the task force, particularly Ivancie and Jackson. They also declared that one of their concerns was whether a decision for the downtown waterfront had already been made and the announcement of such a policy only awaited the arrival of supporting material. This concern, insisted the committee, was reinforced when it learned that an independent firm had been hired to develop a plan for a 135-foot wide green space along the riverfront as well as a widened Harbor Drive. Since the task force appeared to be considering only one plan, they stated, "other proposals which might be of more long range value to the community" were not receiving "equal consideration."¹¹

In its report, the City Club committee declared that the goal of waterfront development should be to improve the life of the city through the use of diverse features. To simply better facilitate traffic flows, they argued,

¹⁰ Governor Tom McCall to Glenn Jackson, 15 July 1969, Bonner, personal files.

¹¹ City Club of Portland, "Interim Report on Journal Building Site Use and Riverfront Development," 25; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 384.

would not satisfy these goals. Utilizing Jane Jacobs' *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, which argued that a good city required a "diversity" of uses to create a feeling of community, the panel outlined the basic criteria, which it believed essential to any waterfront plan. These included the varied use of land so as to encourage community activities throughout the year, an environment that was aesthetically pleasing, an area highly accessible to pedestrians, and easy and attractive access to the river. The City Club leaders further criticized the task force for not linking the development of the waterfront with that of the downtown area as a whole.¹²

In its assessment of the task force, the City Club said that it had "serious doubts about the adequacy of present planning efforts." It declared that each of the five waterfront plans—the depressed highway idea announced by Governor McCall in November 1968, the planning commission's "Downtown Waterfront Plan" of December 1968, the Ivancie plan, the abandonment of Harbor Drive idea, and the interim plan to temporarily widen Harbor Drive and plan for the riverfront park—lacked "human values." Only the "Downtown Waterfront Plan," declared the committee, had treated the green space as anything more than "simply the space that is left over after the highway is taken care of, and even in the Planning Commission's proposal it is shown only as a concept and not as a plan." Furthermore, when the highway department deemed the cut-and-cover

¹² City Club of Portland, "Interim Report on Journal Building Site Use and Riverfront Development," 28-9, 31; Carl Abbott, *Greater Portland: Urban Life and Landscape in the Pacific Northwest* (University of Pennsylvania Press: Philadelphia, 2001), 137-38.

and depressed highway plans too expensive, it argued, “there is no evidence that it has weighed that cost against the value to the downtown properties and shops, or against the pride and pleasure which a well-conceived plan could afford all Portlanders.” The committee lambasted the secrecy of the task force, stating that, since its creation by the governor in November 1968, it had had only three meetings with no agendas and no minutes.¹³

The City Club committee particularly criticized city officials for lack of leadership in the planning process. It argued that it was pivotal that city hall mobilize the people, with the cooperation of both public and private interests, to develop a grand plan not only for the development of the waterfront, but also for downtown as a whole. Without this dialogue, the committee insisted, Portlanders would not know the choices and alternatives involved. Time was running out, it declared, and very possibly a decision on the waterfront development would be made without public participation, leaving the people to pay the bill for a green space that would “be little used and contribute nothing to the central city’s vitality.” The committee warned Portlanders not to forget the lack of public discussion in the purchase of the old *Journal* Building and the decision to raze it. Its report concluded by recommending that no decision on the area be made “until adequate studies of alternatives have been completed and public hearings held.” Furthermore, the committee

¹³ City Club of Portland, “Interim Report on Journal Building Site Use and Riverfront Development,” 29-31.

argued, the task force should utilize the expertise of the planning commission to come up with creative plans to satisfy the "city's needs and capabilities."¹⁴

The next day, Commissioner Frank Ivancie responded to the City Club's "Interim Report" by describing it as "a complete falsehood." The commissioner denied reports that he had been set to announce on July 7 the task force's adoption of the plan to widen Harbor Drive and leave only 135-feet of green space. "How can the City Club be of service to this community," insisted Ivancie, "when they don't want to stick with the facts?" Portland Planning Director Lloyd Keefe also objected to the committee's report. Keefe particularly objected to the City Club's critique of the city council and planning commission. He argued that the report contained numerous incorrect "inferences and statements." Keefe insisted, furthermore, that the planning commission had been working hard to develop the waterfront since the early 1960s.¹⁵

¹⁴ Ibid., 31-3. The "Interim Report" was not the only time in the late 1960s that the City Club criticized Portland officials. In its June 1968 report "Problem of Racial Justice in Portland," the City Club lambasted city hall for its lack of minority hiring. Out of a workforce of 4,188, for example, the City of Portland employed only 136 African Americans. While Mayor Schrunk, who was in charge of the bureau of police, and Commissioner Earl of the fire bureau insisted they had aggressively recruited blacks, the City Club pointed out that in a firefighter force of about 690 people no African Americans were employed, while in a police force of 720, there were only eight blacks. The City Club's committee stated, "...Portland's local government officials...have been curiously and tragically insensitive." The report called on city hall to correct the racial imbalance and set an example for both the public and private sectors. In the 1960 census, Portland's black population was estimated at 15,637 out of a total population of 372,676, or 4.2%. City Club of Portland, "Report on Problems of Racial Justice in Portland," *Portland City Club Bulletin* 49, 14 June 1968 5-10, 15 (first quote, 7-8); "Only 1 In 30 City Of Portland Employees Negro," *The Oregon Journal*, 12 June 1968, 4; "Generalizations Hit In City Club Report," *The Oregon Journal*, 17 June 1968, 4.

¹⁵ "Ivancie Denounces City Club Report," *The Oregon Journal*, 9 August 1969, 4 (first, second, third, and fourth quotes). Another argument between Commissioner Ivancie and the City Club's committee revolved around a disputed meeting between the two on September 4, 1968. The City Club's committee argued that in fact they had interviewed Ivancie and discussed city and state plans for the old *Journal* Building. Ivancie claimed that this meeting never took

Two weeks later, on August 21, David J. Lewis and Neil Goldschmidt, while addressing the biweekly meeting of the Portland Art Commission, argued that the task force should not make any quick decisions regarding the development of the downtown waterfront. The two insisted that what was needed was a comprehensive study by "professionals" to create an overall plan for how the riverfront development related to the entire downtown area. The task force, argued Goldschmidt, was primarily concerned with traffic flows and not with creating a viable green space along the waterfront. Both Lewis and Goldschmidt emphasized that if not planned properly, a riverfront park would not be attractive to people.¹⁶

Just as it had sided with opponents of the Ash Street ramp debate in 1961, the *Oregonian* now supported efforts to beautify the riverfront. In its editorial "No Berlin Wall Here," the daily argued that the City Club's "Interim Report" had "performed a valuable service in focusing public attention on prospective development of the waterfront." Even though some local officials had challenged statements in the report, the editors insisted, the "official silence" of the task force seemed to confirm that a decision to build ten lanes of traffic had already been made. Without a statement from the task force, the *Oregonian* argued, the alarm caused by the City Club's report would quickly spread. Whatever decision was made to temporarily re-route traffic after the old *Journal* Building was razed, the newspaper argued, it should not bar long-

place. At the City Club's Board of Governors meeting on August 11, it was agreed that a letter be sent to Ivancie informing him of certain erroneous statements, including the commissioner's claim of never having "knowingly" met with the committee. City Club of Portland, Board of Governors meeting, Minutes, 11 August 1969, Bonner, personal files.

¹⁶ "City Club Urges Brakes on Waterfront," *The Oregonian*, 21 August 1969, sec. 2, p. 21.

range plans for a “highly accessible” waterfront park. In its August 22 editorial “Let’s Not Be Hasty,” the *Oregonian* reminded its readers that only the “loud disapproval” of a large number of Portlanders had halted the building of the proposed Ash Street ramp. The daily argued, furthermore, that the Fremont Bridge, when completed, might channel enough traffic off Harbor Drive to make its widening irrelevant. The *Oregonian* further insisted that only after a specific plan garnered public approval should steps be made to develop the waterfront.¹⁷

Further criticism of task force members surfaced with staff writer William Sanderson’s August 17 editorial, “Harbor Drive Holds Key to Waterfront Development.” Sanderson declared that the moment had come for Portland to finally salvage “the city’s richest aesthetic resource” after it had been forfeited in the name of commerce and traffic movement. He also wrote, however, that he doubted whether the city council or the highway department were willing to approve a plan to beautify the waterfront. Of the five proposals, Sanderson advocated the abandonment of Harbor Drive. He cited task force member John Mosser as stating that it “is the only plan that makes sense.” Sanderson further quoted Mosser as arguing that the decision for the development was a political one and that “automobiles will go anywhere we

¹⁷ “No Berlin Wall Here,” *The Oregonian*, 6 August 1969, 20; “Let’s Not Be Hasty,” *The Oregonian*, 22 August 1969, 36.

make a place for them. I don't think the waterfront is the place for automobiles."¹⁸

Sanderson explained, however, that the majority of task force members, most notably Frank Ivancie and Glenn Jackson, disagreed with Mosser's assessment. Mosser's plan is "very noble," Sanderson quoted Ivancie as stating, "but it doesn't face the practical problems of traffic problems." Both Jackson and Ivancie argued that they had in fact not agreed to an "interim plan," which would have widened Harbor Drive, slightly depressed the highway, and included plans to build a park at a future date, but that at the moment it made the most sense and would be the first step in implementing the costly cut-and-cover tunnel. Sanderson concluded that the task force's interim plan went against Governor McCall's plea to not build a "Berlin Wall" around the waterfront.¹⁹

The City Club's report, together with the *Oregonian's* editorials, caused a flood of letters to the newspaper, starting in mid-August, which supported the case against the task force. In a letter entitled "Let's Slow Down," one correspondent wrote that, "It saddens me to observe that we are so automobile-oriented we often forget the pedestrian." The writer urged the task force to take advantage of the beauty of the Willamette River in assessing future development plans. She insisted that some of the charm of European cities was the pedestrian focus as well as the utilization of its riverfronts.

¹⁸ William Sanderson, "Harbor Drive Holds Key to Waterfront Development," *The Oregonian*, 17 August 1969, forum section, p. 3.

¹⁹ Ibid.

Portlanders needed to stop the task force from ruining the waterfront and selling out the city to “gas-eating monsters.”²⁰

On August 18, Governor McCall met privately with Mayor Shrunk, Commissioner Ivancie, Glenn Jackson, and Multnomah County and state planners and engineers to discuss the status of the plans to develop the downtown waterfront. McCall now announced that he had instructed the task force to hold public hearings at the earliest possible date. Three of the five development plans (the cut-and-cover idea, the Ivancie Plan, and the interim plan) were “still in the ballpark.” McCall declared, however, that the task force would welcome ideas from the public at the hearing. He also stated that those present at the meeting favored the cut-and-cover plan but recognized that it would be costly. Highway engineer Forrest Cooper stated that the task force had “virtually ruled out” the plan to abandon Harbor Drive because 1990 traffic projections showed 90,000 vehicles utilizing the highway daily. The governor also announced that he would soon appoint a seven-member committee to study plans for a future public transportation system in the Portland metropolitan area in accordance with legislation passed in the Oregon legislature at the city’s request.²¹

Even though beautification advocates undoubtedly were relieved to hear that public hearings would take place, some were angered by the task force’s refusal to consider the abandonment of Harbor Drive. In a letter to the

²⁰ Barbara J. Bell, “Let’s Slow Down,” *The Oregonian*, 13 August 1969, 26.

²¹ “McCall Calls For Quick Hearings on Willamette Bank Beautification,” *The Oregonian*, 19 August 1969, sec. 2, p. 10 (first quote); “Greenway Hearing Date Due,” *The Oregon Journal*, 19 August 1969, 2.

editor in the *Oregonian* on August 28, one Portlander argued that to abandon the idea to eliminate Harbor Drive based on 1990 traffic projections was absurd. "Too often, and for too long," he insisted, "development in this community has been largely a response to a trend or to a one-sided projection of a trend." The correspondent also stated that the abandonment of Harbor Drive was the only logical choice if a significant waterfront park was to be built. At the very least, he argued, per the City Club's warnings, no decision should be made before full consideration of all alternatives had been discussed publicly. "Isn't it about time we start to decide the future of our city," the reader asked, "on the basis of what we want it to be like in 1990?"²²

On August 19, 250 adults and 100 children showed up for a picnic on the small grass area between the traffic lanes of Harbor Drive north of the old *Journal* Building. People held banners that read "Parks for People" and "Save Our Riverfront," while children between the ages of eighteen months and two years were tethered together with a rope so that they did not wander into the traffic. The picnic was a major media event. The Riverfront for People Committee, who had sponsored the picnic, demanded a viable waterfront park with easy pedestrian access and varied activities and development priorities that placed people ahead of cars and emphasized citizen participation through public hearings in the decision making process. Furthermore, the group vehemently opposed all efforts to widen Harbor Drive, which they believed the highway commission had already decided to

²² Arnold N. Bodtker, "Listen to the Public," *The Oregonian*, 28 August 1969, 42.

do. "We want to show what a great opportunity Portland has in its riverfront," explained Robert Belcher, chair of the committee. "The whole city has been alienated from the riverfront," fellow committee member Victor Erickson added, "When I worked downtown, it would have been good to lunch along the river if there hadn't been the need to cross eight lanes of death and destruction."²³

Working together with fellow architect Jim Howell, Robert and Allison Belcher had formed the Riverfront for People Committee in response to the warnings outlined in the City Club's "Interim Report." The organization was made up mainly of young architects and city planners and their spouses. The Belchers had previously been involved in protests against the U.S. war in Vietnam and other "adventures fighting the establishment." They had traveled extensively in Europe and witnessed how beautiful cities utilized their waterfronts. In early August, Allison Belcher had been listening to a radio discussion of the recently published City Club report. "The state and local officials felt it was a splendid opportunity to expand the riverfront road system," she later explained. "I told my husband and Jim Howell: what are you big shot architects going to do about this?" Later in August, Allison Belcher attempted to speak to task force member Ira Keller about the plans to

²³ "'Brown-Baggers' Boost Willamette Seawall Park," *The Oregon Journal*, 20 August 1969, 2 (first and second quotes); Allison Belcher, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 10 March 2003; Robert Belcher, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 24 March 2003; Jim Howell, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 31 April 2003; "'Riverfront for People,'" *The Oregon Journal*, 18 August 1969, 3; Abbott, *Greater Portland*, 136; Ernest Bonner, "Portland: The Problems and Promise of Growth," in *Persoanlity, Politics, and Planning*, ed. Anthony James Catanese and W. Paul Farmer (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1978), 154-155; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 535n.156.

widen Harbor Drive. "He told me I was just a housewife," Mrs. Belcher said, "That's why I decided I had to do something."²⁴

Prior to the picnic at the old *Journal* Building, Robert and Allison Belcher had spent the month of August engaging in an aggressive organizing and letter-writing campaign demanding public hearings and better leadership from elected officials regarding plans for the development of the riverfront. Their campaign included letters to Governor McCall, State Treasurer Robert Straub, and Commissioner Ivancie as well as letters-to-the-editor in both the *Oregonian* and the *Oregon Journal*. In his letter to Straub, Robert Belcher argued that there was a crisis with regard to the waterfront "stemming from inadequate leadership, over zealous highway pressure, and unrealistic planning." Bob Belcher demanded public hearings as well as "public commitment" from the city, county, and state levels supporting "an exciting and pedestrian oriented riverfront development program." Responding to Allison Belcher's letter, Governor McCall reiterated that, with regard to beautifying the downtown waterfront, "we are not going to miss this opportunity." The governor insisted that all the agencies working on the issue were committed "to work with the people in arriving at the best possible development plan."²⁵

²⁴ Robert Belcher interview, (first quote); Allison Belcher interview, (second and third quotes); City Club of Portland, "'Riverfront for People' Committee Inspired By City Club Report," *Portland City Club Bulletin* 50, 22 August 1969, 60; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, Portland, Oregon & Royston, Hanamoto, Beck & Abey, San Francisco, California, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park, City of Portland, Oregon," August 1975, Multnomah County Library, 40; Sam Galbreath to J. David Hunt, 5 May 1977, 1-2, Bonner, personal files.

