Mission Accomplished

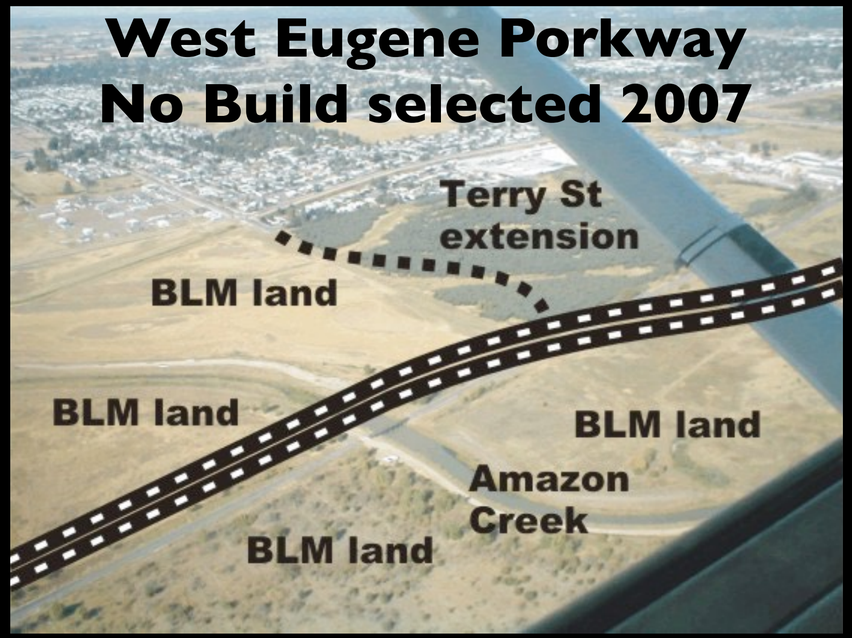
No Build for the West Eugene Porkway

WETLANDS

West Eugene Transportation

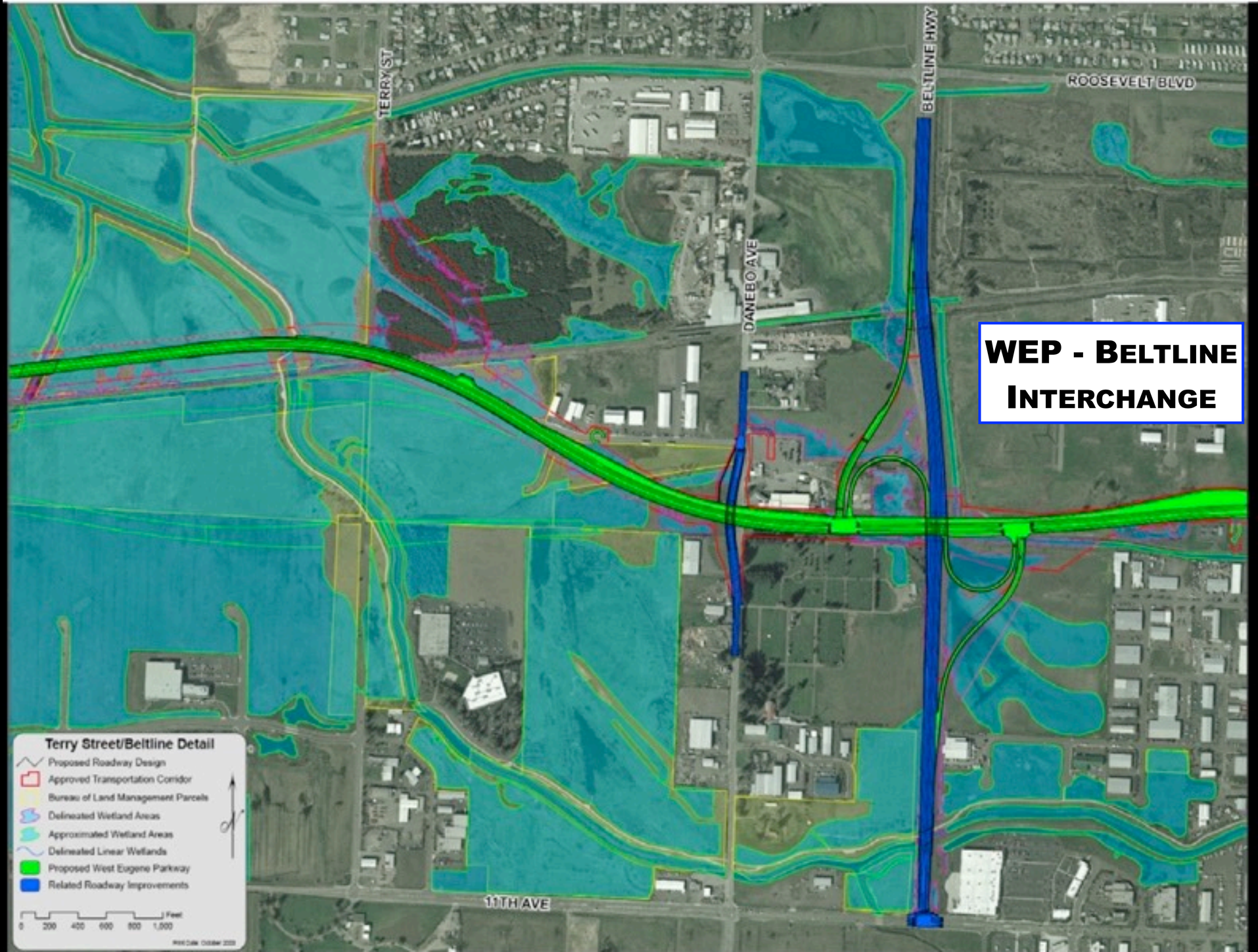
Land and Neighborhood Design Solutions

www.SustainEugene.org/wetlands.html



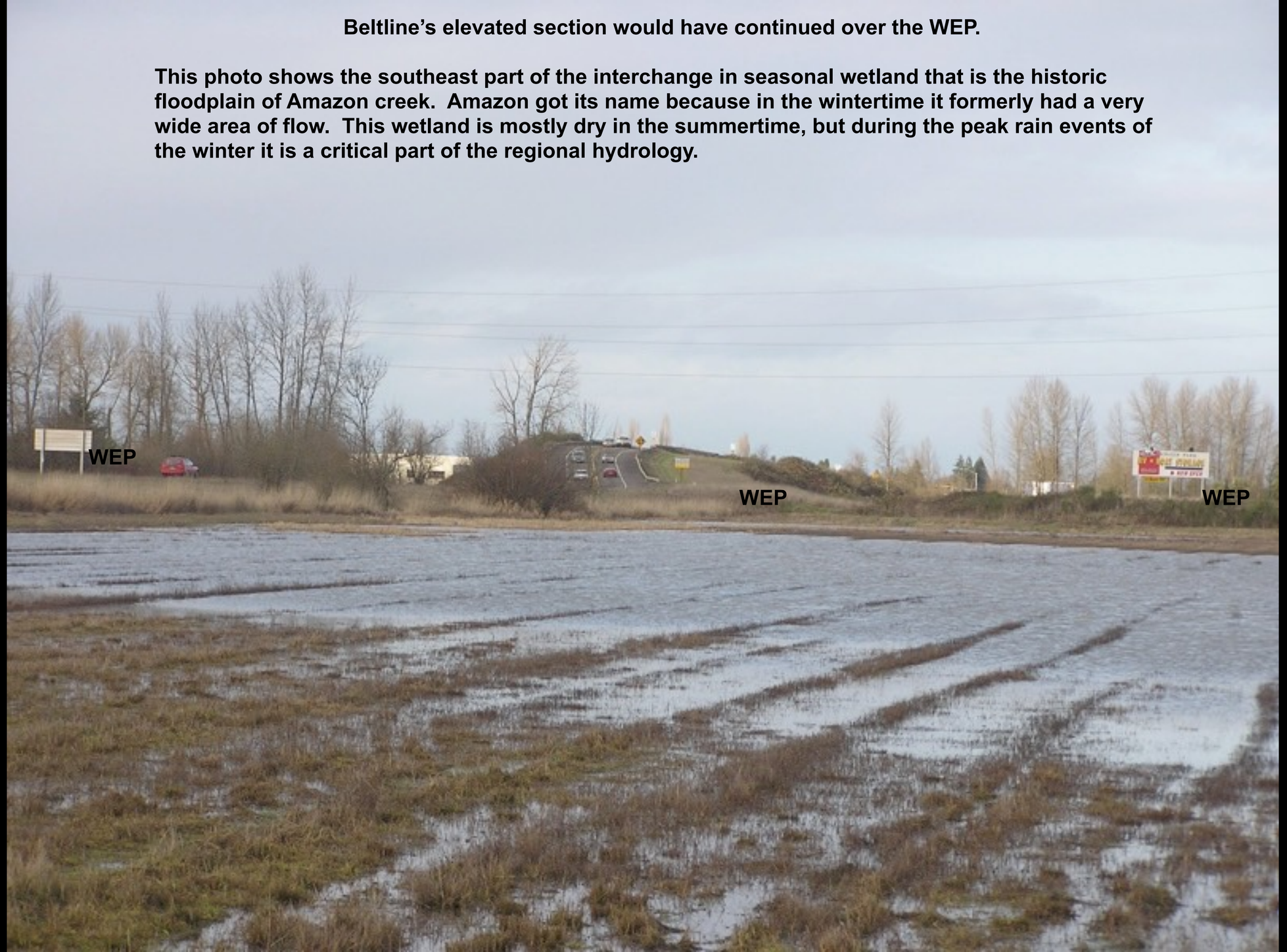
WEST EUGENE PARKWAY
"Alternative A Mitigated"
summer 2003 design

WEP, like most controversial highway plans, had numerous alignment shifts to bypass legal problems and / or to placate concerns about ecological and neighborhood impacts. Tracking shifts required attending many meetings where transportation bureaucrats told politicians some of what they were doing. Paying attention reminded the highwaymen and highwaywomen that they would be challenged in court - and in the court of public opinion.


TERRY ST
DANEBO AVE
BELTLINE HWY
ROOSEVELT BLVD
11TH AVE
WEP - BELTLINE INTERCHANGE
Terry Street/Beltline Detail
Proposed Roadway Design
Approved Transportation Corridor
Bureau of Land Management Parcels
Delineated Wetland Areas
Approximated Wetland Areas
Delineated Linear Wetlands
Proposed West Eugene Parkway
Related Roadway Improvements
Feet
