

Banners tattered but still flying Fremont Bridge only 'sure thing' in NW Portland traffic pattern

By PAUL PINTARICH
of The Oregonian staff

REMEMBER northwest Portland? That's the cozy little close-in urban neighborhood where nearly two years ago planners waved a brand new comprehensive plan like a banner against freeways, industrial expansion, land speculation and general deterioration.

The banner still is flying, vanguard of the Northwest District and Willamette Heights Neighborhood associations, but is tattered by bedraggling delays in getting the plan accepted by the Planning Commission and City Council.

November is the crucial month for Northwest Portland and, perhaps, for the future of the city's other urban neighborhoods as well.

Catalyst is the Fremont Bridge, which this month will open floodgates of traffic into the area, and the only sure thing as far as planners are concerned.

Variables are a promised Planning Commission decision on the plan at a public meeting 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 13, at Trinity Episcopal Church; a commission hearing on the Interstate 505 Industrial Freeway route 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 20, in City Hall, and a final council decision on the freeway Thursday, Nov. 29.

These hearings, after years of meetings, dispute and court action are wearing on participants but important in the context of preserving a lifestyle.

Northwest Portland has been scene of a classic land-use battle: Residents, supported strongly by environmental-

ists and Mayor Neil Goldschmidt's philosophy of urban enhancement, are pitted against businessmen — each group asking for sacrifice.

Residents have four major goals: The reversal of present trends toward the loss of housing, preservation and enhancement of services for residents, diversification of the population while increasing the number of families, and maintaining the strength of citizen groups.

The study area is bounded on the north by NW Nicolai Street, W. Burnside Street to the south and east and on the west by the Stadium Freeway (I-405) and Willamette Heights.

Bisecting the area along one of five alternates to be selected by the council will be I-505, connecting the west end of the Fremont Bridge and NW St. Helens Road — a "line of demarcation" according to Ed Storms, president of the NWDA.

As a result of a federal court injunction in 1972, Highway Division consultants have prepared five alternate routes and a "no build" option for I-505.

Included are an initially proposed Upshur route in a corridor between NW Vaughn and Thurman streets, which prompted court action, a route still favored by industry, and four other alternatives:

— Long Yeon (favored by residents): An elevated freeway of four lanes along Yeon to 29th Avenue, at grade through the Guilds Lake Rail Yard, elevated to cross St. Helens Road.

— Short Yeon: An elevated freeway of four lanes from the bridge to Yeon Avenue; Yeon Avenue and St. Helens Road to feed traffic to and from the freeway.

— Upshur-Yeon: A depressed freeway of four lanes between Upshur and

Vaughn streets, also four lanes, elevated to Yeon Avenue.

— Industrial: Four lanes elevated to Yeon and then west across Industrial Street to St. Helens Road.

Ironically, the corridor preferred by residents is the most expensive (\$72.4 million), the Upshur route least expensive (\$29.7 million).

Businessmen, supported by their Neighborhood Improvement Committee, the I-505 Committee of the Concerned and the Western Environmental Trade Association, have argued the Upshur Corridor would be least disruptive to industry, principally railroads, and would create an ideal buffer between homes and factories.

Residents oppose what they feel will be a gash of noise and air pollution reducing the flexibility of the Northwest District Plan.

Basic components of the plan are designed to counter freeway encroachment and to buffer the area from increased traffic through the neighborhood.

The Planning Commission staff, which helped the NWDA prepare the plan, aims for City Council acceptance of major goals at this time.

"These, simply, are to retain the Northwest as a viable residential neighborhood," said Ernest Bonner, city planning director, "a district to house a diverse population close to the center of the city, free of traffic and providing a stimulating environment."

Storms, president of the NWDA since May, said, "we'll stand on the whole plan right now. If the Northwest area

goes down the tube, the rest of the city's neighborhoods will go too."

Storms feels the city must have a plan to mirror the freeway alternatives.

"I don't know how the Planning Commission and City Council feel right now," he said, "but someone must say at least we have a range of decisions. Now, everything is an ad hoc decision. We need standards to make judgments. If a developer presents a proposal at least with the plan he'll know where things can go."