²⁵ Robert Belcher to Robert Straub, 29 August 1969, Belcher's personal files (first, second, and third quotes); Governor Tom McCall to Allison Belcher, 22 August 1969, Belcher's personal

On Tuesday, September 17, the Riverfront for People Committee sponsored a second "bring your own bag" public picnic just north of the old *Journal* Building. Some 150 people attended despite fall showers. The picnic featured a fireboat water display by the Portland Fire Bureau and a calliope concert. Like the first picnic in August, the second protest was a media event. During his presentation to the crowd, Robert Belcher called for a comprehensive study of the riverfront development, along with regular public hearings before a final decision was made. Belcher declared that not only had many past city planning decisions been made by governmental officials who were isolated from citizens, but that the public needed to rally in favor of a significant waterfront park so as not to "stagnate the city with freeways on both sides of the river."²⁶

Using the picnic as an organizing tool, the Riverfront for People Committee solicited support for a petition for a downtown waterfront program. It proclaimed support for efforts "to reclaim the west bank of the Willamette River and to realize maximum beauty and growth for Portland through a farsighted riverfront program." The committee proposed a program that included creating a pedestrian friendly riverfront park to stimulate

files (fourth and fifth quotes); Robert Belcher to Ray Smith, 6 August 1969, Robert and Allison Belcher, personal files; "'Riverfront' Group to Fight Planners," *The Oregon Journal*, 9 August 1969, 4; "'Great Opportunity,'" *The Oregonian*, 11 August 1969, 18, Belcher's personal files; Robert Straub to Allison Belcher, 11 August 1969, Belcher's personal files; Auditor of the City of Portland to Robert Belcher, 14 August 1969, Belcher's personal files; Commissioner Francis Ivancie to Robert Belcher, 29 August 1969, Belcher's personal files; Allison Belcher interview; Robert Belcher interview; Jim Howell interview.

²⁶ "Riverfront Picnic Dated," *The Oregonian*, 14 September 1969, 25 (first quote); "Second Protest Planned," *The Oregon Journal*, 3 September 1969, 5 (second quote); Allison Belcher interview; Robert Belcher interview; Jim Howell interview; "Tuesday's Showers," *The Oregonian*, 17 September 1969, 12.

downtown growth to “provide Portland with pride.” Riverfront development should have the “priorities of people first, car traffic second,” it suggested. Meanwhile, committee member Jim Howell unveiled his architectural plans for what the waterfront could become. Howell proposed to tunnel Harbor Drive and develop the riverfront with attractions including restaurants, water gardens, picnic areas, a festival park, a marine museum, offices, and apartment buildings. Howell warned that temporary measures “tended to become permanent.” Although tunneling and developing the waterfront would be expensive, he concluded, in the long run such a proposal would prove to be the most economical approach.²⁷

The day following the second picnic, Robert Belcher’s editorial “Let’s Reclaim Our River,” was published in the *Clarke Press*, a weekly Portland publication. “What we need is a riverfront for people,” insisted Belcher, “and the establishment of a great city park.” He not only labeled the Ivancie plan “disastrous,” but seriously questioned the use of 1990 projected traffic trends as the sole evidence on which to base waterfront development decisions. “What is clear,” argued Belcher, “is that there has been no imagination, no sensitivity to human and urban values and necessities, and no will power either at the city, the county, or the state level to bring citizens and consultants into the picture.” He further declared that he was shocked that the cut-and-cover tunnel plan, which he believed was a viable development idea, was

²⁷ “A Petition by the Riverfront for People Committee for a West Bank Riverfront Program,” 16 September 1969, Belcher’s personal files (first, second, and third quotes); “Campaign Opens for Downtown Riverfront Park,” *The Oregon Journal*, 17 September 1969, 2 (fourth quote); Robert Belcher interview; Jim Howell interview.

being met with “silence by City Hall.” Belcher demanded public hearings, the creation of a Portland Citizens Task Force and a thorough professional study of the area to be completed by July 1970. “The will of the people is essential to significant improvement in Portland,” Belcher declared.²⁸

While Allison Belcher rallied the “average person” with the petition drive, Robert Belcher successfully brought the “power echelon” of Portland to the cause. On September 17, the Portland Art Commission adopted a statement to Mayor Terry Schrunk and the city commissioners that declared its support of the goals of the Riverfront for People Committee. Specifically, the art commission argued against utilizing the downtown waterfront as a traffic expressway and instead proposed the building of a riverfront park that would include both “places for quiet reflection” and areas for “interesting and exciting activities throughout the year.” The future growth of Portland, the commission declared, depended on how public and private developments were “oriented to people.”²⁹

As it had done during the Ash Street ramp debate in 1961, the local chapter of the American Institute of Architects (AIA) defended the beautification of the waterfront area. In the days following the second picnic, AIA members contacted Oregon’s garden clubs to induce them to join the

²⁸ Robert Belcher, “For the Multnomah County Democratic Central Committee,” 16 September 1969, Belcher’s personal files (first, second, third, fourth, fifth quotes); “Let’s Reclaim Our River,” *The Clarke Press*, 17 September 1969, 2, Belcher’s personal files; Robert Belcher interview.

²⁹ Robert Belcher interview (first and second quotes); Allison Belcher interview; “Proposed Statement by Portland Art Commission – September 17, 1969,” Portland Art Commission, 17 September 1969, Belcher’s personal files (third, fourth and fifth quotes); “Art Group Hits Traffic,” *The Oregonian*, 27 September 1969, 13, Belcher’s personal files; Jim Howell interview.

fight. "I recall that the help and backing of the Garden Clubs," stated AIA member Richard Norman, "helped to defeat the 'Ash Street Overpass.'" The AIA also brought renowned urban affairs analyst Alan Temko to speak in Portland on September 19. "What God gave Portland," Temko declared, "Mankind has done its best to destroy." The speaker charged the members of the AIA with taking the lead in protecting the beautiful resources of the Northwest, including the riverfront. "You cannot half-rape the Portland waterfront," Temko insisted. "You just can't let those fiends put in an 8-laner next to the river." Temko's statements were publicized in both the *Oregonian* and the *Oregon Journal* on September 20.³⁰

The AIA also initiated a letter-writing campaign to elected officials, which called for public hearings and the rejection of expedient solutions. In his response, Governor McCall assured the architects that, "I share your views completely." Task force member Ira Keller's reaction, however, was not as cordial. "It would be refreshing to see you go out and get something done," insisted Keller, "rather than simply to object to a plan offering considerable improvement within the funds which we have available." The AIA responded that it did not know what "plan" Keller was referring to. Since there had been no public hearings, it argued, "how can we object to a plan we have not seen?"

³⁰ Richard Norman to Mrs. Paul Ellis, 23 September 1969, Belcher's personal files (first quote); "Architect Lambastes Portland," *The Oregon Journal*, 20 September 1969, 4 (second and third quotes).

The institute reiterated that it would “settle for nothing less” than the beautification of the riverfront.³¹

While the *Oregon Journal* had supported the opponents of the Ash Street ramp in 1961, the daily newspaper had a lukewarm response to advocates of waterfront beautification in 1969. In its September 19 editorial entitled “Good Ideas Cost Money,” the *Journal* argued that while the Riverfront for People Committee’s proposals were noble, the cut-and-cover project was too costly and the elimination of Harbor Drive was unrealistic. Instead, citizens groups needed to figure out a way to put the city on “better financial footing.” On September 20, the *Journal*’s Jack Ostergren published a column advocating the Ivancie plan. Ostergren argued that not only was the cost of the project realistic, but traffic needs could still be met while allowing the creation of a waterfront park. Ostergren’s piece received several angry responses, including one from AIA member and city preservationist Alfred Staehli, who argued that it was merely “a shameless attempt to build support for the State Highway Commission plan for another highway widening project.”³²

On October 3, eleven days before the announced task force public hearing, Ira Keller declared that Portland voters might be asked to approve a

³¹ Governor Tom McCall to Fred Rudat, 6 October 1969, Belcher’s personal files (first quote); Ira Keller to Fred Rudat, 25 September 1969, Belcher’s personal files (second quote); A. DiBenedetto to Ira Keller, 9 October 1969, Belcher’s personal files (second, third, fourth, fifth quotes); Fred Rudat to Governor Tom McCall, 19 September 1969, Belcher’s personal files; Portland Chapter of the American Institute of Architects, “Proposed Redevelopment of the West Bank of the Willamette River,” 18 September 1969, Belcher’s personal files.

³² “Good Ideas Cost Money,” *The Oregon Journal*, 19 September 1969, 12 (first quote); “Study Urged,” *The Oregon Journal*, 13 October 1969, 16 (second quote); “Moses Study 25 Years Old, Still Valid for Portland,” *The Oregon Journal*, 20 September 20 1969, 12; “Architect seeks preservation site suggestions,” *The Oregonian*, 11 September 1974, sec. II, p. 9; “Architect Hunts Landmarks,” *The Oregon Journal*, 13 November 1975, 13.

\$10-12 million bond issue in the May 1970 primary election to finance the redevelopment of the downtown waterfront. Keller estimated the cost of the cut-and-cover tunnel plan to be close to \$15 million. While state and federal aid would provide \$3 to \$5 million, Portlanders would have to come up with the remainder of the funds. Keller's announcement was a surprise, as it appeared likely that the task force was close to approving the interim plan. The members of the Riverfront for People Committee immediately criticized Keller. His announcement, Robert Belcher argued, was "a politically inspired move to keep the reins in his own hands." Keller's "premature" statements, said the committee, were designed to scare taxpaying voters into allowing the task force to choose the cheaper interim or Ivancie plans. His announcement, charged Belcher, typified "a serious lack of communication between the community and officialdom."³³

On October 8, Multnomah County Commissioner David Eccles, speaking at a joint city-county coordinating committee meeting, argued that a proposal to build a downtown Portland civic center should have priority over the development of the riverfront. Eccles stated that because of the costs of both projects (the civic center plan was estimated to cost \$35 million), both could not be built. In its editorial "Let's Look to Priorities" published the next day, the *Oregon Journal* insisted that Portlanders needed to determine what projects were the most needed for the area. The daily newspaper argued that

³³ "Architects Rap Riverfront Funds Statement," *The Oregonian*, 5 October 1969, 32 (first, second, third quotes); "Bonds Posed For Redesign of Riverfront," *The Oregonian*, 4 October 1969, 1; "Riverfront Plan Due Debate," *The Oregon Journal*, 6 October 1969, 3; Robert Belcher interview.

while all pending civic projects were justifiable, given the present tax load, all could not be paid for. The *Journal* warned against taking a "piecemeal look at local needs" and acting on projects being pushed by a particular group, such as the Riverfront for People Committee.³⁴

In the weeks prior to the task force's public hearing, Riverfront for People not only increased pressure on elected officials to support the beautification of the downtown waterfront, but also utilized the two daily newspapers to get their message out. In late September, City Club member Neil Goldschmidt set up an appointment for Robert Belcher to meet with State Treasurer Robert Straub. As a result, Straub supported the committee's riverfront plans and set up an appointment for Belcher to meet with Glenn Jackson. Jackson now "gave a sympathetic ear" to the Riverfront Committee's cause and recommended that they should use the coming hearing to emphasize relevant environmental factors, which he described as "a strong argument." If the money were available, Jackson promised, he would not hesitate to support the cut-and-cover tunnel plan.³⁵

On October 8, Neil Goldschmidt and Robert Belcher spoke at Portland State University and argued that a decision on the waterfront should be delayed until a comprehensive study of the entire downtown could be completed. Goldschmidt criticized the city council for not considering the downtown area as a whole when studying solutions for riverfront

³⁴ "Let's Look to Priorities," *The Oregon Journal*, 9 October 1969, 12 (first quote); "Eccles Cites Civic Center Need," *The Oregonian*, 8 October 1969, 5.

³⁵ Robert Belcher to Robert Straub, 3 October 1969, Belcher's personal files (first and second quotes); Robert Belcher interview; Jim Howell interview.

development. The future city commissioner and mayor argued in favor of planning for mass transit, development of the downtown business section, and abatement of water and air pollution. Robert Belcher declared that the cost estimates of the various development proposals were "highly unreliable." Belcher also advocated the abandonment of Harbor Drive as a means to develop a viable waterfront park while avoiding the high costs of the cut-and-cover tunnel plan. On October 13, the day before the task force's public hearing, Riverfront for People member Earl Johnson published an illustration in the *Oregon Journal* sponsored by the fictitious "Riverfront for Cars Committee." Johnson's parody showed the downtown waterfront packed with twelve-lanes of grid-locked traffic with no green space lining the harbor wall. The illustration was combined with an appeal for people to show up at the public hearing.³⁶

HERE IT IS — possible view of Portland in future with 12 traffic lanes along Willamette riverside. This one is allegedly the proposal of a mythical "Riverfront for Cars" committee, reports Earl Johnson, Portland architect who

is a leader of "Riverfront for People" group. Problem of what to do with west bank riverfront area from Taylor Street north will be discussed Tuesday during Intergovernmental Task Force Hearing at City Hall.

³⁶ "Planning Held Key to 'New' Riverfront," *The Oregonian*, 9 October 1969, 4, (first quote); "Riverfront for Cars Committee," *The Oregon Journal*, 13 October 1969, 14; "Architect, Attorney Rap on People's Riverfront," *The Vanguard*, 7 October 1969, 1, Belcher's personal files; "Debate Slated on Riverfront," *The Oregonian*, 6 October 1969, 3; Robert Belcher interview.

On the morning of October 14, with the task force's hearing just hours away, waterfront beautification advocates received the good news that U. S. Senator Robert Packwood publicly supported their cause. "I am in full support of the efforts and concepts of the 'Riverfront for People' Committee," insisted Packwood, "for the beautification of the Harbor Drive area." The senator agreed with the activists that a comprehensive study of the riverfront should be initiated. The waterfront, declared Packwood, should be a place "where all may enjoy it." Earlier, on September 6, Oregon's junior senator had championed the cause to save the state's natural environment from further erosion and pollution by indicating that he would break ranks with past Oregon members of Congress and vote for conservation measures even if they impeded economic growth.³⁷

At the public hearing at Portland's City Hall on October 14, attended by over 500 people including fifty-two organizations brought in by the Riverfront for People Committee, the task force received a "rather loud and clear message": move slowly and include more people. Throughout the hearing, task force members insisted that they did not favor one plan over another. The prior week, however, one member had leaked to the press that the committee was prepared to propose the cut-and-cover plan over the interim plan. To counteract the proposed action, Robert Belcher submitted petitions with about

³⁷ Senator Robert Packwood, "From the Office of Senator Bob Packwood," 14 October 1969, Belcher's personal files (first and second quotes); "Packwood Chooses 'Natural Environment' As Cause," *The Oregonian*, 7 September 1969, 28; Richard Norman to Senator Robert Packwood, 12 September 1969, Belcher's personal files; Senator Robert Packwood to Richard Norman, 23 September 1969, Belcher's personal files; Allison Belcher interview; Robert Belcher interview.

2,500 signatures and argued that riverfront planning should be extended to include the Skidmore District, located near the Burnside Bridge. Architect John Broome reminded the task force of the “multimillion-dollar blunder” that was the proposed Ash Street ramp and argued “another such blunder may be in the making.” AIA President Richard Norman, meanwhile, repeated the position that to dismiss the idea to eliminate Harbor Drive based on 1990 traffic estimates was absurd. Norman said that the projections did not consider new traffic signalization systems due to be implemented in 1970 nor the advent of a mass transit system.³⁸

On October 23, Governor Tom McCall, responding to the public hearing, sent a letter to Glenn Jackson detailing the future plans of the task force. McCall recommended implementing many of the points the Riverfront for People Committee had proposed. The governor argued that a comprehensive plan for the waterfront area that looked not only at traffic flows but at the entire environment would be undertaken. McCall stated that the standards for the study were expressed in the goals of the Portland Planning Commission’s “Downtown Waterfront Plan,” including the need “to create an inviting, human space” that capitalized “on the natural asset we have in the Willamette River,” using the green space to renew the area around

³⁸ “Interim Project Hinted on Riverfront,” *The Oregon Journal*, 15 October 1969, 4 (first quote); “Speakers Criticize Proposals of Waterfront Development Task Force,” *The Oregonian*, 15 October 1969, 27 (second quote); Allison Belcher interview; Robert Belcher interview; Barnes Ellis, “Remarks Before Governor McCall’s Task Force Committee on Development of Portland West River Front,” 14 October 1969, Belcher’s personal files; John Broome to the Members of the Harbor Drive Task Force, 14 October 1969, Belcher’s personal files; Jim Howell interview; Abbott, *Greater Portland*, 138; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, “Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park,” 40.

