

“THE STREETS BELONG TO THE PEOPLE”

“THE STREETS BELONG TO THE PEOPLE”:
EXPRESSWAY DISPUTES IN CANADA, C. 1960-75

By DANIELLE ROBINSON, B.A., M.A.

A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements
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AUTHOR: Danielle Robinson, B.A. (McMaster University), M.A. (University of Victoria)

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Abstract

In Canada, as in the United States, cities seemed to many to be in complete disarray in the 1960s. Growing populations and the resultant increased demands for housing fed rapid suburban sprawl, creating a postwar burst of urban and suburban planning as consultants were hired in city after city to address the challenges of the postwar era. During this period expressway proposals sparked controversy in urban centres across the developed world, including every major city in Canada, namely Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montréal and Halifax. Residents objected to postwar autocentric planning designed to encourage and promote the continued growth of city centres. Frustrated by unresponsive politicians and civic officials, citizen activists challenged authorities with an alternate vision for cities that prioritized the safeguarding of the urban environment through the preservation of communities, the prevention of environmental degradation, and the promotion of public transit. As opponents recognized the necessity of moving beyond grassroots activism to established legal and government channels to fight expressways, their protests were buoyed by the rapidly rising costs that plagued the schemes. By the latter half of the 1960s, many politicians and civil servants had joined the objectors. Growing concerns over the many costs of expressways -- financial, social, environmental, and eventually, political -- resulted in the defeat of numerous expressway networks, but most were qualified victories with mixed legacies.

Expressway disputes were an instrumental part of a wider struggle to define urban modernity, a struggle that challenged the basis of politicians and civil servants power by questioning their legitimacy as elected leaders and uniquely qualified experts, respectively. The

subsequent emergence of urban reform groups that sought to change the direction of city development by challenging the autocratic municipal bureaucracies was the direct legacy of expressway and other development battles. Despite this, autocentric planning continued and demands for greater citizen participation did not result in significant changes to the form and function of municipal governments.

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Acronyms

Toronto

BLAST	Businessmen's League Against Spadina Termination
CBC	Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
MPP	Member of Provincial Parliament
NDP	New Democratic Party
NIMBY	"Not in my backyard"
OMB	Ontario Municipal Board
SHOUT	Students' Health Organization of the University of Toronto
SRC	Spadina Review Corporation
SSSOCCC	Stop Spadina Save Our City Coordinating Committee

AO	Archives of Ontario
CTA	City of Toronto Archives
YUA	Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections, York Univeristy

Vancouver

BC	British Columbia
BOMA	Building Owners and Managers Association of Vancouver
CCCPT	Citizens Coordinating Committee for Public Transit
CMHC	Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation
GVRD	Greater Vancouver Regional District
MLA	Member of the Legislative Assembly
NHB	National Harbours Board
NPA	Non-Partisan Association
TEAM	Electors Action Movement
UBC	University of British Columbia
VTs	Vancouver Transportation Study

CVA	City of Vancouver Archives
UBCA	University of British Columbia Archives
VPL	Vancouver Public Library

Edmonton

LRT	Light Trail Transit
METS	Edmonton Transportation Study
SOPCC	Save Our Parks Citizens' Committee
URGE	Urban Reform Group of Edmonton

CEA	City of Edmonton Archives
EPL	Edmonton Public Library

Winnipeg

COST Coalition On Sensible Transport
IUS Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg
WATS Winnipeg Area Transportation Study

CWARC City of Winnipeg Archives and Records Control
IUS Institute of Urban Studies
WPL Winnipeg Public Library

Montréal

CFAH Common Front Against the Highway
CPR Canadian Pacific Railway
FLQ Front de Libération du Québec
FRAP Front Revolutionnaire pour une Alternative Progressiste
HURC Housing and Urban Renewal Committee
LWCC Lower Westmount Citizens' Committee
MCSA Montréal Council of Social Agencies
MNA Member of the National Assembly of Québec
MP Member of Parliament
MUC Montréal Urban Community
PQ Parti Québécois
WAC Westmount Action Committee

AM Archives de Montréal
BANQ Bibliotheque et Archives Nationales du Québec
CDMV Centre de Documentation Marie-Victorin
MUA McGill University Archives

Halifax

AEC Action Ecology Centre, Dalhousie University
CNR Canadian National Railway
DREE Department of Regional Economic Expansion
HTNS Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia
MOVE MOVEMENT for Citizen Voice and Action

HPL Halifax Public Library
HRMA Halifax Regional Municipal Archives
UASCD University Archives & Special Collections, Dalhousie University