0 200 400 600 800 1,000

Beltline's elevated section would have continued over the WEP.

This photo shows the southeast part of the interchange in seasonal wetland that is the historic floodplain of Amazon creek. Amazon got its name because in the wintertime it formerly had a very wide area of flow. This wetland is mostly dry in the summertime, but during the peak rain events of the winter it is a critical part of the regional hydrology.




Beltline
WEP
WEP
WEP
WEP
interchange
ramps

WEP would have gone through this remnant forest. Wetlands in foreground would have been smothered by ramps for the southeast part of the WEP - Beltline interchange. The Oregon Ducks in the photo would have been displaced. Amazon Creek, Bertelsen tributary is between the silt fences (for a different construction project) and the trees.

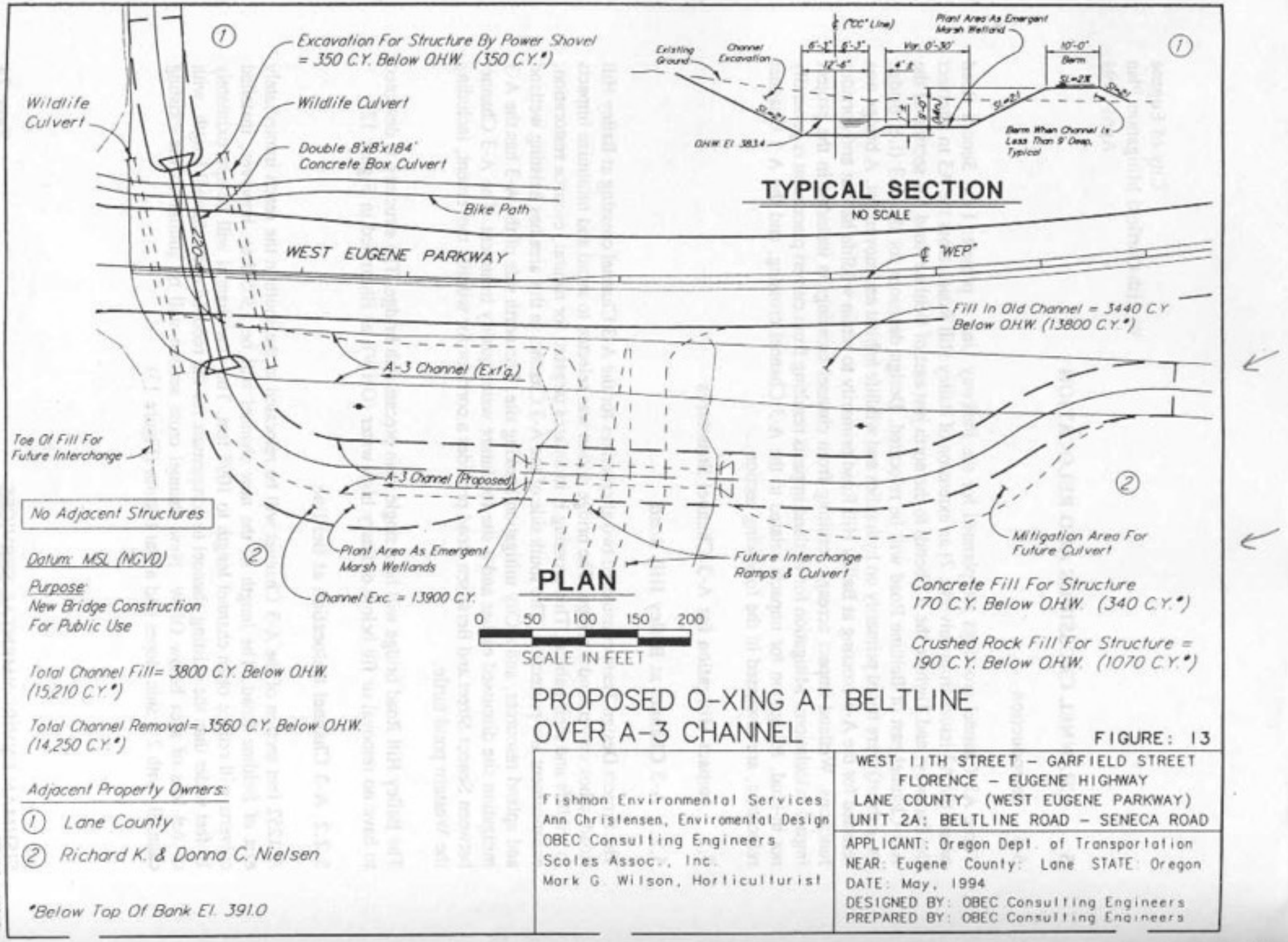
In the 1980s, ODOT focused their studies on wetland impacts east of Beltline and ignored wetlands west of Beltline. Once the West Eugene Wetlands program was established (after the WEP study started), ODOT focused instead on wetlands west of Beltline and ignored wetlands east of Beltline.