NWDA was formed five years ago to watchdog Good Samaritan Hospital urban renewal and other commercial expansion. At first, the group supported the multiple-use corridor routing of I-505 through Vaughn-Thurman until, according to Storms, it was apparent the Highway Division was ignoring the need for replacement housing.

"Our relationship is good with the Willamette Heights people," Storms said, "we joined them in the suit against I-505, which is their primary consideration. We're broader based, concerned with the entire area."

Morton Paglin, WHNA president, said, "I firmly believe we must attempt to stabilize a mixture of uses recognizing, of course, how important the freeway is to land-use."

"Truck traffic must be routed to the north industrial area to minimize the impact on our streets. Once the freeway decision is made, then land released from the original corridor area can be used creatively."

Storms welcomes business interests

to join with the NWDA because "we can't say 'move out.' We must accommodate their objections. Commercial and some business interests must be allowed because they are needed to serve the people. If traffic becomes heavy and the city widens 21st and 23rd avenues and removes on-street parking, then we lose the people that give

the neighborhood its life.

"Then," Storms added, "the Northwest becomes a transitional district, not more than a viaduct for cars. We must take a stand here for the sake of the entire city. We must remember that the citizens of the Northwest, and of the city, are its most valuable resource."

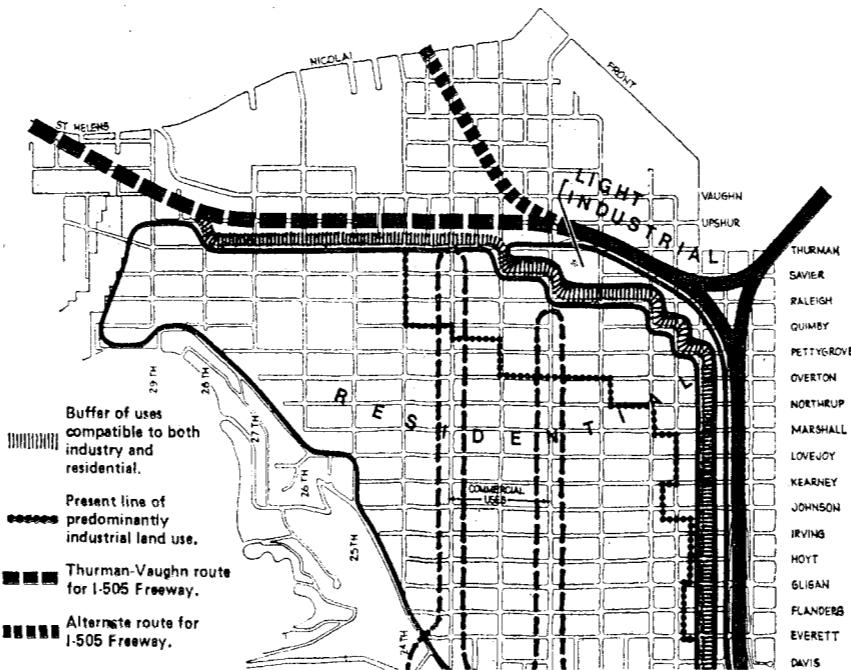
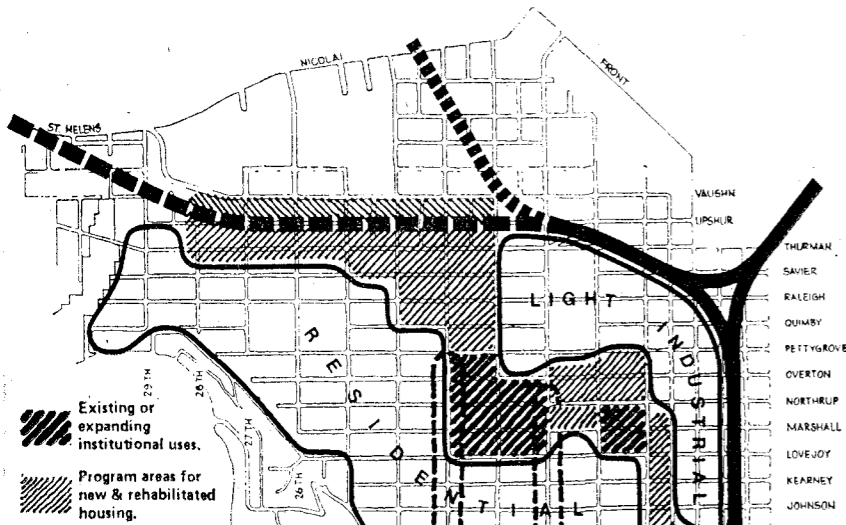


PINTARICH



Isidor Kronowitz, 'this happy man ...'