Front Avenue, strengthening the downtown against "continuing decentralization forces," improving Portland's image, and providing an adequate space for the annual Rose Festival. McCall urged the creation of a citizen advisory committee and the hiring of independent professional planners to develop "the most appropriate program for the core area."³⁹

Governor McCall also requested that Glenn Jackson pledge \$20,000 or 40 percent of the total costs, whichever was greater, from the highway commission to assist in financing the planning for the waterfront. He then argued that due to the testimony given at the public hearing, the stretch of land being considered for redevelopment should be expanded to include the entire area between the Steel and Ross Island bridges and at least up to First Avenue. The governor insisted that the state take the lead in providing financial assistance to the project. Accordingly, McCall asked Jackson to pledge \$7 million in highway funds towards the completion of the project. He argued that any financial investment in the development of the waterfront would be "totally self-supporting under a program which would reflect sharply increased land values." "Please regard this letter," McCall insisted, "as further evidence of my commitment to the consummation of a project that is without rival in its potential favorable impact on the image of all of Oregon."⁴⁰

³⁹ Governor Tom McCall to Glenn Jackson, 23 October 1969, Belcher's personal files (first, second, third, and fourth quotes); Governor Tom McCall to John Broome, 28 October 1969, Belcher's personal files.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

On November 4, Glenn Jackson publicly announced Governor Tom McCall's changes. Jackson added that the waterfront park would "bring the activities of the city down to the water" and include commercial and recreational uses. McCall's plan was, however, not without controversy. As the *Oregon Journal* pointed out in its November 5 editorial, "As Others See the Waterfront," some Oregonians outside of Portland resented the waterfront being given such a high priority. For example, while N.W. Barneir, chair of the Columbia County Board of Commissioners, believed that the improvement of the Lower Columbia River Highway should have priority over Portland's riverfront park, Andy Nasburg, chair of the Coos Bay Planning Commission, argued that widening Ocean Boulevard in Coos Bay should be considered first. Glenn Jackson defended the state's decision by insisting that most of the development of the downtown waterfront would have to be paid for by private businesses and local taxpayers. On the other hand, in its November 5 editorial "Riverfront Sights Rise," the *Oregonian* argued that a world-class riverfront park in Portland would "serve the city and state as a system of Oregon's natural endowments."⁴¹

On December 19, the Harbor Drive Parkway Task Force met for the first time at city hall with the newly created eighteen-member citizens advisory committee. The task force and advisory committee now voted to hire the firm of DeLeuw, Cather & Company of San Francisco to study the best uses of the

⁴¹ "West Side Project Expanded," *The Oregon Journal*, 4 November 1969, 1 (first quote); "Riverfront Sights Rise," *The Oregonian*, 5 November 1969, 30 (second quote); "As Others See the Waterfront," *The Oregon Journal*, 5 November 1969, 10.

downtown waterfront. Cost of the study was expected to be \$75,000. The decision to hire DeLeuw, Cather was made by task force member John Mosser who was seeking to ensure the firm looked beyond traffic considerations in developing a plan. DeLeuw, Cather had previously been hired by the Columbia Region Association of Governments to conduct a metropolitan mass transit study. It was also announced that the wider project could include staffing and administrative fees of as much as \$200,000 for the first year, with part of the cost being paid for with federal funds.⁴²

As the year 1969 came to a close, the old *Journal* Building had still not been completely demolished. On December 9, Walter Lowe, the owner of Atlas Building Wreckers, stated that the city had denied his request that Harbor Drive be closed from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. so that demolition of the building's east wall could be completed. City officials had said that holiday traffic was too heavy to close the highway. Traffic engineers estimated that a thousand vehicles per hour utilized the highway during those times. Starting December 10, Atlas had to pay a \$100 per day penalty for not having completed the demolition in the agreed number of days. The city finally agreed to close Harbor Drive between 7 p.m. and 11 p.m., when 500 vehicles used the highway hourly, but only after January 1.⁴³

⁴² "Harbor Drive Traffic Cut Study Slated," *The Oregon Journal*, 18 December 1969, 6; "Group Takes New Approach to Harbor Drive Parkway," *The Oregonian*, 19 December 1969, 44.

⁴³ "Old Journal Building Resists Efforts of Wreckers' Hammers to End Existence," *The Oregonian*, 10 December 1969, 39; "Old Journal Razing Expected by December 10," *The Oregon Journal*, 8 November 1969, 4; "Demolition Crews Keep Chipping at Old Journal," *The Oregonian*, 1 November 1969, 11; "Demolition Work Slow," *The Oregonian*, 1 October 1969, 14.

1969 was a critical year in planning for the development of the downtown waterfront. In July, the City Club's Committee on the Journal Building Site and Willamette Riverfront Development criticized the unilateral decision making process of the task force, most notably Commissioner Frank Ivancie and State Highway Commission Chair Glenn Jackson, and successfully blocked the implementation of the Ivancie Plan. In its "Interim Report" published the following month, the City Club argued not only should waterfront development be linked to the downtown area, but that public hearings should be held so that more voices could influence the plan for the area. Inspired by the report, Robert and Allison Belcher, along with Jim Howell, formed the Riverfront for People Committee. Their efforts, which included two highly publicized picnics at the old *Journal* Building, galvanized waterfront beautification advocates. Governor Tom McCall, responding to the October 14 public hearing in which the task force was lambasted for its secrecy, instructed Glenn Jackson to implement many of the Riverfront for People Committee's recommendations. As the 1960s ended, proponents of a viable riverfront park had made enormous strides but a definitive plan for the area had not yet been chosen.

CHAPTER IV

PLANNING THE CLOSURE OF HARBOR DRIVE

On February 3, 1970, the State Highway Commission approved an earlier agreement by the Intergovernmental Task Force for Waterfront Development and its own advisory committee to hire DeLeuw, Cather, a San Francisco traffic engineering firm, to study the possibility of removing Harbor Drive. Commission Chair Glenn Jackson indicated that the study would determine the amount of land available for possible riverfront development and would provide "for a more realistic approach to the river frontage planning problem."¹

Five months later, on July 9, the highway commission, the Portland City Council, and a group of downtown businesspeople held a joint meeting to announce the proposed closure of Harbor Drive once the Fremont Bridge was completed at the end of 1971. Jackson declared that the nearly completed Stadium Freeway, along with the Fremont Bridge, had altered downtown traffic, making the waterfront highway unnecessary. "We finally decided on elimination," he stated at the meeting, "because it would be impossible to keep it and satisfy everyone on a riverfront land bank for people." Most of the

¹ "Traffic Study Planned in Harbor Drive Area," *The Oregonian*, 4 February 1970, 6 (first quote); Glenn L. Jackson to Task Force and Advisory Council, 20 February 1970, Allison and Robert Belcher, personal files (second quote); "Harbor Drive Study," DeLeuw, Cather & Company, 14 December 1970, City of Portland Archives, 1-2; Cornell, Howland, Hayes & Merryfield memorandum, 14 January 1970, Ernest Bonner, personal files.

existing traffic of 40,000 cars a day on Harbor Drive, Jackson explained, would be routed not only to the Stadium Freeway, but also to Front, First, and Second avenues. "The Marquam Bridge is now at capacity during certain hours," he emphasized, "and traffic volume on and off the Stadium Freeway is expected to push the flow on the Fremont Bridge to its capacity from the day it is opened." Therefore, by 1978, Jackson declared, another bridge across the Willamette, most likely between the Marquam and Ross Island bridges, would be needed to link Interstate 5 with the future Mt. Hood Freeway. Federal highway funds, however, would be available for construction of the bridge.²

Commissioner Frank Ivancie and Portland business leader Paul Murphy announced that a long-range comprehensive development plan for the downtown area, from Burnside to Market streets and from the Stadium Freeway to the Willamette River, would be developed jointly by city, county, and state agencies. The Portland Improvement Corporation (PIC), which was organized in 1968 by downtown property owners and business interests and included powerful civic leaders Glenn Jackson and Ira Keller, offered \$100,000 to the cash-strapped city towards the over-all planning effort, estimated at

² "West Side Waterfront Plans Keep Cover on 'Can of Worms'," *The Oregonian*, 10 July 1970, 19 (first quote); "Front, First, Second Avenues Slated to Carry Heavier Share of Vehicles," *The Oregon Journal*, 9 July 1970, 4 (second quote); "Harbor Drive Study," DeLeuw, Cather & Company, 7-11; "State Dooms Harbor Drive," *The Oregon Journal*, 9 July 1970, 1; "Major Facelift Proposed For Portland Riverfront," *The Oregonian*, 10 July 1970, 1; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, Portland, Oregon & Royston, Hanamoto, Beck & Abey, San Francisco, California, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park, City of Portland, Oregon," August 1975, Multnomah County Library, 40; Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 22 January 2004; Sam Galbreath to J. David Hunt, 5 May 1977, Bonner, personal files, 2.

\$500,000. The PIC hired the consulting engineering firm Cornell, Howland, Hayes & Merryfield (CH₂M-Hill) to develop a plan for the waterfront area as well as the downtown core. Ivancie cautioned that the plan would be based primarily on “economic realities” and would not be “a Sunday supplement program with a lot of pretty pictures that can never come true.” Citizen groups, the commissioner declared, would be directly involved in all stages of the planning process through public hearings. “Any ultimate plan would not be worth a darn,” Herbert M. Clark, Jr., chair of the Portland Planning Commission, argued, “unless it had the backing and approval of our citizens. What we do now will determine the land use in the downtown area for the next 100 years.” It was estimated that the downtown plan would be completed in 1971.³

In its editorial “Promising Plan,” the *Oregonian* argued that the joint highway commission and city council plans were encouraging. It appeared, the daily newspaper’s editors declared, that the long held goal of many Portlanders to take advantage of one of the city’s greatest assets—the

³ “Major Facelift Proposed for Portland Riverfront,” *The Oregonian*, 10 July 1970, 1 (first and second quotes); Carl Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City* (University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln and London, 1983), 217-218; City Club of Portland, “Report on a Vision of Portland’s Future,” *Portland City Club Bulletin* 60, 19 May, 1980, 289; Jewel Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power 1851-2001* (Oregon State University Press, Corvallis: 2003), 430; Ibid. CH₂M-Hill, in a memorandum from January 14, 1970, disagreed with the highway commission’s plan to eliminate Harbor Drive. The firm believed that removing a highway that must be rebuilt by 1976-80 in order to deal with the increase in traffic was a waste of money. Cornell, Howland, Hayes & Merryfield memorandum, 14 January 1970, Bonner, personal files. The city’s plan to conduct a comprehensive study of the downtown area had been in the works since at least February 1970. Glenn Jackson had held up task force activities in mid-February to avoid an “overlap” in planning pending guidelines to be supplied by the city and county planning commissions on March 30. Jackson to Task Force and Advisory Council, 20 February 1970 (first quote).

Willamette River—was finally at hand. The *Oregonian* pointed out that the decline in traffic along Harbor Drive, a critical fact in the decision to eliminate the riverfront highway, had been foreseen nine years prior in 1961 by those who argued against the construction of the Ash Street ramp. Equally significant to clearing the waterfront area to create a park, the daily newspaper's editors insisted, was the decision to draw up a comprehensive plan for the downtown area. Even though a plan satisfactory to both private and public interests had not yet been achieved, the *Oregonian* argued, the joint planning effort provided the promise of not only creating a world-class waterfront park, but also increasing livability and convenience in the entire downtown area.⁴

Contrary to the *Oregonian's* optimism, the *Oregon Journal*, in its editorial "Who's in Charge Here?" expressed embarrassment in the fact that the city had been forced to delegate major responsibility for downtown planning to the PIC. Citing a 1968 dispute between certain downtown business interests and the planning commission over a proposed twelve-story parking garage on the site of the old Portland Hotel, the *Journal's* editors argued that there was potential for conflict between the PIC and the city government. Adding confusion to the muddled situation, they declared, was the fact that other studies, including the DeLeuw, Cather plan, were still in the works. The paper quoted Herbert M. Clark, Jr. as stating, "If you were to ask me, 'Who's in charge here?' I'd have to answer, I'll be damned if I know." Even though the

⁴ "Promising Plan," *The Oregonian*, 11 July 1970, 14.

Oregon Journal was enthusiastic about the highway department's "willingness" to close Harbor Drive to open up the waterfront, it warned that any study regarding the downtown area would need "adequate" input from citizens groups.⁵

At the end of July, the *Oregon Journal* followed up "Who's in Charge Here?" with another editorial, "Plan Born Under a Cloud," in which the editors expressed skepticism towards the PIC's decision to hire CH₂M-Hill instead of turning over the project to the planning commission. The *Journal* printed portions of an open letter from Roger Shiels, president of the American Institute of Architects' Portland chapter, and member of the City Club's Committee on Journal Building Site and Willamette Riverfront Development, to Mayor Terry Schrunk. Shiels insisted that the planning commission was the "logical arm of the city to represent the people of Portland" in the project. He furthermore argued that unless there was "genuine input from professionals who will be its natural critics," as well as from interested citizens groups, the plan, regardless of how sound, would be viewed as nothing more than "the self-serving proposal of large downtown business interests." In his response to Shiels' criticisms, Schrunk argued that ultimately the city council was in charge because only they could adopt a plan. The mayor reiterated that ample "opportunity for participation by all of the various groups and interests" would be provided before any scheme was adopted. Ultimately, the *Oregon Journal* argued, the success of the plan would

⁵ Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 217; "Who's in Charge Here?" *The Oregon Journal*, 11 July 1970, 10.

depend “heavily” on how well the mayor and city council stuck to their promise.⁶

A month and a half later, on September 10, the city council passed Ordinance #131483, which authorized an agreement with the highway commission to landscape the area of the former *Journal* Building, S.W. Harbor Drive between Morrison and Salmon streets. Glenn Jackson stated that the area was to be “appropriately landscaped for public use for the interim period of approximately two years before the discontinuance of Harbor Drive.” While the state was chiefly responsible for the project, including all grading, seeding, and installation of irrigation equipment, the city was to provide shrubbery and approximately thirty trees. The site was to be developed into a large lawn area with pedestrian walkways and park benches. The project was to begin that winter.⁷

On September 9, the day prior to the council’s action, Glenn Jackson sent a letter to Mayor Schrunk officially notifying him of the highway commission’s plan to close Harbor Drive in the spring of 1972. Jackson also stated that the commission was “contemplating” a one-way couplet in which Front Avenue would be a northbound street while First Avenue would be southbound. Specifically, the plan called for connecting Front and First

⁶ Shiels, a frequent project management consultant for the city, oversaw the construction of both the downtown transit mall and Pioneer Courthouse Square as well as the renovation of Civic Stadium. “Plan Born Under a Cloud,” *The Oregon Journal*, 31 July 1970, 12; Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, 22 January 2004 ; “Project consultant takes behind-scenes approach,” *The Oregonian*, 27 February 1984, p. B2.