The east-of-Beltline wetlands do not have the endangered species that live west of Beltline, but they are extremely rare in the Eugene area even if they don't qualify for the Endangered Species Act. Ash and cottonwood forests don't have legal protection but bottomland forest still deserves to be protected from pavement.

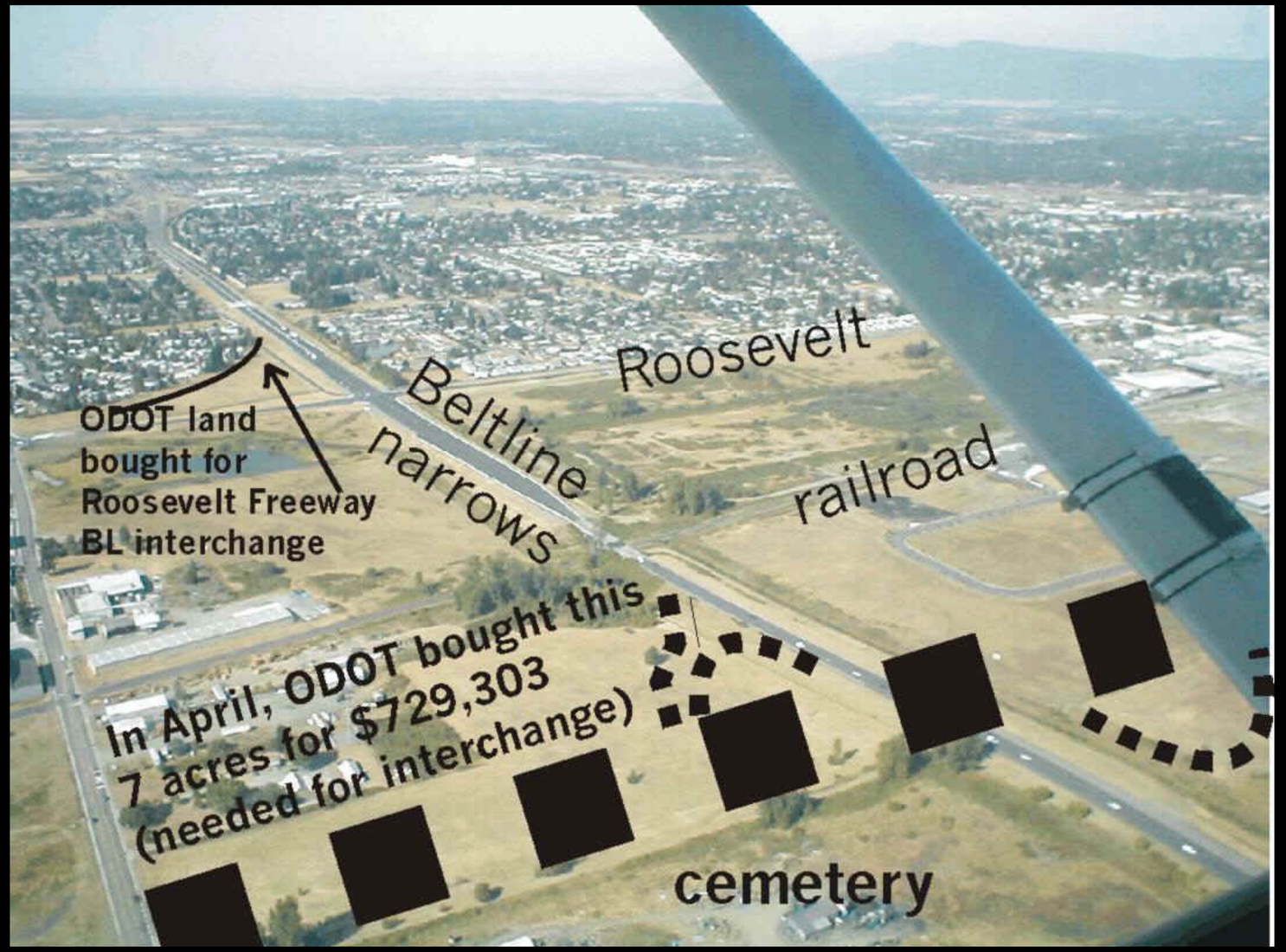
Most of the planned direct devastation to Amazon Creek would have been east of Beltline -- one half kilometer would be filled in or covered over. This engineering diagram from 1994 shows that the existing creek would be filled in, relocated and partially channeled into a long culvert. The design for the interchange would also have required filling in the creek channel on the west side of Beltline near the railroad overcrossing. Some of Amazon Creek's water quality problems are due to the large amount of channelization as it flows through central Eugene.

There are several government and non-governmental organizations that have claimed to be working to protect and restore Amazon Creek. During my eight years of tracking the WEP (1999 to 2007), it was difficult to find anything from any of these groups that suggested the WEP might be a bad idea for Amazon Creek.