'Business I don't have, but ... work I have all I can do...'



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Isidor Kronowitz, 'this happy man ...'

'Business I don't have, but... work I have all I can do...'

By FRANK STERRETT
 Special Writer, The Oregonian

IT TAKES all kinds of people to make up this world. I ran across a most unusual man the other day up in Northwest Portland. In a hole in the wall shop at 518 NW 21st is a refugee Jew from Austria who told me that only by the grace of God is he today living in America instead of being a cinder in one of Hitler's ovens.

This happy man is Isidor Kronowitz and his specialty is orthopedic shoe work. He builds shoes for men, women and children who have deformed or incorrect feet from orthopedist's prescriptions. As a sideline, he repairs shoes.



STERRETT

Isidor is a spry and wiry little man, 84 years old and like his father before him, started as an apprentice in Austria as a young man. On the wall of his shop is a diploma from the Genossenschaft in testimony that he spent three years of hard work learning the shoemaking trade. He pointed to it and smiled and said, "You have to be good to get this piece of paper."

If you doubt his ability in the trade, he will come up with letters from people all over the world.

At first glance of Isidor's cluttered place of business, it made me think of a place where a disaster had happened so I asked him how business was.

He said, "Business I don't have, but, work I have all I can do." He then went on to point out that he is busy every day but that most of his work is for poor people and most of the time those people cannot pay. He went on to tell me that because money comes in in such little dabs his wife Hilda is work-

ing as a bookkeeper, "to make both ends meet."

An example, "People bring in a pair of old shoes and want new heels and soles, so I fix them, they never come back to get, then I give them to the garbage man in a year's time. There goes my leather and my work."

Isidor could make an Internal Revenue Investigator cry when he talks about business, but when he talks about shoes he is all smiles. He loves his work and he surely loves people, especially poor people.

Isidor likes to talk about how he got away from the oven. When Hitler invaded Austria, he noticed that Jews were being taken away and were never heard from. Word got around that they were being taken to Auschwitz, so Isidor made up his mind to flee to Belgium. Just when he thought he was safe, Hitler invaded Belgium. Isidor and many others were placed in a prison camp for the duration. When the war ended, he made it to New York.

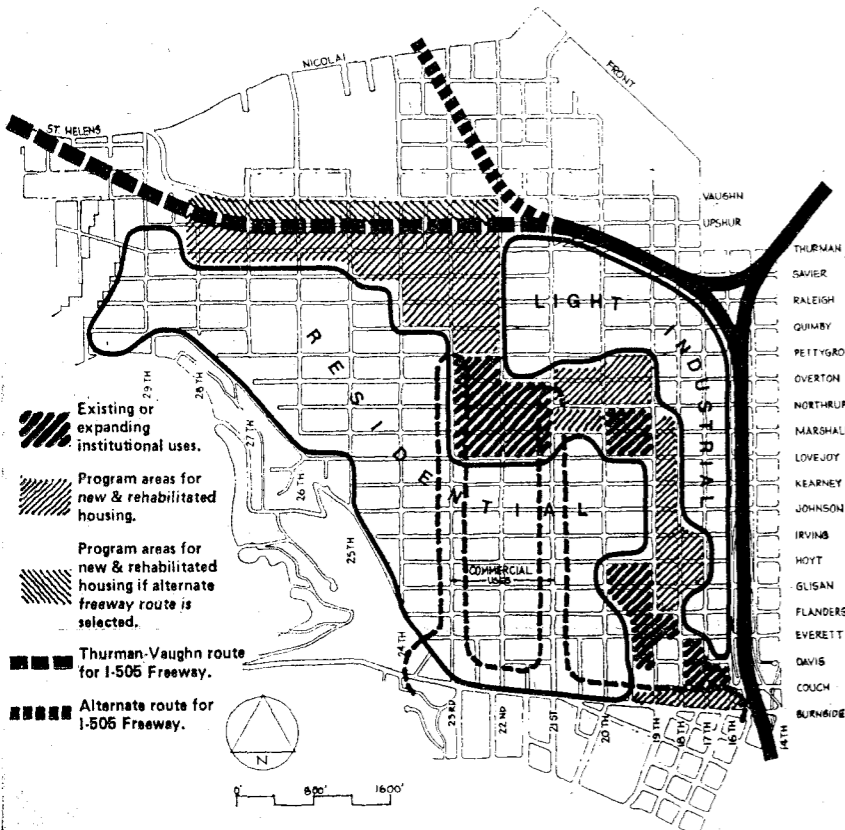
Isidor came to Portland because his wife had a sister living here.