Introduction

In Canada, as in the United States, cities seemed to many to be in complete disarray in the 1960s. Growing populations and the resultant increased demands for housing fed rapid suburban sprawl, creating a postwar burst of urban and suburban planning as consultants were hired in city after city to address the challenges of the postwar era. As new residential areas cropped up, so too did shopping centres, posing a significant threat to central business districts across the country. For those who still lived in and around city centres, planning policies designed to revitalize struggling urban cores threatened neighbourhoods with large scale renewal schemes. Development battles over housing and central expressways polarized urban residents and prompted public interest in, and anxiety over, urban issues. Canada's cities were ailing and something had to be done to return them to good health.

During this period expressway controversies erupted in urban centres across the developed world, including every major city in Canada, namely Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montréal and Halifax.¹ In each of these cities, residents objected to postwar autocentric planning designed to encourage and promote the continued growth of city centres. Frustrated by unresponsive politicians and civic officials, citizen activists challenged authorities with an alternate vision for cities that prioritized the safeguarding of the urban environment through the preservation of communities, the prevention of environmental degradation, and the promotion of public transit. As opponents recognized the necessity of moving beyond grassroots

¹ There is also evidence of expressway projects facing "organized opposition" in smaller urban centres across Ontario, including London, Ottawa, Kenora, Sarnia, Brantford, and Brampton. "Implications of the Spadina Expressway Cancellation," Memo, W.G. Wible (Program Engineer, Department of Highways, Ontario) to A.T.C. McNab (Deputy Minister), 21 July 1971, Interim Box 737, File: District No. 6 Toronto: [Spadina Expressway] 1971; Archives of Ontario.

activism to established legal and government channels to fight expressways, their protests were buoyed by the rapidly rising costs that plagued the schemes. By the latter half of the 1960s, many politicians and civil servants had joined the objectors. Growing concerns over the many costs of expressways -- financial, social, environmental, and eventually, political -- resulted in the defeat of numerous expressway networks, but most were qualified victories with mixed legacies.

Citizen Activism in the 1960s and 1970s

High levels of citizen engagement characterized the tumultuous 1960s. In both Canada and the U.S., the Cold War provided the political context for the ongoing Civil Rights movement, anti-Vietnam War protests, the rise of second wave feminism, campaigns for Native rights, the New Left and various students' groups, as well as the proliferation of numerous other countercultures. Politics north of the border were also further complicated by the Quiet Revolution and Québec separatism. Keeping these factors in mind, this study contributes to growing efforts among scholars to document and understand this famously tumultuous era in the Canadian context.²

With many of the same movements growing in both Canada and the U.S., the influence of American activists reached beyond U.S. borders. Protests against the Vietnam War were particularly important in building links between American and Canadian activists, as thousands of draft resisters migrated north, and intellectuals and political activists fled the increasingly

² Important contributions to the growing literature on the 1960s in Canada include: Dimitry Anastakis, ed., *The Sixties: Passion, Politics, and Style* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2008); Bryan Palmer, *Canada's 1960s: The Ironies of Identity in a Rebellious Era* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009); Sean Mills, *The Empire Within: Postcolonial Thought and Political Activism in Sixties Montréal* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010); Stuart Henderson, *Making the Scene: Yorkville and Hip Toronto in the Sixties* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2011).

intolerable political climate. The most well known American expatriate of the era was renowned urban theorist Jane Jacobs, a leading critic of high modernist projects engaged in urban renewal battles on both sides of the border. In recent years scholars have stressed the importance of this connectivity between American and Canadian activism.³

Burgeoning environmental and urban reform activism animated urban politics in the postwar era. Heated debates over urban renewal and attendant concerns about public housing and transportation systems dominated the debates. New ideas about citizen participation, technology, and the environment emerged out of this activism. Historians have noted the ways in which growing numbers of people questioned their political representatives and no longer accepted city planners as impartial experts. In addition, they have identified these emerging citizen activists as typically middle class white collar workers, often intellectuals, who possessed the necessary political and media savvy to advocate effectively. Many were university educated Baby Boomers who were influenced by the rising student radicalism that helped define the institutional culture of the era. A number of key grievances were shared by urban reformers of various stripes, including accusations that planners offered simplified solutions to complex