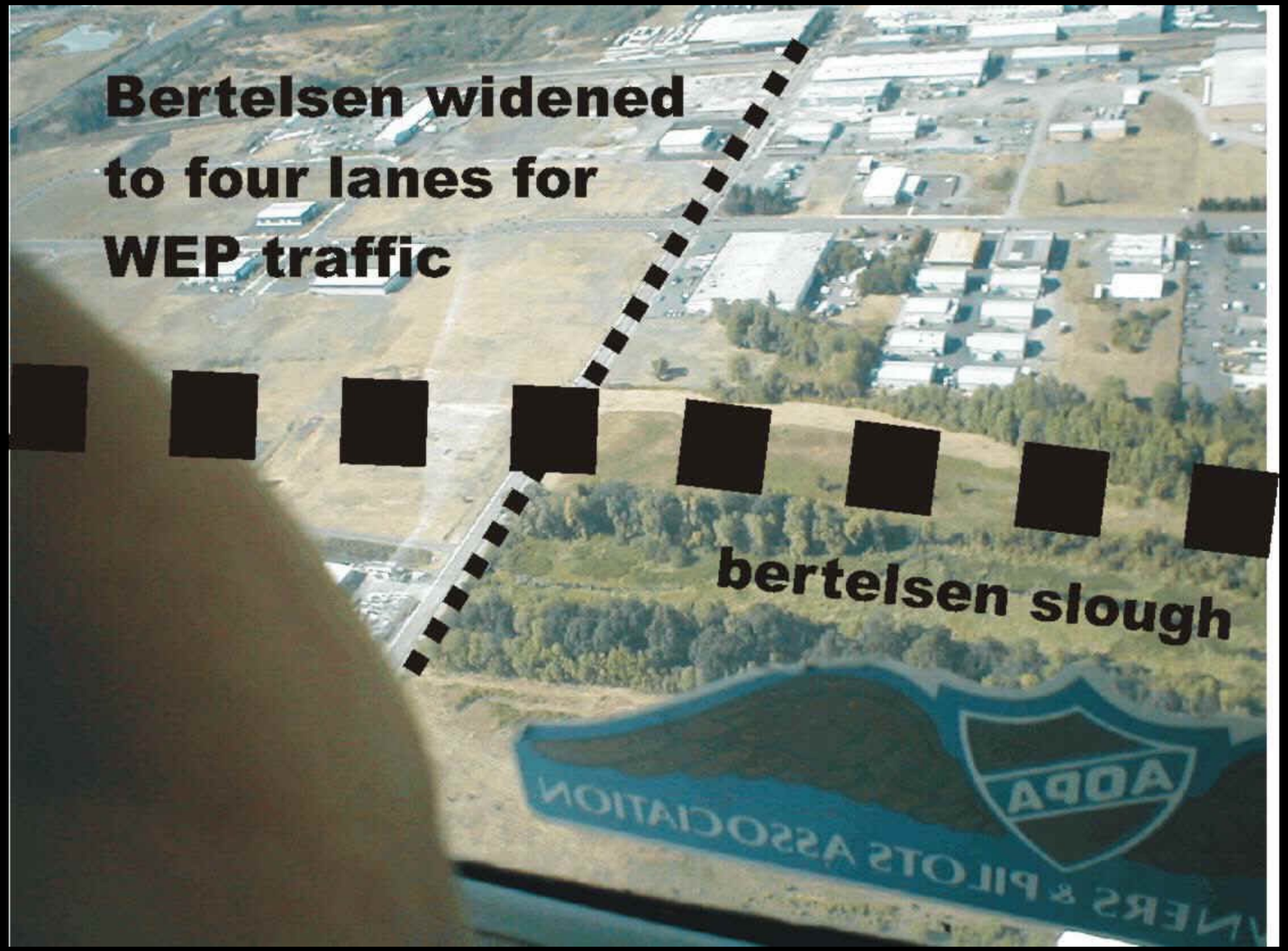
One of the government bureaucrats allegedly working to protect the wetlands told me he favored building the eastern half of the WEP through Bertelsen Nature Park, but not the segment west of Beltline. "Segmentation" of the highway would have been even more illegal than approving the full design.