For seven years, he worked for Meier & Frank Co. as an orthopedic specialist, but "I was earning not so much money so I decided I should open my own shop," he said.

The old man is the most enthusiastic booster for America I have encountered. I asked him when he was going to retire and he explained that he has never been sick in his life. He thinks that if and when he gets sick, then he will die and retire at the same time.

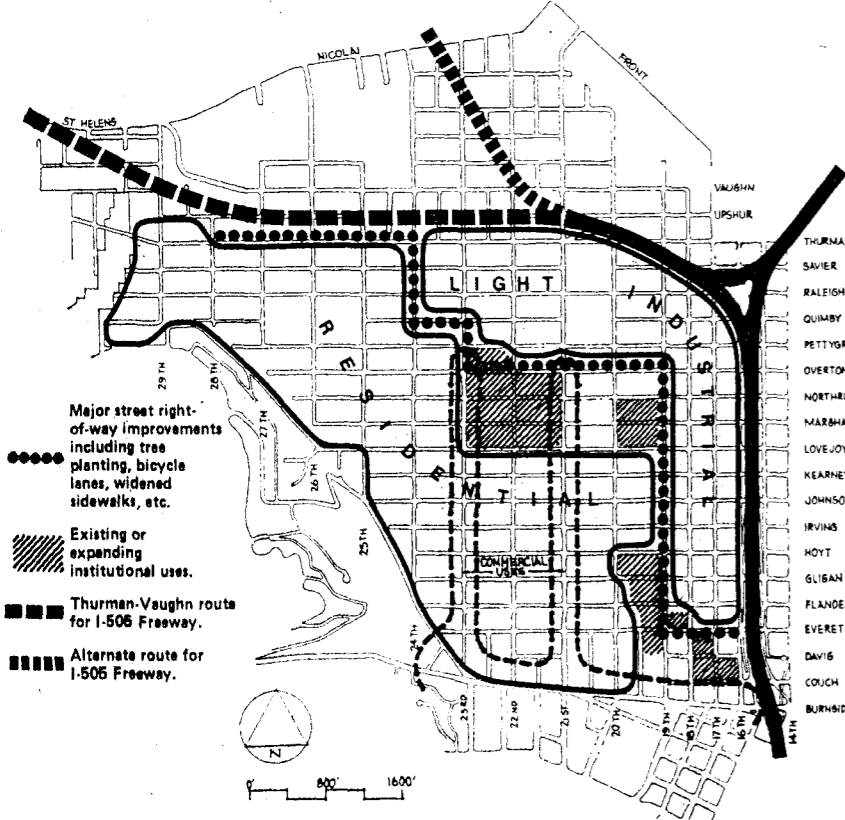
He works closely with the Crippled Children's Division of the Oregon Medical school and derives much satisfaction from helping handicapped people; about money—he could care less.

His honest face, his sweet smile, just like a breath of spring and a nicer guy you will never meet.