⁷ “Journal Site Due to Bloom,” *The Oregon Journal*, 11 September 1970, 2 (first quote); “Plans Revealed For Journal Site,” *The Oregonian*, 6 August 1970, sec. III, p. 21; “Journal Site to be Landscaped,” *The Oregonian*, 12 September 1970, 19.

avenues to the Steel Bridge in the vicinity of N.W. Couch and Davis streets, while connecting the southern section of Harbor Drive to Front and First in the vicinity of S.W. Market and Harrison streets. It was estimated that the couplet plan would cost around \$2.5 million. Jackson stated that a public hearing regarding the street proposals would be scheduled in the near future. The city traffic engineer and planning commission were instructed to study the plan and assess its compatibility with long-range planning for the downtown area and the riverfront.⁸

Three months later, in mid-December, the highway commission announced it was scheduling a public hearing for January 14, 1971 at the Portland Civic Auditorium. Plans called for the proceedings to commence at 2 p.m., continue throughout the afternoon, and then reconvene at 7:30 p.m. after a recess for dinner. To notify all "interested persons" of the sessions, the commission published public notices in the local papers on December 14 and January 8. The commission stated that oral and/or written statements would be accepted at the formal hearing and within ten days afterwards.⁹

Opposing the meeting as "premature," the planning commission unanimously voted on December 21 to recommend to the city council that the meeting be postponed. The PPC insisted that the hearings be delayed "at least" until the comprehensive downtown plan was completed. Lloyd Keefe,

⁸ Glenn L. Jackson to Terry D. Schrunk, 9 September 1970, Bonner, personal files (first quote); "Closure of Harbor Drive Set," *The Oregon Journal*, 15 September 1970, 1; Glenn Jackson to Members of the Task Force and Advisory Committee, 24 September 1970, Bonner, personal files; "Harbor Drive Study," DeLeuw, Cather & Company, p. A.

⁹ Floyd Query to Mayor Terry D. Schrunk, 10 December 1970, Bonner, personal files (first quote); "Harbor Drive Hearing Set," *The Oregonian*, 15 December 1970, sec. II, p. 8; "Street Closure Meet Set," *The Oregon Journal*, 18 December 1970, 8.

director of the planning commission, argued that changes made by the state would not only determine the shape of the waterfront but would eliminate several planning options for the downtown area. "There is no need to be hasty in making a decision about the future status of Harbor Drive," Keefe insisted, "as no difficulties will result if it remains open after the Fremont Bridge is completed and in use." To make a decision on the riverfront highway now, he explained, would defeat the "orderly approach" of preparing the downtown comprehensive plan.¹⁰

In letters to Glenn Jackson, both Herbert M. Clark, Jr. and Roger Shiels concurred with Keefe. Clark declared that the planning commission did not want "preliminary alternative plans being studied to be implanted or carried to a degree of commitment or of 'no return.'" Meanwhile, Shiels argued that the public hearing should not take place until both the DeLeuw, Cather study and the downtown plan were completed. "An intelligent decision cannot be made on how or whether to close Harbor Drive," Shiels insisted, "until all the alternatives have been explored and a consensus developed." Nevertheless, on December 23, the city council declined to heed the planning commission's advice and instead voted to go forward with the public hearing.

Commissioner Ivancie stated that the session would simply consist of a discussion of preliminary plans for the benefit of the highway department and downtown planners. "The die is not cast at the hearing," he stated. Six days later, in a letter to the task force and advisory council, Glenn Jackson declared

¹⁰ Lloyd T. Keefe to Portland City Council, 22 December 1970, Bonner, personal files.

that the decision on alternative routes from the closure of Harbor Drive “could possibly be delayed if necessary.”¹¹

At the end of 1970, DeLeuw, Cather released its “Harbor Drive Study,” which concluded that the closure of the roadway would cause “tolerable” short-term traffic conditions but in the long-term necessitate expanding the capacity of the area highway system, especially Interstate 5. The consultants examined five plans for alternative routings for auto traffic if Harbor Drive were removed. The consultants declared that alternative five, which called for the building of a north-south expressway in the vicinity of East 20th Avenue, was infeasible as the highway would not provide sufficient relief to Portland’s freeways to prevent over loadings. In addition, significant community opposition, based on environmental considerations, had “deferred indefinitely the construction of the facility.” The consultants further stated that alternative one, the cut-and-cover plan, was unsatisfactory, as it would enable only 15.8 acres to be developed for a waterfront park and would entail “numerous hidden costs” as well as sound and air pollution problems.¹²

¹¹ H.M. Clark, Jr. to Glenn Jackson, 29 December 1970, Bonner, personal files (first quote); Roger Shiels to Glenn Jackson, 23 December 1970, Bonner, personal files (second quote); “Council OKs Hearing on Harbor Drive Plan,” *The Oregonian*, 24 December 1970, 8 (third quote); Glenn L. Jackson to Task Force and Advisory Council, 29 December 1970, Bonner, personal files (fourth quote); Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, 22 January 2004.

¹² DeLeuw, Cather noted that Harbor Drive was utilized primarily as a downtown bypass route for trips between the south of downtown area to areas north and east of the Steel Bridge. They explained that the riverfront highway’s function for access to downtown was “less significant.” With regard to 1990 traffic patterns in the downtown area, the consultants found that even by keeping Harbor Drive, serious “capacity deficiencies” would exist. They pointed out that the Portland freeway system was designed to accommodate 1975 traffic demand. “Harbor Drive Study,” DeLeuw, Cather & Company, pp. A, 1-2, 7, 10-11, 17, 21-26, 37-40 (first quote, p. A, second quote, 37, third quote, 7, fourth quote, 17); “Report Offers Traffic Plans,” *The Oregonian*, 1 January 1971, 24.

The consultants stated that alternative three—Front Avenue as a high-capacity six-lane, two-way surface street—was unsatisfactory because it would provide for only a 160-foot strip for public development while creating a barrier between downtown and the waterfront that would offset the benefits of removing Harbor Drive. Alternative two, the Front and First avenues couplet scheme, the report concluded, was satisfactory given that 28.6 acres would be available for development and the costs of the plan would be low. They viewed alternative four—the long-term plan to build another Willamette River bridge in the corridor between the Marquam and Ross Island bridges while upgrading Interstate 5 and the Stadium Freeway—as the most desirable plan because it would create a viable riverfront park connected to downtown while solving future traffic problems.¹³

On January 8, 1971, the task force and advisory committee voted to proceed with steps to close Harbor Drive when the Fremont Bridge was completed, instead of waiting until all alternatives were considered and adopted. “You have to make a start,” Glenn Jackson explained, “If you just wait for an over-all program, you might never get it off the ground.” Members of the task force argued that to leave Harbor Drive open after the completion of the freeway loop was to invite traffic to establish itself on the riverfront highway as well as the Stadium Freeway and Fremont Bridge, making relocation more difficult. Richard Ivey, director of planning for CH₂M-Hill, agreed that there was nothing objectionable to the closure. The task force and

¹³ Ibid., “Harbor Drive Study,” DeLeuw, Cather & Company, 7, 17, 26-35, 38-40 (first quote, 34).

highway commission declared that it was prudent to allow ninety to 120 days for agencies such as the Multnomah County Planning Commission, the Portland Planning Commission, and the PIC to review and comment on DeLeuw, Cather's "Harbor Drive Study."¹⁴

Six days later, however, at the highway commission's public hearings, attended by a total of 146 people, the majority of testimony from both public officials and private individuals concurred with the elimination of Harbor Drive but demanded that the removal of the riverfront highway be postponed at least twelve to fifteen months. Significantly, Glenn Jackson did not attend the hearing. Lloyd Keefe argued that not only was 120 days too short a time to consider the "Harbor Drive Study," which would have ended on May 7, but that a conceptual plan for the downtown area would not be ready until May 1. "The development [of the riverfront and downtown] should be determined first," Keefe insisted, "and then the traffic rearrangements can be decided accordingly rather than the other way around." Meanwhile, some downtown real estate developers advised that the Front and First avenues couplet would adversely affect both the area south of the Hawthorne Bridge as well as the Skidmore Fountain neighborhood.¹⁵

¹⁴ "Harbor Drive Closure Proposal Due for Presentation to Public Hearing," *The Oregonian*, 13 January 1971, 16 (first quote). The task force voted unanimously in favor of the plan to close Harbor Drive as quickly as possible while the advisory committee had one dissenting vote. Transcript, Public Hearing on January 14, 1971 in Portland, Oregon State Highway Division, Bonner, personal files, 8.

¹⁵ Transcript, Public Hearing on January 14, 1971 in Portland, Oregon State Highway Division (first quote, 13); "Drive Closure Held 'Opening Move'," *The Oregon Journal*, 14 January 1971, 7; "Harbor Drive Talks Heated," *The Oregon Journal*, 15 January 1971, 7; "Highway Department Urged to Take it Slow," *The Oregonian*, 15 January 1971, 27.

The strongest objections at the hearings were raised by Robert Belcher, of the Riverfront for People Committee, AIA members Richard Norman and Roger Shiels, and City Club member David J. Lewis. Expressing frustration at their inability to be heard in the decision-making process, the dissidents argued that the couplet plan would simply replace the riverfront highway "...with a new Harbor Drive made up of Front and First." Meanwhile, Alex Pierce, an AIA architect and board member of the Portland Beautification Association, objected that since a decision had already been made by the commission, the hearing was a "sham." "I suggest that we go home," he declared. On the other hand, Albert E. Owen, representing Local No. 8 of the International Longshoreman's Union, argued against the proposed closure of Harbor Drive by asserting that it would adversely affect not only the 35,000 to 40,000 workers who relied on the riverfront highway, but also would hurt the Port of Portland's ability to keep costs low and compete with other harbors. Owen denounced the couplet idea because it would funnel "100-footlong, 3-tandem rigs" onto downtown streets, causing enormous safety problems. The couplet would create such a barrier between downtown and the park, he claimed, that few people other than "winos" would actually venture to the waterfront.¹⁶

¹⁶ Of the fourteen comment cards that were received at the meeting, two people rejected the idea to eliminate Harbor Drive. "We don't need this change," one card read, "It is a waste of tax payer's money." Transcript, Public Hearing on January 14, 1971 in Portland, Oregon State Highway Division (first quote, 22; second and third quotes, 38-9, fourth quote, 27, fifth quote, 28, sixth quote, 50); Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, 22 January 2004 ' "Dear Mayor Goldschmidt," Portland Beautification Association, 1 August 1975, Oregon Historical Society; "Portland architect charges city planning has become a capricious political mess," *The Oregonian*, 6 October 1968, Forum section, p. 8; Ibid.

In response to the public hearing, both the *Oregonian* and the *Oregon Journal* argued that more studies were needed before Harbor Drive was closed. In its editorial "No Rush on Closing Harbor Drive," the *Journal's* editors joined those who preferred that plans for the riverfront wait until the completion of the downtown plan. "It is far more important," they argued, "that the West Side waterfront be redeveloped right than that it be done fast." Meanwhile, despite Albert Owen's objection, the Port of Portland Commission voted on February 10 in support of the highway department plan on the condition that interchanges be built to funnel truck traffic from the northwest industrial area onto the Fremont Bridge and Stadium Freeway. Edward G. Westerdahl II, executive director of the port, declared that he had received "personal assurance" from Glenn Jackson that Harbor Drive would not be closed until adequate means for moving traffic to and from the industrial area had been worked out.¹⁷

Glenn Jackson now asked the city council to evaluate the highway commission's plan with respect to whether Harbor Drive should be vacated and what steps should be taken to handle traffic, given the closure. The council requested that Commissioner of Public Works Lloyd Anderson examine the recommendation and ask various agencies to comment on the matter. As urban historian Carl Abbott has explained in *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City* (1983), the council was

¹⁷ "SW Harbor Closing Supported," *The Oregonian*, 11 February 1971, 1 (first quote); "No Rush on Closing Harbor Drive," *The Oregon Journal*, 13 February 1971, 10 (second quote); "Harbor Drive Closure Now or Later?" *The Oregonian*, 21 January 1971, 30; "Harbor Drive: Close it Now or Wait for Downtown Plan," *The Oregonian*, 26 January 1971, 17.

undergoing dramatic changes in the late 1960s that signaled the end of the reigns of the politicians who had run the city for over a decade. This process, which began in October 1969 when Anderson was appointed to the city council after the death of William Bowes, continued in March 1970, as Connie McCready replaced Stanley Earl, becoming only the second woman to serve on the council. Both Anderson, who had previously been chief planner at CH₂M-Hill, and McCready, who had been a strong supporter of civil rights and environmental legislation during her two terms as a Republican state legislator, were in their forties and were newcomers to city politics. In November 1970, twenty-nine year-old Neil Goldschmidt was elected to fill the seat vacated by Buck Grayson and young businessperson Tom Walsh barely lost to the established Frank Ivancie. The new members on the council represented an altered political landscape based on demographic changes, wherein the percentage of people aged fifteen to thirty-four in Portland had increased from 22 percent to 29.5 percent between 1960 and 1970.¹⁸

Three months later, on May 5, Commissioner Anderson submitted his report recommending that the city council, Multnomah County, and the highway commission pass a resolution agreeing that Harbor Drive be closed.

¹⁸ In the race for city commissioner, some conservative supporters of Frank Ivancie derogatorily referred to Tom Walsh as "King of the Hippies." Meanwhile, many young people were angered by Ivancie's tough stand against anti-war demonstrators utilizing the South Park Blocks to protest President Richard Nixon's invasion of Cambodia. Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 174-176 (first quote, 174; Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, 22 January 2004; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 389-91, 477, 483; "'Radical' pushed for model city," *The Arizona Republic*, 23 February 2003, www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic [accessed September 13, 2003]; "Seizure Takes Life of William Bowes," *The Oregonian*, 19 October 1969, 1; "Wm. Bowes Dies At Home," *The Oregonian*, 19 October 1969, 31; "City Council To Appoint Successor To Fill Out Term Of William Bowes," *The Oregonian*, 19 October 1969, 31; "Ex-Mayor Connie McCready dies," *The Oregonian*, 23 December 2000, 1.

Before the closure could take place, however, Anderson argued that the council must adopt a detailed development plan for the riverfront area, approve a plan for a revised Front Avenue, and make an agreement with Tri-Met for better bus circulation for the downtown area. The Tri-County Metropolitan Transportation District had been created in October 1969 by the Oregon legislature to take over the troubled Rose City Transit Company. The commissioner, in addition, insisted that the highway commission ensure an access route between the Fremont Bridge and the northwest industrial area, as well as construct two park-and-ride facilities adjacent to Interstate 205, which bisected eastern Multnomah County. Anderson said it would be possible to close Harbor Drive once the council completed its obligations by July 1973 and once the state fulfilled its commitments. Even though many Portland officials were opposed to the elimination of Harbor Drive, Anderson argued, their opinions should be balanced against the long-term advantages to be gained from such a policy.¹⁹

¹⁹ Of those opposed to the State Highway Commission's plan, which included the city engineer, the fire bureau, and the bureau of police, traffic engineer D.E. Bergstrom offered the most adamant rejection. He argued that the closure would result in "serious" traffic congestion and delays resulting in "severe" criticism of both the city and the state. Bergstrom declared the benefits from a redeveloped waterfront area would be "overshadowed and outweighed by the liabilities" caused by the closure. In his argument against the highway commission's plan, Benjamin Bullwinkle, businessperson and frequent user of Harbor Drive, insisted not only would the closure cause traffic delays, but, that a riverfront park would only benefit the "itinerant alcoholics, drifters, and hippies." Instead of the closure, Bullwinkle explained, additional pedestrian overpass bridges should be built to "'get the girls to the sailors.'" Traffic Engineer to Public Works, 19 March 1971, City of Portland Archives (first, second, and third quotes); Benjamin B. Bullwinkle to Mayor Terry Schrunk, 21 February 1971, City of Portland Archives (fourth and fifth quotes); Richard Wise to Mayor Terry Schrunk, 18 March 1971, City of Portland Archives; James H. Riopelle, Chief, Bureau of Fire to Commissioner Lloyd E. Anderson, 19 March 1971, City of Portland Archives; Donald I. McNamera, Chief of Police to City Engineer, 17 March 1971, City of Portland Archives; R.E. Hatchard, Program Director, Columbia-Willamette Air Pollution Authority to Commissioner Lloyd E. Anderson, 19 March 1971, City of Portland Archives; H. Kenneth Anderson, Chief

Eight days later, on May 13, the city council unanimously accepted Anderson's report. It also scheduled a joint public hearing with the highway commission for June 18 to discuss the proposal. The following Wednesday, the council passed an ordinance authorizing expenditure of \$500,000 in federal grant money to purchase right-of-way land along Harbor Drive from the state. In return for the federal aid, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) garnered a lien on the property, committing the land for park purposes only. In its editorial "Future of the Waterfront," the *Oregon Journal* again argued that the city council was moving too quickly in deciding the fate of the riverfront. The newspaper's editors insisted that no decision be made without the guidelines from the comprehensive downtown study due to be completed in 1972.²⁰

Two days before its second scheduled public hearing, the highway commission cited "public opposition" to the couplet plan and announced a new proposal that called for the closure of Harbor Drive by 1973 and the use of Front Avenue to handle both southbound and northbound traffic. The

Engineer to Commissioner Lloyd E. Anderson, 15 March 1971, City of Portland Archives; Lloyd E. Anderson to City Council (draft), 29 April 1971, City of Portland Archives; Lloyd E. Anderson to City Council, 5 May 1971, City of Portland Archives; Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, 22 January 2004; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 216-217, 253; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 378-79, 384; "Closure of Harbor Drive Considered by City Council," *The Oregonian*, 8 May 1971, sec. II, p. 7; "Waterfront Program Proposed," *The Oregon Journal*, 8 May 1971, 2.