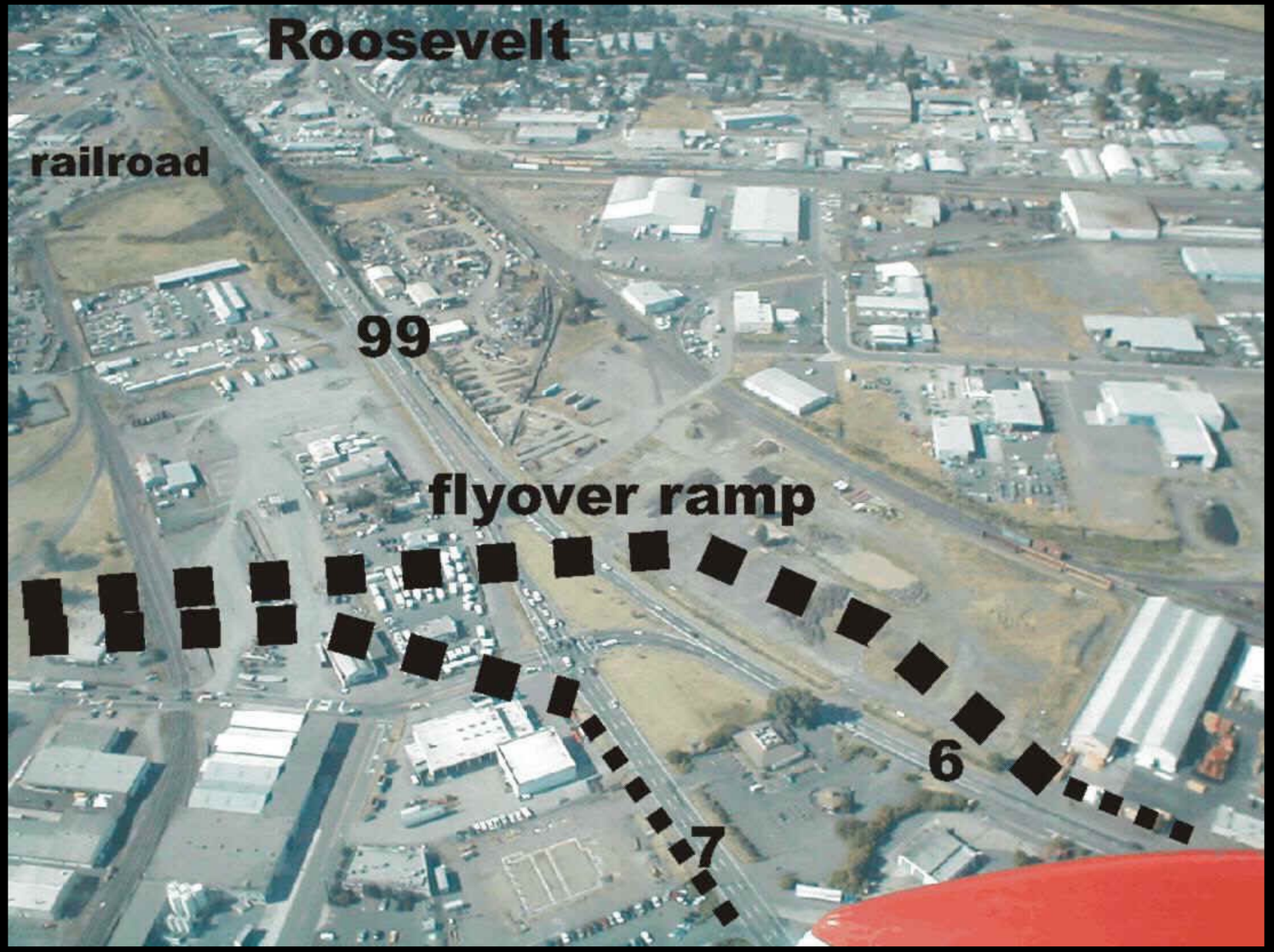


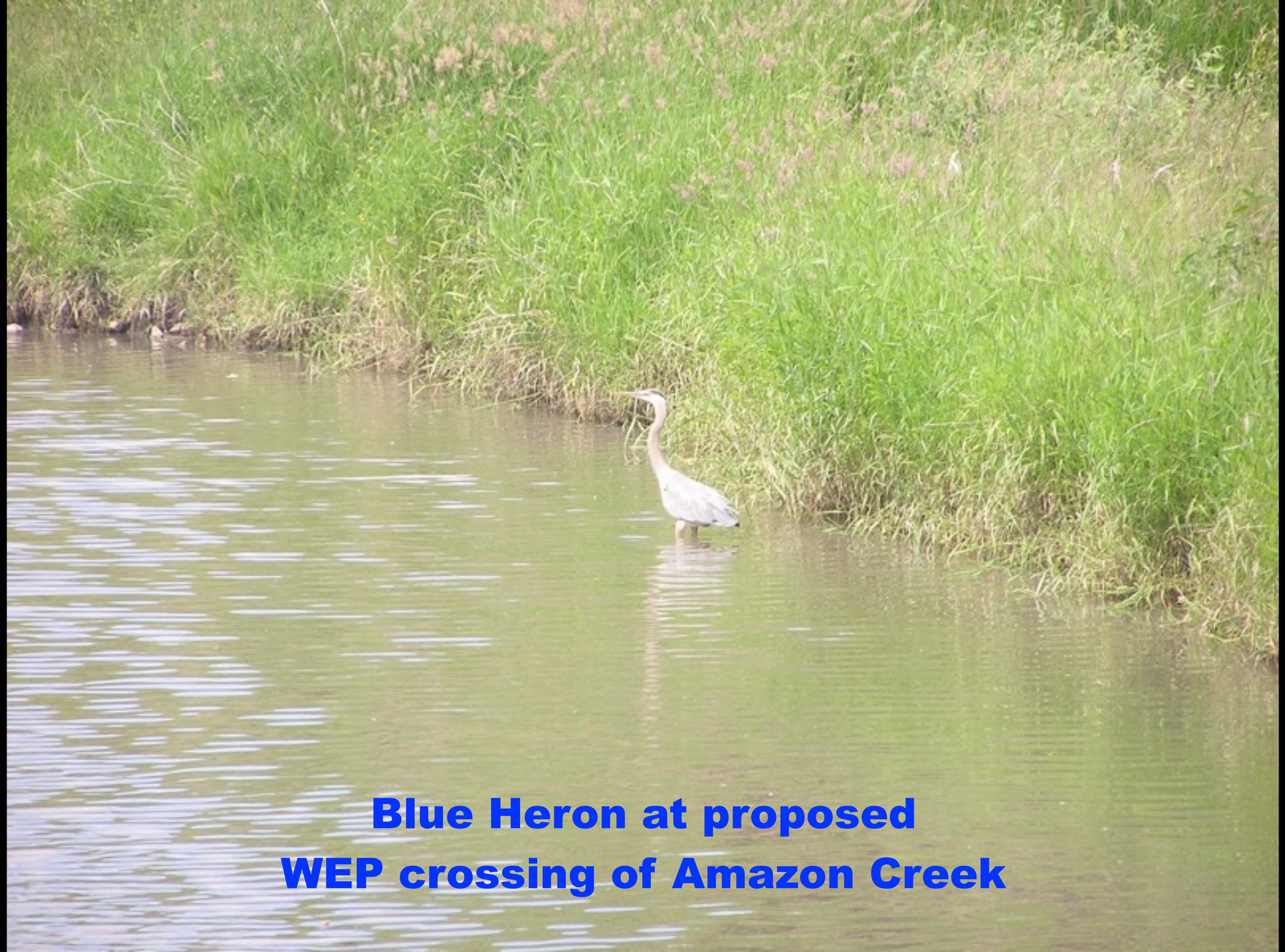

aerial photos by Jan Spencer
www.suburbanpermaculture.org
2002
In April, ODOT bought 7 acres here for $729,303
(needed for WEP / BL interchange)
WEP - BL
interchange
ramps
Bertelsen
Slough
target
11th
wetlands wal-mart


ODOT land
bought for
Roosevelt Freeway
BL interchange
Beltline
narrows
Roosevelt
railroad
In April, ODOT bought this
7 acres for $729,303
(needed for interchange)
cemetery


In the 1980s, the City of Eugene and ODOT pretended there were only a few wetlands in the WEP's path. The wet prairie is seasonally wet - in August (when this picture was taken) the wetlands are mostly dry, and a casual observer might not realize they are wetlands.
Terry st. extended
wet prairie (dry in summer)
W 11