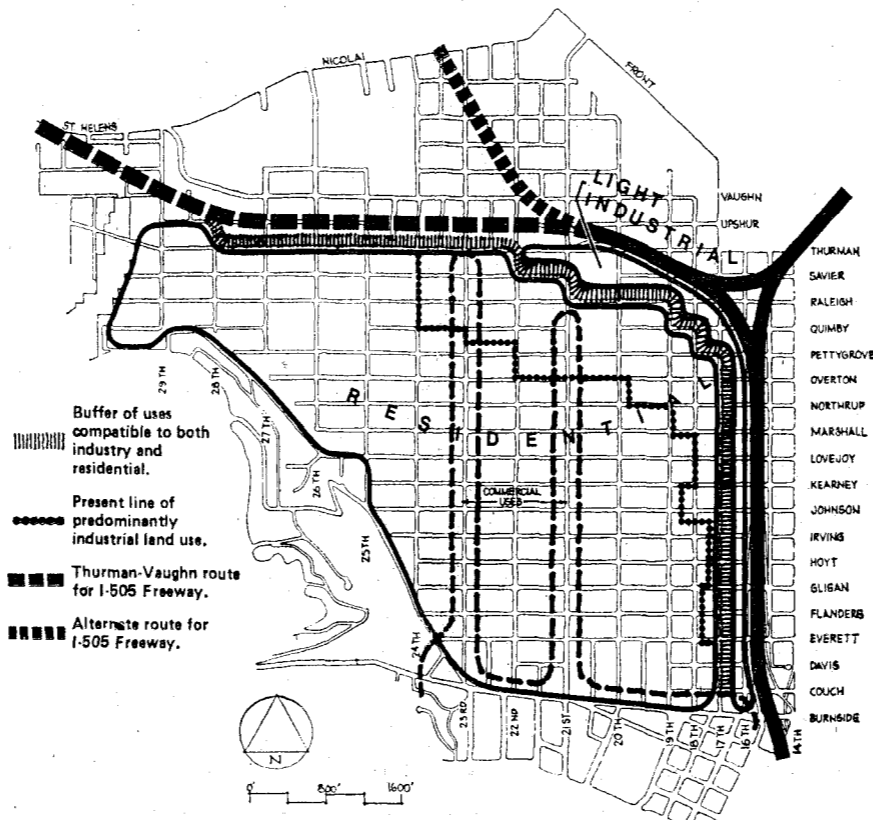
Concept 1

... based on the strategy of linking solid institutional and residential use areas with "reinforced" areas of new and rehabilitated housing to form a solid zone of investment against the expansion of non-residential uses.



Concept 2

... basically a projection of current trends toward the gradual erosion of the residential edge of the district until it reached a point where a sharp line could distinguish between conflicting uses.



Concept 3

... reflects the strong feelings of many district residents that industry should eventually be pushed back to a point where the freeway would serve as a natural border.

Underneath it all... The wondrous 2-in-1 park

By HELENE MELYAN
 Special Writer, The Oregonian

I was reading, the other day, about the Legislature's plan to build a 1,780-seat hearing room facility beneath a park adjacent to the Capitol. If, as proponents of the plan say, the park would not be hurt, I wonder how far it will be possible to go, in the future, in combining such facilities.



MELYAN

IT WAS a crisp fall day, and Bobby and Susie were going to the park. Bobby took his bike, and Susie took her skates, and they both walked briskly to keep warm.

"I like going to the park now," said Susie. "Really I do. It's so much nicer and cleaner than the way it used to be."

"Daddy was right," agreed Bobby. "He said that this would be the perfect solution — that this way they could have their Meeting Hall in a real handy place, and we could still have our park, only better than ever."

When they got to the park entrance, Bobby and Susie paused for a moment to admire the Hall. "I hear they keep it real nice, inside," sighed Susie. "Mu-

rals, and everything." Then they opened the park door and Susie took the stairs, while Bobby walked his bike down the special ramp.

Downstairs in the park, children and adults alike were enjoying a perfect fall afternoon, as the maintenance crew sprinkled crackly autumn leaves underfoot. Susie sighed happily as she glanced up at the cheery blue ceiling with its evenly spaced white clouds and its big smiling yellow sun right in the middle. Suddenly a loud noise startled her. "Thunder?" she asked Bobby.

"Nah," he said, helping her tie her skates. "Somebody upstairs, moving a chair or something." Bobby rode his bike around the arti-turf, and Susie tried out her skates on the linoleum paths, giggling when she came across a pair of young lovers stealing a kiss beneath a hanging philodendron basket. Then she met Bobby by the Snack Corner.

"You know, sometimes I do miss the trees," said Bobby, looking wistfully at the restful green walls. "But in a regular park, you can't have these neat soda machines, not without digging up the ground and everything for wires." He bought a bottle of sparkling soda for Susie, then one for himself.

"Bottoms up," said Bobby. "Here's to the great indoors."