²⁰ "Harbor Drive Report Given City Council," *The Oregonian*, 14 May 1971, 46; "Council 'Accepts' Harbor Drive Plan," *The Oregon Journal*, 14 May 1971, 3; "Harbor Drive Project Aided," *The Oregonian*, 20 May 1971, 35; "City Asks Financing For Waterfront Job," *The Oregon Journal*, 20 May 1971, 27; "Future of the Waterfront," *The Oregon Journal*, 29 May 1971, 10. In May, three inches of sawdust was placed on the site of the old *Journal* Building in preparation for the Rose Festival. After the festival, the sawdust was plowed into the dirt expanse and grass was planted. "Desolate Expanse Will Bloom Next Month," *The Oregon Journal*, 8 May 1971, 3.

commission now proposed to make Front Avenue more pedestrian-friendly by adding traffic lights at busy intersections, providing walkway crossings to the waterfront, and by mandating reduced vehicular speeds. The cost of the new plan, mainly consisting of the construction of off-ramps to the north and south of the closure area, was estimated to be \$750,000, \$1.75 million less than the couplet idea.²¹

The public hearing on June 18 produced generous support for the new plan. Roger Shiels, reading a statement representing the City Club, suggested that the proposal was “consistent with the goals outlined in the City Club’s interim report” and urged the city council to adopt it. Meanwhile, Robert Belcher, of the Riverfront for People Committee, insisted that, while he approved of the plan, he wanted a “definite date” for the closure of Harbor Drive. Businessperson and public transportation advocate Ray Polani argued it was “encouraging” that the highway commission had listened to the overwhelming testimony against the couplet idea and responded with new plans. “I feel that we have definitely moved in the right direction,” Polani stated, “I feel that this should be very heartwarming for the younger people in our society.”²²

²¹ “Closure of Street to Wait Until ‘73,” *The Oregonian*, 19 June 1971, 9 (first quote); “Summary of Draft Environmental Impact Statement: Closure of Harbor Drive Pacific Hwy. West (US 99W) Portland,” Oregon State Highway Division: Program & Planning Section, 2 June 1971, City of Portland Archives; “New Proposal on Closure of Harbor Drive Offered,” *The Oregon Journal*, 16 June 1971, 3; “Hearing on Harbor Plan Set,” *The Oregon Journal*, 17 June 1971, 4.

²² Born in Trieste, Italy, Ray Polani, chair of the Citizens for Better Transit, believed that Europe’s excellent public transportation system could be replicated in Portland. Transcript, Public Hearing on June 18, 1971 in Portland, Oregon State Highway Division, Bonner, personal files (first quote, 28, third quote, 34); Transcript, Public Hearing on January 14, 1971 in Portland, Oregon State Highway Division (second quote, 38); Robert Belcher, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 24 March 2003; Roger Shiels, interview by

Of those opposed to the highway commission's proposal, some supported the removal of Harbor Drive but demanded more radical plans in dealing with automobile traffic. Portland State University Professor Sam Oakland of the Bicycle Lobby, for example, argued that automobiles, with the exception of delivery trucks, should be removed from the downtown area entirely. "I'm tired of seeing the same old tired designs coming from the same old tired designers," he declared. Alex Pierce, who had referred to the January public hearing as a "sham," objected that traffic on Front Avenue separated the waterfront from downtown and prevented pedestrian access to the riverfront. He added that attending meetings of the highway department was like "buying a cheap suit."²³

In its editorial "The Waterfront and People," the *Oregon Journal* argued that although the removal of Harbor Drive was going to be "painful" and "costly," Portlanders were "paying for our past sins in locking up the waterfront with highway and industrial development." The editors supported any and all moves to reclaim the riverfront for "beauty and recreation." Reversing past policy, the *Journal* commended the inclusive decision-making process of the highway commission and city council, which it described as a "fascinating study in democracy at work."²⁴

Michael Jenner, 22 January 2004 ; "Accord Seen on Harbor Drive Closure," *The Oregon Journal*, 19 June 1971, 7; "Mass transit advocate to keep 'riding' Tri-Met board," *The Oregonian*, 12 September 1983, p. B1.

²³ Transcript, Public Hearing on June 18, 1971 in Portland, Oregon State Highway Division (first quote, 28-29, third quote, 34 and fourth quote, 35); Transcript, Public Hearing on January 14, 1971 in Portland, Oregon State Highway Division (second quote, 38).

²⁴ "The Waterfront and People," *The Oregon Journal*, 23 June 1971, 18.

On September 23, the city council unanimously adopted Commissioner Anderson's resolution declaring its "desire and intent" to close Harbor Drive no later than July 1973. Earlier in the month, however, Glenn Jackson had attempted to persuade the council to adopt a plan to close the riverfront highway in November 1972, to coincide with the scheduled completion of the Fremont Bridge, instead of awaiting detailed industrial freeway plans and commitments from Tri-Met. "This Harbor Drive idea has been around for a long time," Jackson stated, "and I'd like to live to see it finished." In late November, nonetheless, the highway commission adopted Commissioner Anderson's resolution.²⁵

In an interview with former city planning director Ernie Bonner, Lloyd Anderson explained that his far-reaching ordinance would not have been possible without Governor Tom McCall's support. "If the governor had opposed [the closure]," he insisted, "then introducing an ordinance and having the city council close a state highway right through the middle of the city that carried 40,000 cars a day was not at all possible." In addition, both Richard Ivey and Richard Brainard, members of the CH₂M-Hill team that helped develop the "Downtown Plan," stated that McCall was the major impetus behind the highway commission's decision to close the riverfront

²⁵ "Harbor Drive Closure Sought By July 1973," *The Oregon Journal*, 24 September 1971, 6 (first quote); "City May Close Harbor Drive Early," *The Oregon Journal*, 1 September 1971, 3 (second quote); "Council OKs SW Harbor Closure Date," *The Oregonian*, 24 September 1971, 1; "Freeway to Decide," *The Oregonian*, 27 September 1971, 18; "Construction Stipulations: Steel Bridge - Sheridan St Sec. (Harbor Drive), Pacific Highway West, No. 1W," Oregon State Highway Division, 4 October 1972, Bonner, personal files; "Closure OKd for Street," *The Oregon Journal*, 3 November 1971, 1; "State OKs Harbor Drive Plan," *The Oregon Journal*, 24 November 1971, 1.

highway. “[Jackson] was basically closing it for his boss,” Ivey declared, “He threw up his hands and he said, ‘I’m just trying to help the governor.’”²⁶

A week after it adopted Anderson’s resolution, the city council hired the consulting team of Portland architectural firm Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca (WZGF); San Francisco landscape architectural firm Royston, Hanamoto, Beck & Abbey; and San Francisco economic consultants Larry Smith and Co. to develop a comprehensive plan for the waterfront area before Harbor Drive was closed. The study was projected at \$120,000, with the city paying \$72,000 and the state the remainder, and was set to begin in early 1972 to coincide with the basic concepts of the downtown plan. “What’s exciting,” architect Robert J. Frasca stated, “is there is some resemblance of reality to it. With a little bit of luck, we could pull off something no one else in the country has done.” The council instructed the consultants to develop a plan that was “as economically self-sufficient as possible.” Financing for the area, they stated, was to be generated from private development on the riverfront rather than from city coffers. Larry Smith & Co. were directed to use “extensive market studies” to explore the “amount and type” of private development that might be encouraged on the waterfront property.²⁷

²⁶ “Waterfront Park Video Script,” Ernest Bonner, 7 July 2002, Bonner, personal files, 78-9 (first quote); Richard Ivey, interview by Ernest Bonner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 13 January 1995, www.pdxplan.org [accessed October 30, 2002] (second quote); Richard Brainard, interview by Ernest Bonner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., www.pdxplan.org [accessed October 30, 2002].

²⁷ “Private Consultants, City Officials Meet to Lay Waterfront Plans,” *The Oregonian*, 2 November 1971, 4 (first quote); Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, “Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park,” 41 (second, third and fourth quotes); “City Names Design Firm,” *The Oregonian*, 1 October 1971, 38; “City OKs Riverfront Study Plan,” *The Oregon Journal*, 23 December 1971, 11; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca & Ritter to Harbor Drive Parkway Task Force, 19 August 1971, Bonner, personal files.

Seven months later, in April 1972, the Portland Development Commission (PDC) submitted Phase I of the Waterfront Study, which established the basic design and financing strategies for the creation of the park. They stated that preliminary estimates indicated that “substantial” private development on the riverfront would be needed in order for the park to be self-sufficient. This, however, the PDC concluded, was contrary to community goals and to the guidelines of the downtown plan. They advised, therefore, that the waterfront area and downtown core be designated for urban renewal, making tax increment financing available for public improvements. The PDC further recommended that the City Charter be amended by a vote of the electorate to eliminate existing limits on permissible amounts of tax increment financing. This, they stated, was “essential” in maximizing the potential for revitalization of the waterfront area.²⁸

While the work for the Phase II Study was suspended by the city in order to study and implement the urban renewal plan, the political climate at city hall continued to change. In May 1972, Neil Goldschmidt defeated retired industrialist Bill DeWeese to become the youngest mayor in Portland’s history. Even though DeWeese outspent Goldschmidt two-to-one in the most expensive primary in city history, the younger candidate won 460 of 500 precincts as well as over 57% of the total vote. Goldschmidt had not only

²⁸ Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, “Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park,” 41; Portland Parks and Recreation, “Waterfront Park: An Assessment of Conditions and Issues,” April 2001, 20; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, Portland, Oregon & Royston, Hanamoto, Beck & Abey, San Francisco, California, “Appendix to Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park, City of Portland, Oregon,” August 1975, Multnomah County Library, Appendixes L, M.

become the council's president in 1971, but had been serving as acting mayor since Terry Schrunk's heart attack a month prior to the election. Goldschmidt's political allies, commissioners Anderson and McCready, also won decisive victories in the May primary. For proponents of a viable park on the waterfront, the victories of Goldschmidt, Anderson, and McCready represented a significant step forward.²⁹

Two months later, in early July, the State Highway Commission released its environmental impact study for the closure of Harbor Drive. George Baldwin, state highway administrator, argued that the closure of the riverfront highway would not solve all of the anticipated city-wide traffic problems but that both short-term and long-term inconveniences "must be accepted" in the name of progress. Two projected problems, the report stated, were a downgrade in the overall air quality in the downtown area and an increase in the noise level, due to slowed traffic on Front Avenue. Baldwin emphasized that the closure could be reversed or modified anytime the public wanted but that development of the area would make this more difficult. Contrary to the highway commission's report, however, the Portland

²⁹ After Neil Goldschmidt resigned in 1979 to become secretary of transportation in the Carter administration, Commissioner Connie McCready was appointed mayor, becoming only the second woman to have held the position. McCready, however, lost the 1980 mayoral election to Commissioner Frank Ivancie. Ivancie lost his 1984 re-election bid to newcomer "Bud" Clark. As the *Willamette Week* noted, "History belongs to those who adapt. The times changed. Ivancie did not." Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 395-96, 411-16, 428-30, 475, 477, 479, 483 (first quote, 430); Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 174-176, 180-81; Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, 22 January 2004; "Goldschmidt Takes Mayor Race Easily," *The Oregon Journal*, 24 May 1972, 1; "Mayor, Council Members Chosen," *The Oregon Journal*, 8 November 1972, 5. Stan Terry, the Portland businessman who had argued in 1969 to keep the old *Journal* building open to be utilized as a municipal office and parking structure, finished second to Anderson in the primary election garnering 13.8% of the vote. "Goldschmidt Takes Top City Post," *The Oregonian*, 24 May 1972, 1.

Chamber of Commerce publicly urged the city council not to close Harbor Drive. In October 1972, the chamber requested that the cut-and-cover plan be further investigated as a means of creating a waterfront park while keeping carbon monoxide levels down.³⁰

Four days before Neil Goldschmidt was sworn in as mayor, the city council in December 1972 adopted the “remarkable” “Portland Downtown Plan,” which outlined its previously stated goals and policies for land use, transportation, and the general environment in the downtown area. The report was significantly influenced by a Citizens’ Advisory Committee (CAC), which had been created in May 1971. The CAC, which was chaired by lawyer and Irvington neighborhood worker Dean Gisvold, not only established its independence from both the PIC and CH₂M-Hill, but also created a list of fundamental downtown goals, including making the area pedestrian friendly. The committee had met once a week from June 1971 through February 1972 and its members gathered input from more than a thousand Portlanders. In February 1972, the CAC presented its set of “moral principles” to the city council. City planners and CH₂M-Hill then worked together to develop the

³⁰ “Impact Study Made on Drive Closure,” *The Oregon Journal*, 11 July 1972, 11 (first quote); “Chamber Criticizes Harbor Drive Plan,” *The Oregonian*, 6 October 1972, 22. On October 31, 1972, the state approved Ordinance No. 135362, which authorized an agreement between Portland and the highway commission to close Harbor Drive and reroute Pacific Highway West along Front Avenue. “Maintenance Stipulations, Steel Bridge – Sheridan Street Section (Front Avenue), Pacific Highway West, No. 1W,” Oregon State Highway Division, 31 October 1972, Bonner, personal files.

ideas into specific proposals. The "Downtown Plan" contained "a clear strategy [and] a new vision of downtown" as a "people place."³¹

The plan described downtown as a "multifunctional district" that emphasized a variety of activities. It organized the area into twenty-one overlapping districts in an attempt to give downtown "a sense of order and identity." San Francisco's exciting and unique downtown was a major influence on the report. The key to the plan was the Transit Mall, which allowed buses to be the dominant form of transportation along the office corridor—Fifth and Sixth Streets—in order to speed-up bus service as well as encourage the use of public transportation. Between September 1971 and January 1972, the concepts of the Transit Mall were approved by Tri-Met, the planning commission, and the city council. The plan also called for the building of two parking garages with room for 1,300 cars near the retail core.³²

With regard to the riverfront, the "Downtown Plan" contained specific goals, including the creation of a park with "unique activities through which

³¹ Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 208-209, 215, 217-223, 253 (first quote 215, second quote, 219, third quote, 220, fourth quote, 208); Carl Abbott, "Five Strategies for Downtown: Policy Discourse and Downtown Planning since 1943," *Journal of Policy History*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 1993, in *Planning the Twentieth-Century American City*, ed. Mary Corbin Sies and Christopher Silver (The Johns Hopkins University Press: Baltimore and London, 1996), 7, 14-15; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 393-95, 401; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 20; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 40; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Appendix to Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," Appendixes J, K; "Planning Guidelines: Portland Downtown Plan," Portland City Planning Commission, 9 February 1972, Multnomah County Library; "Planning Guidelines/ Portland Downtown Plan," Portland Citizens' Advisory Committee, December 1972, Multnomah County Library; "Waterfront for People," Portland Planning Bureau, 16 August 1974, City of Portland Archives; Ernest Bonner, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 28 April 2003; Ernest Bonner, "Portland: The Problems and Promise of Growth," in *Personality, Politics, and Planning*, ed. Anthony James Catanese and W. Paul Farmer (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage Publications, 1978), 157; Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, 22 January 2004.