Bertelsen widened
to four lanes for
WEP traffic
bertelsen slough
ADPA


Roosevelt
railroad
99
flyover ramp
6
7



Blue Heron at proposed
WEP crossing of Amazon Creek

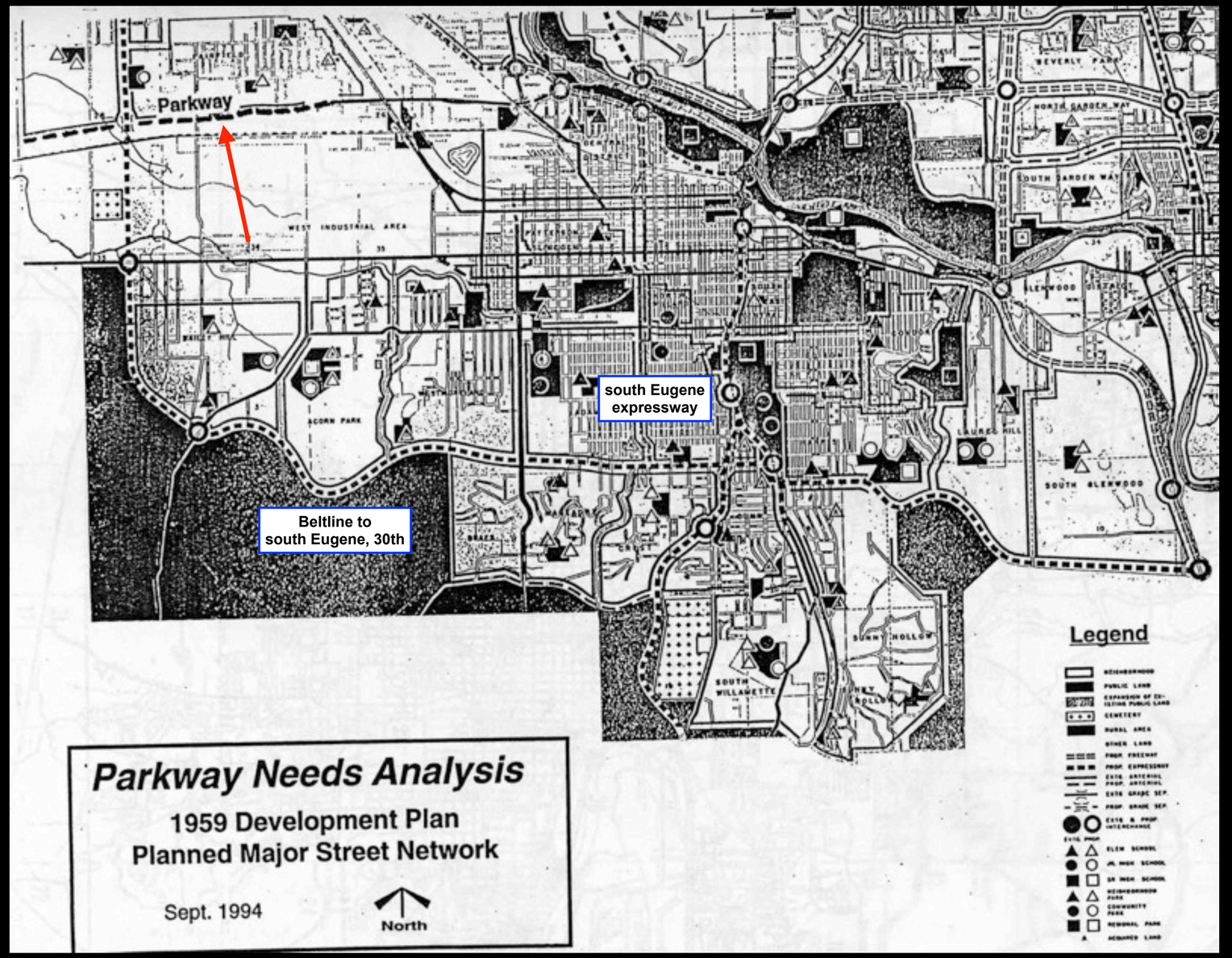

Amazon Creek
Bertelsen tributary


WETLANDS tour of
WEP wrong-of-way

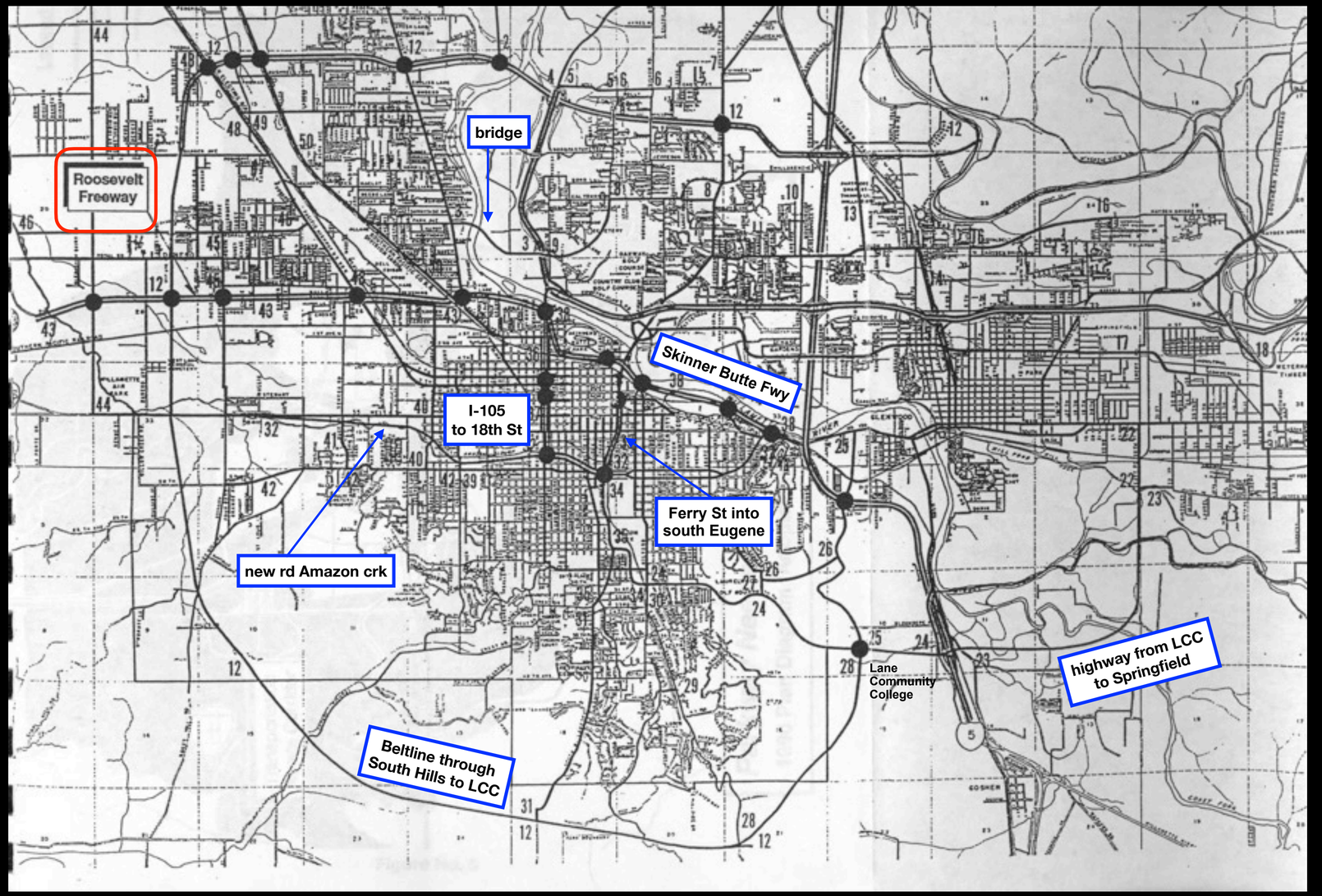
West Eugene Porkway: 1951-2007

Eugene's freeway fighters stopped Roosevelt freeway, Skinner Butte freeway, highway from downtown to south Eugene, Beltline through the South Hills.

Eugene 1959 highway plan



Eugene 1967 highway plan



Roosevelt Freeway

interchange with I-105

canceled 1972

The only part of Roosevelt Freeway that was built is this I-105 overpass just south of the Willamette River. In the 1960s, when I-105 was first built across the river, construction demolished several blocks of housing, provoking community opposition. For several years I-105 terminated at First Street while there was boisterous debate whether to allow the highway to continue into South Eugene. When that was canceled, a compromise allowed a short extension to Sixth and Seventh (a more logical terminus than First). It was built on pylons instead of fill dirt to mitigate impacts even though that is more expensive. Several years ago ODOT spent almost a million dollars to extend the southbound merge lane from Delta Highway onto I-105. This would have been done during Roosevelt interchange construction, but since that never happened, ODOT never fixed the dangerous merge zone that was left over. This “low build” fix improved safety but repairs are not as exciting as building new roads.

EUGENE EAST-WEST CORRIDOR ALTERNATIVE 3

(Recommended by TPC)

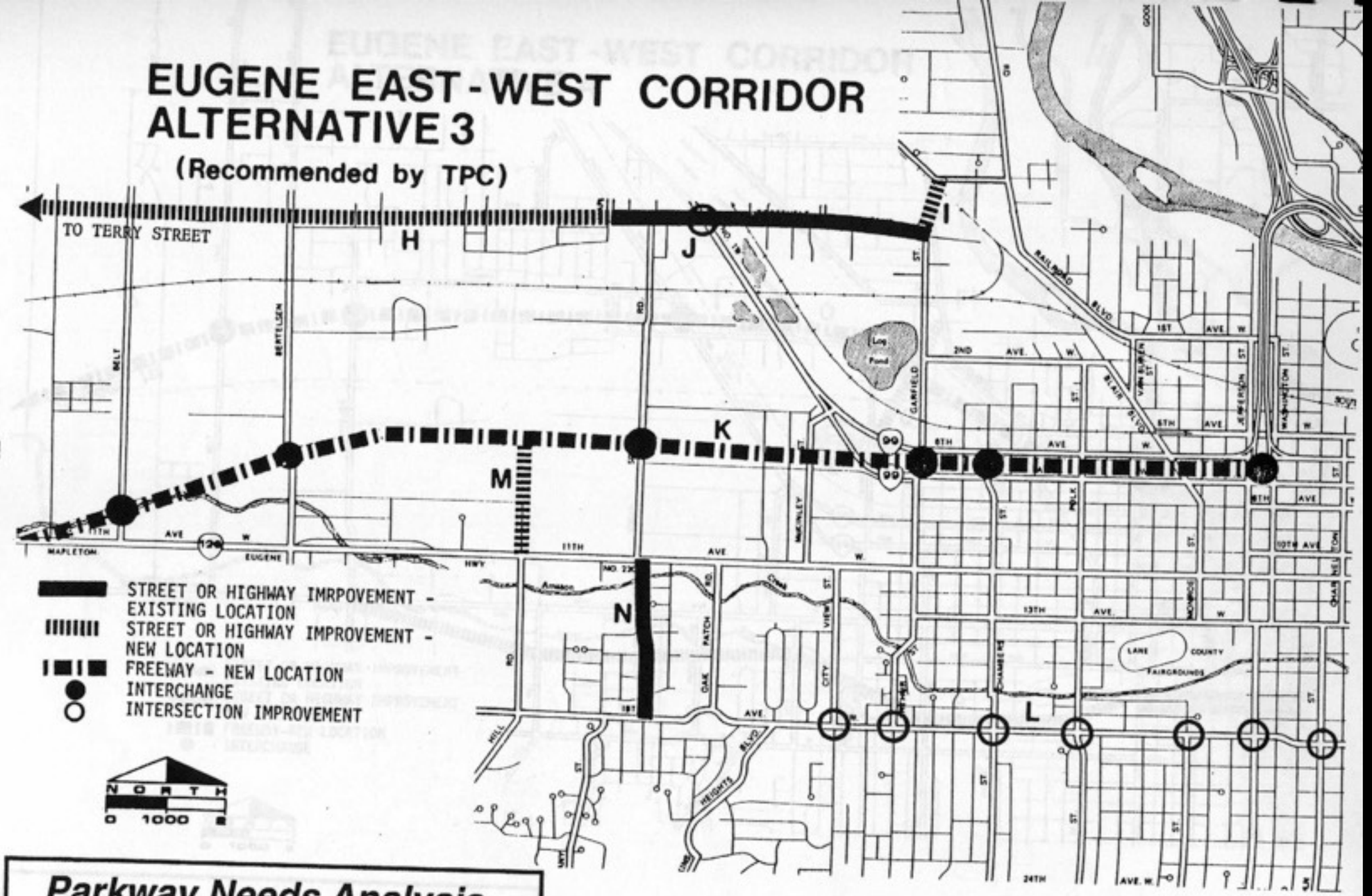
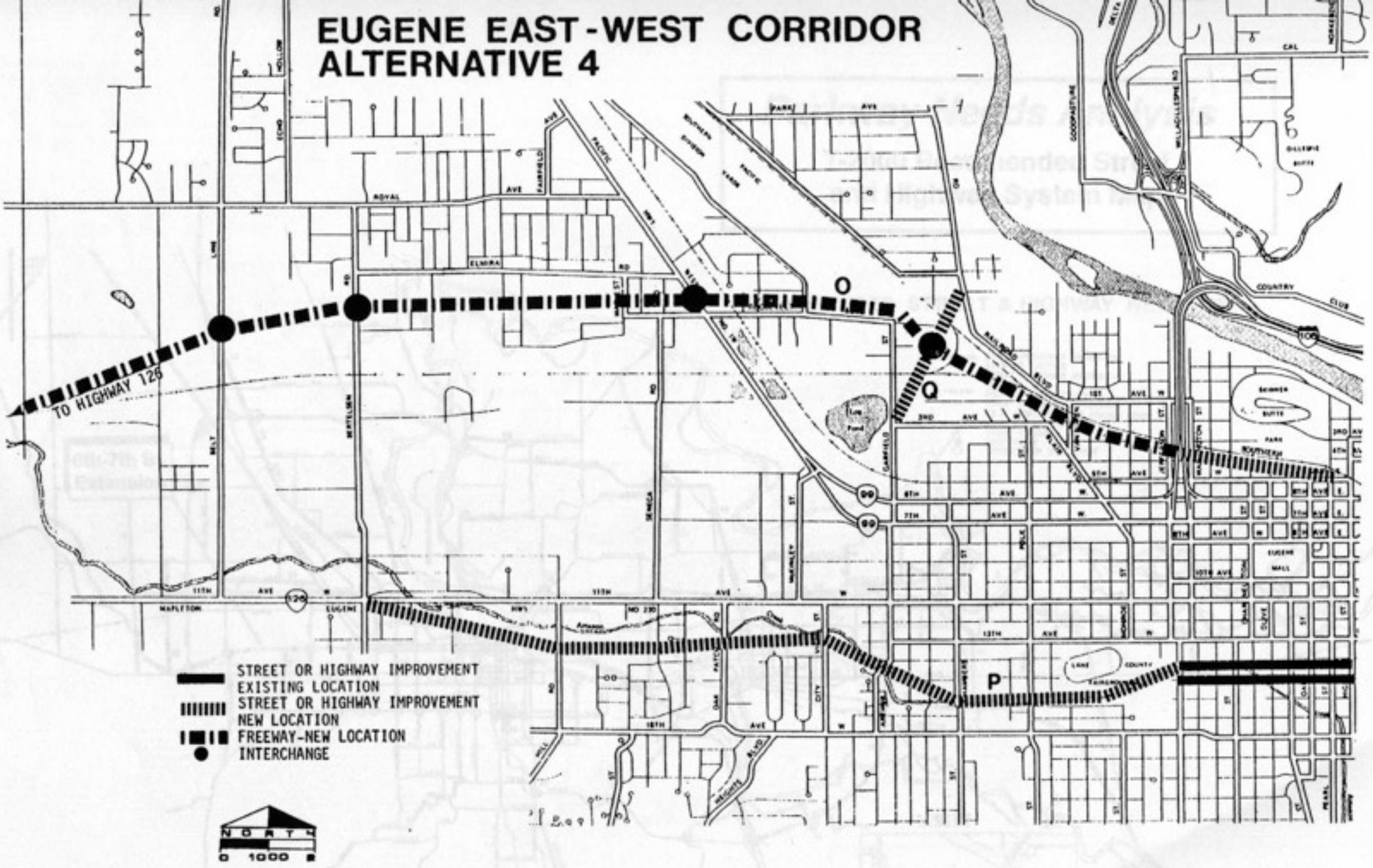