³² Ibid; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 209 (first quote), 222 (second quote); Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 394-95, 401, 408.

city life can be enhanced." The waterfront, the scheme detailed, was to provide an open space, fully integrated with adjoining areas, that would offer a contrast to the "formal character of downtown" and act as a "magnet" to create a "community focus." In its immediate goals for the riverfront, the report declared not only should public use of the area be encouraged as soon as Harbor Drive was closed, but that citizen involvement be emphasized in the planning process. In order to "recapture the beauty and drama of the Willamette," the plan emphasized activities that would take advantage of the river as well as reducing its pollution. In its long-range goals for the area, the plan stated that ample open space should be maintained, and "good physical and visual access" should be developed in the park itself as well as in the downtown area near the waterfront. To accomplish these goals, the report insisted that the area be "pedestrian-oriented," for "mingling and communicating," and be served by public mass transit.³³

Along with the dramatic changes in city hall and citizen involvement in the "downtown revolution," the growth of neighborhood associations in every section of Portland in the late 1960s and early 1970s greatly altered the planning process. As Carl Abbott has detailed, during the 1950s and 1960s, professional planners made critical decisions affecting neighborhoods with little regard to the opinions of the residents living there. The prevailing belief

³³ Ibid., "Planning Guidelines/ Portland Downtown Plan," Portland Citizens' Advisory Committee, 9-11 (first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth quotes); Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 394; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan, Portland, Oregon," 2003, Multnomah County Library, 17; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Appendix to Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," Appendixes J, K; Galbreath to Hunt, 5 May 1977, Bonner, personal files, 2.

among city officials was that the inner ring of residential neighborhoods was in an inevitable process of decline and hence, could not be saved. By the late 1960s, however, angry local residents created neighborhood associations that not only demanded a voice in the decision making process but also argued their areas could be revitalized. By the early 1970s, the neighborhood movement had a powerful influence on the city.³⁴

Arguably, the greatest victory for neighborhood associations was the cancellation of the Mt. Hood Freeway. Since the early 1960s, the construction of a freeway parallel to southeast Division and Powell streets had been planned to link downtown with Interstate-205 in eastern Multnomah County. Increasingly, however, neighborhood associations in the late 1960s, especially in southeast Portland, began questioning the logic of building a highway that would displace 1,750 households as well as numerous schools. By the early 1970s, a grassroots movement opposed to the freeway was barraging city hall with complaints. In 1974, the city council, with Commissioner Frank Ivancie in opposition, voted four-to-one to cancel plans for the freeway. Led by Mayor Goldschmidt, a staunch supporter of the neighborhood movement, the council diverted funds from the freeway to develop Portland's light-rail system (MAX). The following year, Governor Bob Straub formally withdrew the Mt. Hood Freeway from the interstate highway system.³⁵

³⁴ Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 182-206 (first quote, 208); Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 393.

³⁵ Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 196-197, 255-257; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 383, 385, 405-06; "Freeway Foes Ask 2nd Meet," *The Oregon Journal*, 21 August 1969, 6.

Like Portland, other major cities in the United States were shifting away from exclusivity in planning in the late 1960s and 1970s and moving towards a more representative process. In *Twentieth-Century Richmond: Planning, Politics, and Race* (1984), urban historian Christopher Silver examined the rise to power of the long-neglected African American community in Richmond, Virginia during this period. In the 1950s and 1960s, city officials had engaged in a strategy of downtown growth and city expansion as a means of fending off Richmond's decline. The "progressives," who sought to promote the city's progress through planning and economic development, initiated urban renewal projects. Their goal was to make the downtown area more attractive but the result was to destroy the inner city, predominately black, neighborhoods. Ironically, as Silver detailed, projects such as the construction of the Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike actually furthered the decentralization process it was seeking to combat. Dislocated African Americans moved into predominately white neighborhoods, which in turn increased white flight to the suburbs. By the 1960s, white city officials desperately sought to annex adjacent counties as a means of increasing the white population and stemming the rising tide of black influence.³⁶

During the 1970s, Richmond dismantled its federal urban renewal program and witnessed increasing influence by ordinary citizens in city planning decisions, most notably in the battles over the Fulton neighborhood

³⁶ Christopher Silver, *Twentieth-Century Richmond: Planning, Politics, and Race* (University of Tennessee Press/Knoxville, 1984), 13-14, 210-255; Abbott, "Five Strategies for Downtown," 5, 10, 11, 18.

and Washington Park. Richmond's leaders began to emphasize neighborhood conservation as a means of curbing suburban flight. In 1977, Richmonders elected their first African American majority to the city council. Even though these changes in city hall did not bring about a radical shift in planning policy, they resulted in more sensitivity to the needs of low-income neighborhoods. For example, the new council invested nearly \$3 million in the Jackson Ward area, the historic center of the black population. Richmond also planned in the late 1970s to make improvements to its riverfront as well as to improve pedestrian circulation in the downtown area.³⁷

Another American city that shifted towards a more inclusive planning process and emphasized a functional downtown was Omaha, Nebraska. In *The Changing Image of the City: Planning for Downtown Omaha, 1945-1973* (1992), urban historian Janet Daly-Bednarek suggested that Omaha's officials reevaluated their city planning based on economic changes that had been taking place since the 1950s. Nebraska's largest city had shifted from being predominately blue-collar—"the livestock and meatpacking center of the nation"—to emphasizing white-collar sectors, including the insurance and service industries. Daly-Bednarek utilized the two major city plans of the 1950s and 1960s, the "Omaha Plan" of 1956 and the *Central Omaha Plan* (1966), to explain that not only had civic leaders ignored the already changing economy, but they also had relied almost entirely on the private sector to initiate proposed changes. Both plans emphasized the continued reliance on

³⁷ Ibid., 311-320

traditional industries and infrastructure improvements to combat the trend of the declining downtown. City officials believed that if the downtown area was accessible and cleaned up it would once again perform the dominant role it had played in the past.³⁸

The collapse of the meatpacking industry in the late 1960s, however, led city leaders to emphasize beautification and quality of life factors in city planning to address the new dominance of white-collar industries in Omaha's economy. Like Portland, Omaha's City Hall was undergoing dramatic changes in the late 1960s and early 1970s, ushering in a new generation of politicians who had fresh ideas regarding city planning. Eugene Leahy, Omaha's mayor from 1969 to 1973, not only increased the role of the public sector in city planning decisions, but championed a scheme to restructure the downtown area as a business and cultural center. The Central Business District Plan of 1973 differed from previous post-war strategies in that it emphasized input from a citizens advisory committee as well as from professional planners. The key element of the plan was the Central Park Mall, a "massive" area of greenery and water in the downtown area.³⁹

In May 1974, Portland moved forward with its own downtown revitalization plan. That month, the highway commission officially closed Harbor Drive between the Hawthorne and Steel bridges. Southbound lanes were closed on May 23 and northbound lanes were closed the day after. In its

³⁸ Janet Daly-Bednarek, *The Changing Image of the City: Planning for Downtown Omaha, 1945-1973* (University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln & London, 1992), 1-40, 127-148, 164-173, 185-186, 227-230; Abbott, "Five Strategies for Downtown," 14.

³⁹ Daly-Bednarek, *The Changing Image of the City*, 231 (first quote), 187-225, 227, 230-231; Abbott, "Five Strategies for Downtown," 14.

editorial "Blacktop to Green," the *Oregonian* celebrated the end of the forty-one year-old highway, arguing that the vision of a waterfront park overshadowed the short-term traffic problems produced by the closure. Harbor Drive had served its purpose well, the newspaper's editors insisted, "but this is a new era in which greenery and open space are valued over the exhaust-filled lanes of macadam and concrete." The *Oregonian* argued that easy pedestrian access from the downtown core and riverfront attractions needed to be provided to make the park viable. "The people have recaptured the river in downtown Portland after more than a century," the editors declared, "Let's never let it go." In June, while the section between S.W. Columbia and Clay streets was being torn up to allow the city a head start on the development of a waterfront park, tents were placed along the route for the annual Rose Festival.⁴⁰

That November, Portlanders voted to remove the City Charter debt limit on tax increment financing, opening the way to greatly enhance the ability to build an open green space on the waterfront without "substantial private development." A year-and-a-half prior, in April 1973, the city council

⁴⁰ City historian Jewel Lansing has noted it was ironic that Harbor Drive (1942–1974) kept the valuable downtown waterfront property in the public domain enabling the creation of Waterfront Park in the 1970s. "Harbor Drive Closing Set," *The Oregon Journal*, 9 May 1974, 11 (first quote); "Blacktop to Green," *The Oregonian*, 24 May 1974, 38 (second and third quotes); "Urban Renewal Plan for the Downtown Waterfront Urban Renewal Project," City of Portland Development Commission, 25 April 1974, Multnomah County Library; R.N. Bothman to Connie McCreedy, 30 May 1975, Bonner, personal files; Galbreath to Hunt, 5 May 1977, 2, Bonner, personal files; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 224; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 405–07; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 17; "Asphalt Strip to Disappear From Portland Riverfront," *The Oregonian*, 23 May 1974, sec. II, p. 29; "For You a Park in Portland Grows," *The Oregon Journal*, 9 May 1974, 11; "Reclaimed Waterfront in Sight," *The Oregon Journal*, 21 May 1974, 12; "Old Freeway Torn Up," *The Oregon Journal*, 6 June 1974, 1.

had followed the recommendations of the "Phase One" report by instructing the Portland Development Commission to prepare the necessary documents for a Waterfront Urban Renewal Area and retained the prestigious planning firm of Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill to help develop the plan. A year later, in April 1974, the city council approved an urban renewal designation for the area adjacent to the riverfront. The vote ended the two-year delay on planning for the area as the Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership and Royston, Hanamoto, Beck, & Abey resumed their studies.⁴¹

As the year 1974 came to a close, city traffic engineer D. E. Bergstrom submitted the "Harbor Drive—'Before' and 'After' Traffic Study." Bergstrom stated that with regard to volume and travel time in the downtown area, only Front Avenue exhibited any noticeable change. While the traffic volume on the avenue had nearly doubled, an increase in automobile speed had caused a decrease in travel time. Prior to the riverfront highway closure there had been approximately 1,400 trucks on Harbor Drive and 600 trucks on Front Avenue per twenty-four hour period. This level, however, had been decreased to 1,500 in the combined corridor following the closure. As traffic engineer Richard Brainard recounted, the closure of the riverfront highway did not cause the traffic chaos some had predicted. "Once Harbor Drive was closed, the next

⁴¹ Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 4, 40-41 (first quote, 41); "Urban Renewal Plan for the Downtown Waterfront Urban Renewal Project," City of Portland Development Commission; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 17; idem, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 20; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 224; Galbreath to Hunt, 5 May 1977, 2, Bonner, personal files.

day the traffic disappeared," he stated, "There was no traffic jam. Nobody could figure out where the traffic went."⁴²

Between 1970 and 1974, proponents of a waterfront park won a series of important victories. The radical decision in 1970 to remove Harbor Drive not only opened up the possibility of redeveloping the land as a park, but also provided an opportunity to reorganize the downtown area. Importantly, the highway commission listened to the negative testimony at the public hearing on January 14, 1971 and responded with both a new plan that rejected the Front and First avenues couplet and accepted Commissioner Anderson's proposal to delay the closure of Harbor Drive until planning for the area could be completed. Facilitated by the ascension to power of a younger generation of city officials, Portland moved dramatically toward approval of the "Downtown Plan" and an increase in tax increment financing. By 1974, the question was not whether there should be a park along the riverfront, but what the park was to look like.

⁴² Richard Brainard, interview by Ernest Bonner (first quote); "Harbor Drive—'Before' and 'After' Traffic Study," D. E. Bergstrom, Traffic Engineer, 9 December 1974, Bonner, personal files.

CHAPTER V

THE CREATION AND UTILIZATION OF TOM McCALL WATERFRONT PARK

As 1975 began, the consulting firms Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership of Portland and Royston, Hanamoto, Beck & Abey of San Francisco completed their public reviews of the waterfront park plan alternatives, which had begun the prior September, and moved closer to submitting their recommendations to the city. A year prior, in February 1974, the firms had resumed work on Phase II of the Waterfront Study, which focused on design options and an implementation strategy, after a two-year delay. When the Portland City Council approved the urban renewal designation for the riverfront area in April 1974, it ensured sufficient funding for the creation of a viable park. The firms were given seven guidelines by the city to consider as they developed their plan: create places to “observe river activities,” establish a “pedestrian promenade,” supply places for “large public gatherings,” develop “waterfront oriented shops and restaurants” in the adjoining areas of the park, encourage activities on the river such as “public boat tours,” design “visual and physical ties” linking the park with downtown, and produce “attractive pedestrian spaces.”¹

¹ Portland Parks and Recreation, “Waterfront Park: An Assessment of Conditions and Issues,” April 2001, 21 (first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth quotes); Wolff

With these guidelines, the consultants prepared three separate development schemes for the park, intending to draw out ideas to help finalize the ultimate plan. In scheme one, the park would consist primarily of open space, with areas of commercial activity located at the bridgeheads. In scheme two, the riverfront would include community facilities such as a theater and/or an exhibition hall, surrounded by some large open areas. In scheme three, the park would become a commercial activity center based on Ghiardelli Square in San Francisco and Tivoli Garden in Copenhagen, with open areas as well. After presentations to the city council, planning agencies, and citizens groups, including the Citizens' Advisory Committee, the consultants concluded that the "majority sentiment" favored the scheme having the most open space, scheme one.²

From June 1974 through January 1975, city officials and the consultants engaged in a review process to encourage community input regarding preliminary concepts for Waterfront Park. This process of citizen participation originated with and was carried forward by the "Downtown Plan" of 1972, which detailed the organization and uses of the downtown area and the riverfront. According to the consultants, the process of citizen involvement was not only "experimental" but was a "pioneering effort at including direct public participation in the planning of a major public facility." The

Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, Portland, Oregon & Royston, Hanamoto, Beck & Abey, San Francisco, California, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park, City of Portland, Oregon," August 1975, Multnomah County Library, 5, 40, 42.

² Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 42-44 (first quote, 42).

“aggressive” strategy of citizen input, which produced several thousand individual responses, was pursued through a variety of techniques, including public meetings, extensive questionnaires, a booth at the annual Rose Festival, and two all-day fairs and workshops (Waterfront Sunday in September and Son of Waterfront Sunday in October). Input from groups, individuals, public agencies, and each member of the city council was also gathered. According to the consultants, the responses produced a coherent vision of a park with activity areas within open natural spaces.³

The seven-month review process produced six conclusions for Waterfront Park and formed the basis on which the consultants designed their final report. While there was almost unanimous agreement that the riverfront should indeed be utilized as a park, some respondents favored the commercial activity plan over the open space scheme as a means of drawing people to the riverfront. Secondly, the consultants had originally recommended landscaping that included “extensive mounds, beams and dense plantings,” but this was rejected for several reasons. For one, the police bureau noted that such extensive growth, while lessening traffic noise, would have increased the incidences of concealed violence and would have made surveillance difficult. Furthermore, it was noted that such landscaping would have been too expensive to maintain and would have limited the uses to which the park could be put. The consultants explained that the third conclusion—a partial

³ Ibid., 45 (first, second, and third quotes); Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, Portland, Oregon & Royston, Hanamoto, Beck & Abey, San Francisco, California, “Appendix to Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park, City of Portland, Oregon,” August 1975, Multnomah County Library, Appendixes F, G, H, I.

removal of the seawall—was quite controversial. While many felt the removal was essential to achieve “visual access” to the river, an equal number felt that it would not be worth the risk in the case of flooding.⁴

A fourth conclusion gleaned by the consultants was that while the majority of responses favored some sort of park activities, including some commercial use, leaving the area flexible was essential as well. Fifthly, the area south of the Hawthorne Bridge was a much-discussed issue among respondents. The consultants had originally proposed the creation of an amphitheater but this plan received some negative feedback. Several people questioned the scheme for a variety of reasons: Portland already had similar facilities, traffic noise would limit the optimum use of the area, and the plan would require some modifications to street patterns. The majority of responses, however, favored upgrading the existing marina. Finally, the consultants noted additional concerns that were raised: fire protection, construction and maintenance costs, water safety, and impact on the skid road population. They recommended further study of these issues.⁵

On August 28, 1975, the city council adopted Resolution No. 31595, which provided detailed guidelines for the design and development of Waterfront Park. The consultants had completed and submitted their findings to the city two months prior. During July and early August, city officials had held public reviews and hearings to consider the consultants’

⁴ Ibid., Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, “Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park,” 46 (first and second quotes, 46).

⁵ Ibid., Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, “Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park,” 46-47.

recommendations. Five days after the Portland Development Commission (PDC) had passed a motion endorsing the findings, the Portland Planning Commission had determined on August 5 that the recommendations were consistent with the previously stated goals of the "Downtown Plan" and it endorsed the council's adoption.⁶

Resolution No. 31595 detailed six policies for the creation of the park. The riverfront was to be designed for both "activity centers" as well as "generous, unstructured...open grass 'meadows'." Secondly, the park was to be fully integrated with the downtown area by converting Front Avenue into a "tree-lined boulevard." Thirdly, the consultants' recommendations emphasized physical and visual water contact through removal of the solid balustrade on the seawall, addition of fountains and pools, and creation of water-related development opportunities at the north and south ends of the park. Fourthly, the resolution specified that while the Rose Festival was to be accommodated, open grass areas would be emphasized. The fifth policy said the park should be a place for pedestrians and bicyclists—not for cars—and that public transportation would be provided to and from the riverfront. The city council, not the consultants, added the sixth policy to the resolution, which specified that "low or easy maintenance and operation of improvements shall be the primary consideration" to park planning. In addition, no improvements would be made without assurance that the funds

⁶ Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 7-12; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 21; Carl Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth in a Twentieth-Century City* (University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln and London, 1983), 224-225.

would be available. The resolution also contained a section on procedures for future plans for the park. In the first procedure, the plan stated that any changes or additions to the park would have to fit within the six adopted policies. The second procedure directed the development commission to implement plans for the creation of Waterfront Park as soon as possible.⁷

In late August, the consultants released "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park, City of Portland, Oregon," which was the guiding document for the park until 2003. The fifty-eight page report chronicled the history of the riverfront, some of the events that led to the creation of the park, as well as immediate, three-year, and long-term development schemes for the area. Of great importance, emphasized the consultants, was that a "significant portion" of the park be reserved for later use. For its immediate plan, the consultants recommended initiating both the second policy from Resolution No. 31595—Front Avenue development—and a portion of the third policy involving removal of the balustrade. Interestingly, with regard to the balustrade, the scheme involved utilizing new concrete panels as the foundation for the esplanade along the river's edge, which could also be quickly lifted vertically into place on top of the seawall in case of a flood.⁸

In its three-year plan for Waterfront Park, the consultants explained that their scheme was but one means of interpreting the various policies

⁷ Ibid., Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 7-11 (first, second and third quotes, 7, fourth quote, 11).

⁸ Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 16-21, 38, 50-58 (first quote, 38); Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan, Portland, Oregon," 2003, Multnomah County Library, 17; Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Appendix to Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park" Appendixes A, B, C, D, E; Sam Galbreath to J. David Hunt, 5 May 1977, Ernest Bonner, personal files, 2-3.

contained in the city's resolution. In its plan, they divided the linear urban park into five distinct areas. For the South Auditorium District, area one, the consultants envisioned upgrading the existing boat moorage for recreational activities and creating a small commercial center. The two blocks east of Front Avenue, furthermore, an area purchased by the city from the Multnomah Plywood Company in July, was to be utilized for the building of a hotel and for providing "people-oriented activities." For the Hawthorne Bridge District, area two, the consultants recommended remodeling the old Visitors Information Center into a restaurant to attract people to the riverfront and creating a Main Street pedestrian area between the park and Third Avenue as a means of developing a major residential complex.⁹

For area three, the Yamhill District, the consultants recommended the creation of a linear lagoon of approximately two feet in depth, stretching from Salmon Street to the Morrison Bridge, as a safe alternative to physical contact with the river. The Morrison Bridge District, area four, would be built-up as a concentration of shops and restaurants of approximately 30,000 to 40,000 square feet to provide both an all-weather activity center as well as a source of revenue for offsetting park maintenance costs. Meanwhile, virtually all of the area between the Morrison and Burnside bridges was recommended as open flexible space for uses such as the annual Rose Festival, play and recreation, and a resource for future generations. For area five, the Skidmore Fountain/Old Town District, the consultants recommended extending the

⁹ Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 14-15, 27-31 (first quote, 28); Galbreath to Hunt, 5 May 1977, Bonner, personal files, 2.

Skidmore Fountain Plaza to the river's edge through the creation of a large hard-surfaced area to accommodate gatherings and provide a passive area to counter the activities to the west of Front Avenue. Finally, the area between the Burnside and Steel bridges was to be left undeveloped and set aside for future development.¹⁰

The consultants noted that several park elements received strong support and should therefore be considered for long-term development plans. While they noted that the improvements to Front Avenue would better connect the Waterfront Park to the downtown area, the consultants added that only the closure of the boulevard would completely unite the two areas. Secondly, much support emerged for a Tivoli Garden type entertainment center in the park, with the area between the Burnside and Steel bridges suggested as a possible location. Also, the consultants noted that part of the South Auditorium District could be utilized for the building of a medium-sized theater to compliment the Civic Auditorium. Finally, there was support for adding sporting activities (tennis courts, softball fields) and community facilities (indoor tennis courts, indoor swimming pools).¹¹

Starting in 1976, the development commission began the construction of Waterfront Park, which occurred in five phases over seventeen years at the

¹⁰ Ibid., 14-15, 32-37. In its assessment of the "Final Report," the Portland Beautification Association approved of the plan "in principle" with "certain reservations." Specifically, the PBA "quarrel[led] philosophically" with the creation of the lagoon when the Willamette River was "but a stone's throw away." The organization, furthermore, stated its principle criticism of the report was the lack of physical connection between the park and the river. "Dear Mayor Goldschmidt," Portland Beautification Association, 1 August 1975, Oregon Historical Society.

¹¹ Wolff Zimmer Gunsul Frasca Partnership, "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park," 38-39.

cost of approximately \$20 million. The first project, Phase 1, involved redesigning Front Avenue as a boulevard. This project included reducing the traffic lanes from six to four, widening and adding trees to the west sidewalk, and adding ornamental lighting. Certain elements of the plan were not implemented, however. Some of the pedestrian sidewalks were not aligned and the planting buffer on the park side of the avenue was not added due to high costs. The next year, the Phase 2 project, from the Morrison to Burnside bridges, was initiated. The construction included open meadows bordered by trees, a wide esplanade walkway, and the removal of the solid balustrade.¹²

The aim of city planners was to provide a public gathering place for each section of the park. In this case, the Phase 2 project included the construction of the Ankeny plaza, which contained a stage area as well as wall seating. Also, the Battleship Oregon Memorial, located between S.W. Oak and Pine streets, was upgraded with new paving and a raised planter. The Battleship Oregon, which had served in both the Spanish-American War and World War I, had been utilized as a floating military museum between 1925 and 1942. In 1944, the mast of the ship was dedicated as the Battleship Oregon Mast and Park at its current location. Thirty-two years later, at the

¹² Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 9, 14, 21-22, 26, 37; James D. McClure to John Lang, 10 May 1978, Bonner, personal files; J. David Hunt to the Mayor and City Council, 28 March 1977, Portland City Archives; H.S. Coulter to Jack L. Sollis, 11 April 1977, Bonner, personal files; Galbreath to Hunt, 5 May 1977, Bonner, personal files, 3. In 1996, Front Avenue was renamed Naito Parkway after businessperson and "local visionary" Bill Naito. Jewel Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power 1851-2001* (Oregon State University Press, Corvallis: 2003), 457 (first quote).

bicentennial celebration on July 4, 1976, the mast was rededicated and a time capsule with artifacts was buried at the site, to be sealed until 2076.¹³

On Sunday July 16, almost nine years after Robert and Allison Belcher, along with Jim Howell, had formed the Riverfront for People Committee to fight for the creation of a viable park along the riverfront, Waterfront Park officially opened. The dedication ceremony at the Battleship Oregon Memorial, which coincided with the beginning of the Neighborfair festival, included speeches by Governor Bob Straub and Mayor Neil Goldschmidt along with a performance by gospel singer Willa Dorsey. The *Oregonian* declared that, "Portland historically has returned to the place of its birth...." The opening of the park was another success for Mayor Goldschmidt (1973-79) in converting the ideas of the "Downtown Plan" into reality. Ernie Bonner, the planning director in the 1970s, declared that Goldschmidt was "the perfect person to come into the mix. He was charismatic...and radical." Along with the creation of Waterfront Park, Goldschmidt was also responsible for overseeing the completion of the Transit Mall in 1977, as well as ensuring the creation of Portland's light rail system (MAX) and Pioneer Courthouse Square.¹⁴

¹³ Ibid., 22, 33-34; Jewel Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 408; "Historic Flag," *The Oregonian*, 5 July 1976, 1; "Time Capsule," *The Oregonian*, 5 July 1976, 1; "Park officially named after old battleship," *The Oregonian*, 5 July 1976, p. B13; "Old Glory," *The Oregon Journal*, 5 July 1976, 1.

¹⁴ "'On the waterfront' takes on new sense with park," *The Oregonian*, 14 July 1978, p. T28 (first quote); "'Radical' pushed for model city," *The Arizona Republic*, 23 February 2003, www.azcentral.com/arizonarepublic [accessed September 13, 2003] (second quote); Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 401, 407-08, 423, 439; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 177-180, 209, 222-227; Allison Belcher, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 10 March 2003; Robert Belcher, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript,

In 1984, Phase 3, the South Waterfront "Bowl" section of the park, was completed. The area was designed with a large bowl shaped lawn, located just south of the Hawthorne Bridge, to be used for large-scale concerts during the summer, such as the Blues Festival and Oregon Symphony concerts, as well as a pedestrian path running along the river's edge. The area just south of the bowl area, RiverPlace, was being developed by the PDC as a residential, commercial, and marina complex. The ten-acre area had been purchased by the city council in 1978 as an urban renewal project. One year prior, in 1983, Waterfront Park was renamed Tom McCall Waterfront Park in honor of Oregon's former governor whose leadership in the late 1960s and early 1970s was instrumental in the decision to close Harbor Drive and build a viable riverfront park.¹⁵

Two years later, the area between the Hawthorne and Morrison bridges, Phase 4, was completed. Whereas the first three phases of park development closely mirrored the consultants' recommendations, the central waterfront differed significantly from the "Final Report." City officials chose to build neither the lagoon nor the proposed commercial development near

Portland, Or., 24 March 2003; Ernest Bonner, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 28 April 2003; Roger Shiels, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 22 January 2004; "Portland's Waterfront Park," 3 July 1978, Bonner, personal files; Joan Biggs to Allison Logan Belcher, 10 July 1978, Robert and Allison Belcher, personal files; "Wine, food, music, crafts, dance," *The Oregonian*, 14 July 1978, p. D1; "Ship memorial gets new look," *The Oregonian*, 14 July 1978, p. T13.

¹⁵ Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 9, 12, 22-23, 26, 36; Benkendorf & Associates, "South Downtown Waterfront Study Workshop I," 29 June 1978, Bonner, personal files; Abbott, *Portland: Planning, Politics, and Growth*, 225; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 407. Tom McCall died on January 8, 1983 at the age of sixty-nine. Audrey McCall said of her late-husband, "I had him for forty-three years. It wasn't enough." Brent Walth, *Fire at Eden's Gate: Tom McCall and the Oregon Story* (Oregon Historical Society Press, 1994), 467 (first quote).

the Morrison Bridge. According to Bonner, not only was there a lack of funds in the city's coffers due to an economic recession, but officials feared that the proposed developments would not have produced large enough profits. It was decided, therefore, to develop the area as open grass meadows. Phase 4, however, did entail the creation of the Salmon Street plaza and the Salmon Springs fountain, which is the most popular element in the park. The plaza extends to the river's edge where the seawall was reconstructed with a terraced area. In 1988, the city finished converting the old Visitor's Information Center, located directly south of the Salmon Street entry, into McCall's Restaurant. The building, originally built in 1949 for the Chamber of Commerce, was later utilized to house the City Archives and City Mapping Services.¹⁶

In 1988, ten years after the opening of the park, the Portland Bureau of Parks and Recreation initiated the "Waterfront Park Management Study" to deal with the high volume of summer events in the park that was causing "significant" turf damage. Six years prior, the "Waterfront Park Study 1982" had examined the status and future developments of the four-year old park but had not addressed the issue of festivals. As the "Management Study" detailed, two major public events were held in the park during the late 1970s: the Rose Festival and Neighborfair. Within a few years, however, nonprofit organizations discovered that Waterfront Park was an ideal site for

¹⁶ Ernest Bonner, interview by Michael Jenner, typed transcript, Portland, Or., 28 April 2003; Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 444; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 9, 13, 23, 26, 33-34, 37.

fundraising through large-scale community events. By 1988, seven major public festivals, including the Cinco de Mayo Festival, the Blues Festival, and the Bite, along with numerous minor events, were being held. If the situation were to continue, the study warned, turf damage would become so great as to degrade the park's "visual character and beauty." The study offered four options for dealing with the problem: relocate events out of the park, prohibit festivals for a six to eight week period in the middle of summer to allow for turf regeneration, restrict the maximum attendance and duration of events, or redesign sections of the park with a surface other than grass. The study resulted in some restrictions being placed on events, an increase in permit fees, a prohibition on festivals from October through mid-March, as well as annual turf revitalization.¹⁷

The next year, in 1989, the fifth phase, from the Burnside to Steel bridges, was completed. The design for the northernmost section of the park was inspired by the donation of one hundred Japanese cherry trees by the Grain Importers Association to commemorate forty years of trade relations between Portland and Japan. This section, which narrows considerably north of the Burnside Bridge, also contains the Japanese American Historical Plaza: Bill of Rights Memorial built in 1990. The Oregon Nikkei organization

¹⁷ The results of the "Waterfront Park Study 1982" led to the city council's passage of Resolution 33358 in March 1983, which contained slight revisions to Resolution 31595. Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 24 (first quote); Bureau of Parks & Recreation, "A Management Study for Waterfront Park," 14 September 14, 1988, Portland City Archives (second quote, 5); Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 17-18; idem, "Waterfront Park Study 1982," Portland City Archives; Waterfront Park Task Force, "Report on Waterfront Park Task Force," 30 October 1991, Portland City Archives, 2.

provided an endowment to cover all construction and maintenance costs. The plaza features two bronze statues along with boulders that tell the story of the 110,000 people of Japanese ancestry who were interned during World War II. The memorial stresses the importance of civil liberties. The plaza is located near the original "Nihonmachi" or Japanese American community in Portland. Before 1941, there were over eighty Japanese owned businesses along N.W. Couch Street. The north waterfront park section also contains the "Tomodachi" or "Friendship Circle." Sapporo, Japan, Portland's sister city, recently donated \$30,000 for an artwork display to be located at the site.¹⁸

As the 1990s began, the increased popularity of events in the park during the summer months continued to raise concerns regarding overuse. In July 1991, Director of Parks Charles Jordan appointed the Waterfront Park Task Force to research the issue and make recommendations. The task force held weekly meetings from August through October and gathered information from diverse sources. As their report detailed, the numerous events caused tension with both the concept of the park as a place for quiet recreation and reflection as well as the city's ability to restore and maintain the grass turf. Furthermore, many of the events utilized fencing to control admissions, which resulted in large sections of the park excluding the public. In late October, the task force made twenty-one recommendations to the city.