Figure No. 9

Parkway Needs Analysis

T-2000 Eugene East-West Corridor, Alt. 3

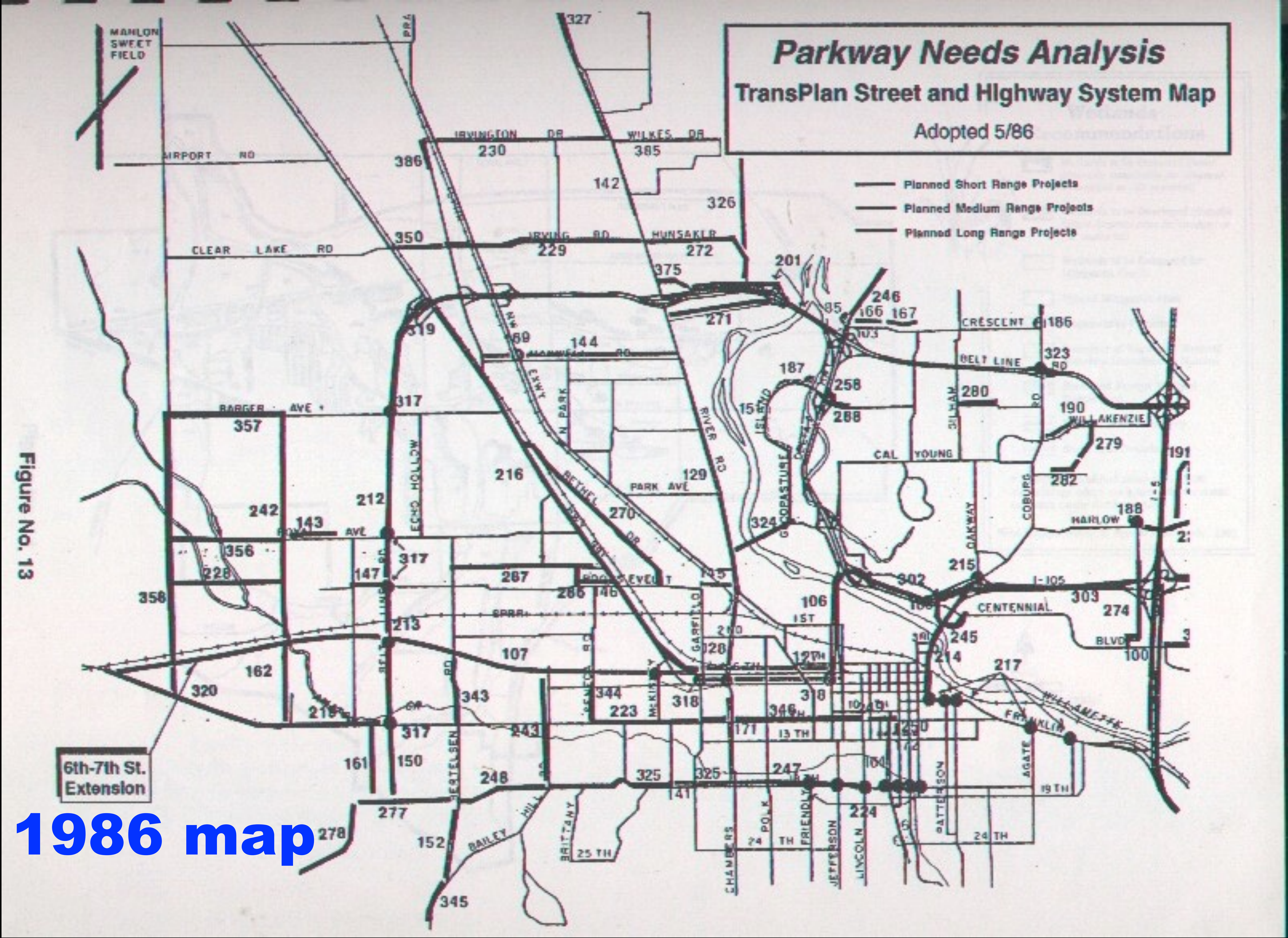
1978 map



Parkway Needs Analysis

T-2000 Eugene East-West Corridor, Alt. 4

1978 map


Parkway Needs Analysis
TransPlan Street and Highway System Map
Adopted 5/86
Planned Short Range Projects
Planned Medium Range Projects
Planned Long Range Projects
Figure No. 13
6th-7th St. Extension
MANLON SWEET FIELD
AIRPORT RD
IRVINGTON DR
WILKES DR
CLEAR LAKE RD
IRVING RD
HUNSAKER
CRESCENT
BELT LINE RD
BARGER AVE
CAL YOUNG
WILLAKENZIE
PARK AVE
RIVER RD
ECHO HOLLOW
BETHEL DR
HARLOW
I-105
CENTENNIAL BLVD
ROOSEVELT
GARFIELD
13 TH
19 TH
24 TH
25 TH
CHAMBERS
POLK
FRIENDLY
JEFFERSON
LINCOLN
PATTERSON
AGATE
FRANKLIN
WILLAMETTE
BAILEY HILL
BERTELSEN
BRITTANY
COBURG
OAKWAY
GOODPASTURE
ISLAND

1986 map