¹⁸ In all, approximately 4,500 Japanese and Americans of Japanese descent from Oregon and Washington were interned during World War II. Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 340, 447; Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 10, 15, 24, 26, 32, 35, 37; idem, "Japanese American Historical Garden Review," 27 April 1989, Portland City Archives; Charles Jordan to Henry Sakamoto, 30 April 1991, Portland City Archives.

In effect, it called for restrictions to be placed on events as well as increased fees for park use. In addition, the panel recommended that capital improvement options should be explored as a means of better accommodating passive public use of the park.¹⁹

Even though the task force's report resulted in minor improvements, the pressure from events continued to overwhelm the park during the 1990s as other additions were made. For example, in 1991, the Portland Police Memorial was created directly adjacent to the northern slope of the South Bowl. The Police Memorial Association had raised private funds in the late 1980s to pay for construction costs. The memorial contains a garden, plaza, and a three-foot high semi-circular wall with plaques that commemorate officers killed in the line of duty. It is located near the sites of the first territorial prison and the original harbor patrol. The memorial is also visible from the Justice Center and Police Headquarters. In 1994, the city added two features to the park: the Oregon Maritime Museum and the *Spirit of Portland*. The museum is located in the Steamer Portland, which is docked along the seawall between the Morrison and Burnside bridges. The vessel is the last operational wheel tug boat in the United States. In 1986, the Port of Portland had planned to dock the steamer at Salmon Springs and convert it into a restaurant. When the funds did not materialize, however, the steamer was donated to the city. The *Spirit of Portland*, which is privately owned, is docked

¹⁹ Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park Master Plan," 18; idem, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 24-25; Waterfront Park Task Force, "Report on Waterfront Park Task Force," 30 October 1991.

along the seawall at Salmon Street and takes cruises up the Willamette River to the Milwaukee Basin and back. This popular cruise averages approximately 90,000 passengers per year.²⁰

Between 1975 and 1989, the long-held dream of beautification advocates to create a viable riverfront park became a reality. Extensive planning, including significant citizen participation, was completed by the consultants in 1975 and led to the city council's passage of Resolution No. 31595, which detailed the design and development scheme for Waterfront Park. The consultants' "Final Report" illustrated the plan for the area, which consisted of large open areas with activity centers located near the bridges. While city planners closely followed the consultants' recommendations in the first three phases of park development, in the fourth phase, the area between the Hawthorne and Morrison bridges, they opted for open grass spaces instead of commercial development. In the late 1980s and 1990s, city officials struggled to effectively handle the numerous large-scale summer events that were overwhelming the park. The function of the park as either a place for passive recreation or as the center of festivals was becoming increasingly problematic.

²⁰ Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment," 12, 31, 33-34; idem, "Police Memorial Review," 25 April 1989, Portland City Archives. The first police officer killed in Portland in the line of duty was Thomas G. O'Connor, who died on August 30, 1867 after suffering gunshot wounds a week prior in front of Oro Fino Saloon. Jewel Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power*, 124.

CONCLUSION

The City of Portland began preparing an updated master plan for Tom McCall Waterfront Park in 2001. The original "Final Report: Downtown Waterfront Park" of 1975 had provided the blueprint for the greenway's development but since that time unforeseen problems had arisen. While the park was heavily utilized from March to October, visitation dropped-off dramatically during the wet winter months. City planners hoped to adequately address the competing functions of the greenway as a place for large-scale festivals and as a space for quiet recreation. During 2000, there were eleven events held in Waterfront Park, each attracting over 10,000 visitors. Of these, five drew over 50,000 people. In all, Portland Parks and Recreation estimated festival attendance at over one million. During the summer and fall, festivals, which often required fencing, took up much of the park and caused significant turf damage that required restoration. The long duration of some of the events exacerbated the situation. While most events lasted a single weekend—Friday to Sunday—the Rose Festival lasted the entire month of June.¹

¹ In 2000, the heaviest use of the park during non-festival summer months occurred during the lunch hour from 11am to 1pm and also from 3pm to 5pm on weekdays. By far, the largest event was the Rose Festival, which drew 350,000 people to the park. Portland Parks and Recreation, "Waterfront Park: An Assessment of Conditions and Issues," April 2001, 2, 4, 5, 38; idem, "Waterfront Park Master Plan, Portland, Oregon," 2003, Multnomah County Library, 10-12.

Another problem city officials described was that S.W. Naito Parkway “visually and functionally” separated the park from downtown. In 1976, the city had redeveloped the avenue as Phase One of the park’s construction. Some key components of the plan, however, were not implemented—the sidewalk buffer on the park edge of the boulevard and some of the pedestrian crosswalks were not aligned—resulting in inadequate pedestrian circulation. The lack of sufficient entry points into the park, furthermore, resulted in jaywalking, which became dangerous during popular events. As part of the renovation of S.W. Naito Parkway scheduled for 2005, the city proposed the construction of additional pedestrian crossings into the park and a bicycle lane. Another concern with the park was the presence of transients and drug dealing activity around the Ankeny Pump Station. City officials acknowledged part of the problem was the lack of attractions in that section that could draw other visitors.²

As with the “Final Report” of 1975, significant citizen participation was emphasized in the development of the new “Master Plan.” Planning was guided by a Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), which met from July 2001 through December 2002. The CAC represented a balance of interests including those of downtown businesses and open space advocates. Harriet Cormack, a developer who helped create RiverPlace, chaired the CAC. The process of “citizen involvement” included a community survey, three rounds of discussion with focus groups, and four public meetings. By January 2002,

² Portland Parks and Recreation, “Waterfront Park: An Assessment,” 5-6, 21-22; idem, “Waterfront Park Master Plan,” 5-6, 32, 82.

planners had developed three park options: 1) an urban grid, 2) a river landscape, and 3) a meandering promenade with open spaces and activity areas. At the public forum on January 16, 256 people out of an attendance of over 650 chose to fill out comment cards. While a majority preferred the third option, many recommended “combining” and “simplifying” elements from all three schemes. With this information, city planners began designing a new plan.³

On May 30, city officials held another public forum to garner feedback on the new draft concept for the park. One-third of the 129 people who attended completed comment cards. The scheme was also displayed at the Rose Festival Waterfront Village from May 31 through June 9. While over 2,000 people spent time in the booth, only fifty-nine completed comment cards. Among respondents, there was “widespread” support for the plan. City planners then proceeded to finalize the scheme. At the last open house on November 19, a total of ninety people attended the afternoon and evening meetings to review the final plan. Even though the scheme was generally

³ On January 14, 2002, a panel discussion on the history of Waterfront Park was held. The panel included Riverfront for People Committee co-founder Robert Belcher and former planning director during the 1970s Ernie Bonner. Portland Parks and Recreation, “Waterfront Park Master Plan,” 19-30; idem, “Newsletter No. 4,” February-March 2002 (first and second quotes); idem, “Newsletter No. 1,” August-September 2001; idem, “Waterfront Park Master Plan: Public Forum – Summary of Public Input,” October 24, 2001; idem, “Waterfront Park Master Plan: Focus Groups – Round 1 Summary,” August-November 2001; idem, “Waterfront Park Master Plan: Survey #1 Results Summary,” November 2001; idem, “Newsletter No. 2,” December 2001-January 2002; idem, “Newsletter No. 3,” January 2002; idem, “Waterfront Park Master Plan: Public Meeting #2 Results Summary,” April 2002; idem, “Newsletter No. 5,” July 2002; idem, “Waterfront Park Master Plan: Public Meeting #3 Results Summary,” July 2002; idem, “Creating a Great Portland Waterfront,” November 2002.

supported, some people expressed concerns that Naito Parkway would continue to be a significant barrier between the park and downtown.⁴

In late 2003, Portland Parks and Recreation released the “Waterfront Park Master Plan,” which detailed the long-term development plan for the greenway. The scheme divided the mile-long, thirty-seven acre linear park into five distinct areas. The Bowl area, the southernmost section of the park, was designated to remain a grassy open space serving as a venue for concerts and performances. At the western edge of the Bowl, a series of terraces were to be added for enhanced event seating. The plan for this area also called for the creation of a level path at the eastern edge of the Bowl linking the greenway with RiverPlace and for the addition to the beach area of riparian plantings and a rock facing.⁵

The Salmon Springs Fountain area was designated to serve as one of two major activity centers in the park. In order to accomplish this, some type of facility near the fountain was to be used to attract people throughout the year and act as an “anchor” for the southern section of the park. City planners were unsure, however, whether the Yeon Building, now functioning as McCall’s Restaurant, could serve for this purpose. The fountain area was to be enhanced for both summer and winter use through the addition of a “buffer” area to include seating and shaded areas as well as an activity center accommodating vendor carts. A set of terraces to offer views of the river and

⁴ Ibid., Portland Parks and Recreation, “Public Meeting #3 Results Summary” (first quote, 1).

⁵ The Master Plan was approved with minor changes by the city council in May 2003. Portland Parks and Recreation, “Waterfront Park Master Plan,” 9, 47, 65-66.

provide a multi-use performance space was designed for the grassy area in between the Hawthorne Bridge and the fountain. The Maritime Museum Sternwheeler Portland and Battleship Oregon Memorial were to be relocated from in between the Morrison and Burnside bridges to the seawall just north of the Hawthorne Bridge.⁶

The area between Salmon Springs and the Morrison Bridge was designated "Waterfront Plaza," an all-weather "destination space" for hosting events and producing winter programs. The plaza was also designed to include the addition of two entry points at S.W. Morrison and Yamhill streets and a new curved pathway to extend over the river. The area between the Morrison Bridge and Ankeny Pump Station was designated "The Meadow." This open grassy area was designed to provide a site both for overflow from events and for quiet recreation. The scheme for this area also included lowering a 900-foot length of the seawall an estimated eight feet to provide more direct views of the river. City planners acknowledged that this area could be flooded during a 100-year flood event, as had occurred in 1996.⁷

The Ankeny Pump Station Area was selected as the second activity center for the park through the additions of an interactive water feature, a visitor services building, a new dock, and an intimate seating area for lunchtime visitors. The area around the water feature was to be "versatile and

⁶ Ibid., 9, 45, 66-70 (first quote, 67, second quote, 69).

⁷ The long-term plan for this area also included the creation of residential developments immediately west of the park. Ibid., 9-10, 45, 70-75 (first and second quotes, 70, third quote, 72); Jewel Lansing, *Portland: People, Politics, and Power 1851-2001* (Oregon State University Press, Corvallis: 2003), 456.

flexible” to allow for a variety of year-round activities. A curved pathway through the activity area was designed to reach out over the seawall for better river views. For the northernmost area of the park—the Burnside to Steel bridges—the Master Plan detailed the addition of a new floating walkway to connect the park to the Willamette Greenway Trail and the McCormick Pier apartments, with two additional entry points to the park from Old Town/Chinatown.⁸

Because of Portland’s economic downturn in 2002, funding for the new Master Plan project did not materialize. Since the total cost of the scheme was estimated at \$45 million, the city hoped to implement the plan gradually over the next fifteen to twenty years. Expensive additions, such as Waterfront Plaza and the development of the area between the Burnside and Steel bridges including the floating walkway, were included in phases beyond 2015. Between 2003 and 2010, the city recommended initiating the improvements to the Bowl, Salmon Springs Fountain, and Ankeny Pump Station areas. City planners acknowledged that in the long-term development of the park, some changes to the scheme were possible, if they were consistent with the recommendations of the report.⁹

This thesis has chronicled the history of Portland’s downtown west side riverfront during the twentieth century. Between 1900 and 1943, numerous outside planners called for the creation of a park along the waterfront to enhance the area. Despite this advice, city officials instead initiated

⁸ Portland Parks and Recreation, “Waterfront Park Master Plan,” 10, 46, 75-9 (first quote, 75).

⁹ *Ibid.*, 83-91.

infrastructure improvement projects, including the construction of the seawall in 1929 and Harbor Drive in 1942. The creation in 1933 of the Public Market Building on the riverfront just north of the Hawthorne Bridge turned out to be one of the city's biggest boondoggles. By the 1950s, it was apparent that the sixteen-foot wide esplanade along the river's edge was an inadequate space for the popular annual Rose Festival.

The possibility of a viable waterfront park appeared remote when the city council, in the spring of 1961, approved the construction of the Ash Street overpass, which would have obstructed the last open area along the riverfront. A groundswell of opposition led by architects Dan McGoodwin and Lewis Crutcher along with the *Oregonian* and the *Oregon Journal*, however, challenged the project. The cancellation of the overpass project in August 1961 marked the first time in Portland's history that waterfront beautification advocates had influenced plans for the area. Seven years later, City Commissioner Frank Ivancie arranged for Portland to buy the old *Journal* building and have it torn down. Governor Tom McCall, seeing an opportunity to create a riverfront park, created the Intergovernmental Task Force for Waterfront Development, chaired by Glenn Jackson, to examine the issue and make recommendations.

The year 1969 marked the paradigm shift for the development of the riverfront area from exclusivity to a more inclusive process. In July, the Portland City Club's Committee on the Journal Building Site and Willamette Riverfront Development, which included future city commissioner and mayor

Neil Goldschmidt, initiated the cancellation of the Ivancie-Jackson unilateral plan to widen Harbor Drive. The Committee's "Interim Report" in August lambasted the secrecy of the task force and argued that no decision for the area be made until adequate studies were completed. Inspired by the document, Robert and Allison Belcher, along with Jim Howell, formed the Riverfront for People Committee and held two high profile picnics in August and September at the old *Journal* building. The group not only demanded public hearings on the issue but also recommended the removal of Harbor Drive. At the public hearing at Portland City Hall in October, attended by over 500 people, including numerous organizations brought in by the Riverfront for People Committee, the task force received a clear message to move more slowly and allow for public participation. Accordingly, Governor McCall instructed Jackson to implement many of the public's recommendations, including the creation of a citizens advisory committee.

In July 1970, Glenn Jackson announced both plans for the removal of Harbor Drive, which was eventually closed in 1974, and plans for the building of a viable waterfront park. A year later, a group of open-space advocates fought against and succeeded in canceling the task force's First and Front avenues couplet plan. The beautification of the riverfront coincided with the adoption of the "Downtown Plan" of 1972, which was a radical scheme to make downtown pedestrian friendly and enhance both citizen livability and Portland's attraction as a business and retail center. The early 1970s also marked a transition in city hall from conservative white males to progressive

politicians, who, as a group, were more diverse in age, gender, and race.

Thirty-two year old Mayor Goldschmidt, along with commissioners Lloyd Anderson and Connie McCready, won a series of victories in the 1970s, including turning the ideas of the "Downtown Plan" into reality and creating Waterfront Park.

The process of citizen participation, which had been carried forward by the "Downtown Plan," played an important role in defining the type of park that was to be built along the riverfront. In August 1975, the city council adopted Resolution No. 31595, providing detailed guidelines for the design and development of Waterfront Park. Even though the consultants in their "Final Report" recommended some commercial development in the park, city officials instead chose an open space scheme. In 1978, nearly nine years after the Riverfront for People Committee had formed, Waterfront Park officially opened. By the turn of the twenty-first century, however, the role of the park as a place either for large events or quiet recreation was becoming increasingly problematic.

This thesis has explored the manner in which beautification advocates initiated a paradigm shift in city planning with regard to the development of Portland, Oregon's downtown waterfront area. The period from 1965 to 1975 saw a change in attitude towards the downtown area in many U.S. cities. A philosophy that emphasized livability and rejuvenation emerged as a reaction against the destructive aspects of urban renewal. Portland in the late 1960s and 1970s, with the removal of Harbor Drive and the creation of Waterfront

Park, provides an excellent example of the battle against the ascendancy of the automobile and the ability of citizen groups to effect city planning decisions. Even with this paradigm shift it remains critical that city leaders and experts continue to seek public participation instead of imposing their will on the citizenry. Substantial input from broader segments of the public is essential for decision making to be truly inclusive rather than representing only the interests of the professional elite.

February – March 1975. July 1976. July 1978. September 1983. February 1984. October 1985. December 2000.
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