³ David S. Churchill reports a net increase of 120,000 Americans immigrated to Canada between 1965 and 1976, a “significant portion” of which due to opposition to Vietnam. The types of immigrants he describes -- “mostly young, healthy, middle-class, and well educated” -- were the same kinds of people who often became leading activists. David S. Churchill, “An Ambiguous Welcome: Vietnam Draft Resistance, the Canadian State, and Cold War Containment,” *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 37, 73 (2004), 1-26. American expatriates were also influential in the creation of Greenpeace: Frank Zelko, “Making Greenpeace: The Development of Direct Action Environmentalism in British Columbia,” *BC Studies* 142/143 (Summer/Autumn 2004), 197-239. Zelko stresses the importance of international events like the Vietnam War and nuclear testing in inspiring activism in this country. On the rise of environmental consciousness in the U.S. at this time, see Priscilla Coit Murphy, *What a Book Can Do: The Publication and Reception of Silent Spring* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005). Jane Jacobs was the highest profile American expatriate of the era. Christopher Klemek argues that although the initial American response to her ideas was largely hostile, the fact that planners in Germany, England and Canada embraced Jacobs’s ideas shows they were “not inherently antiplanning, antimodernist, or NIMBYist.” He further argues these different cultures produced different fates for the urban reform movements in the New York City and Toronto, as the movement in Toronto was driven by a broad coalition of reformers that dominated the local government throughout the 1970s, while the movement in New York City was weakened by internal divisions. Christopher Klemek, “Placing Jane Jacobs within the Transatlantic Urban Conversation,” *Journal of the American Planning Association* 73, 1 (2007), 49-67 and “From Political Outsider to Power Broker in Two Great American Cities: Jane Jacobs and the Fall of the Urban Renewal Order in New York and Toronto,” *Journal of Urban History* 34, 2 (2008), 309-332.

problems, that planners obscured the political implications of their planning decisions, and that these professionals claimed scientific objectivity to defend decisions that negatively impacted already marginalized groups.⁴

Of all the urban renewal and redevelopment projects of the era, transportation infrastructure projects were especially complicated by the historical power of the automobile as a symbol of progress and modernity. Expressways and expressway planning represented aspects of a vision termed high modernism, which historians have employed to better understand these conflicts. Authoritarian high modernism revolved around harnessing the benefits of technical and scientific progress. In this view, scientific knowledge constituted a supreme authority and politics were consequently downplayed or excluded altogether. There was a single best solution to any problem; usually a large scale project that required a public authority to fund and orchestrate the plan. The efforts of high modernist plans proved most tragic where civil society was weak but where citizens were engaged, large scale urban redevelopment plans sparked protracted and unprecedented battles over the future of cities.⁵

⁴ On the important role of young, urban professionals in the inner city in urban reform movements: David Ley, *The New Middle Class and the Remaking of the Central City* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996). John Sewell draws similar connections in his chapter on the Spadina controversy: "Creating an Alternative to Modernism," chap. 6 in *The Shape of the City: Toronto Struggles with Modern Planning*, 173-198 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993). On the role of the Baby Boom generation: Doug Owsram, *Born at the Right Time: A History of the Baby-Boom Generation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996). Chapter 9, "Youth Radicalism in the Sixties," 216-247 focuses on post-secondary institutions. These activists did not draw attention to the similarities in training and status between themselves and the government experts they criticized.

⁵ James C. Scott, "Authoritarian High Modernism," chap. 3 in *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 89-101. Scott cites New York City builder and expressway promoter Robert Moses as a proponent of the approach, and does Marshall Berman, whose characterization of modernity as "creative destruction" is compatible with Scott's approach. Marshall Berman, *All That is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1982). See also, David Ward and Olivier Zunz, "Between Rationalism and Pluralism: Creating the Modern City," in *The Landscape of Modernity: Essays on New York City, 1900-1940*, (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1992), 3-15. Tina Loo employs the concept of high modernism in her study of a B.C. community whose small, subsistence economy was squashed by a government plan for a modern hydro plant and planned residential communities. Tina Loo, "People in the Way: Modernity, Environment, and Society on the Arrow Lakes," *BC Studies* 142/143 (Summer/Autumn 2004), 161-196.

Comparing Canadian and American Expressway Disputes

Expressway protests in Canada and the U.S. shared many features. Scholars have uncovered similar dynamics in numerous expressway disputes across the United States, including in Miami, Los Angeles, New Orleans, San Francisco, Washington, and Baltimore.⁶ In these cases, historians identified middle class professionals as the leading activists who worked to halt increasingly expensive expressway projects backed by all levels of government, from federal to city authorities. Opposition that was often initially motivated by the NIMBY sentiment matured into a more substantial reform vision, as protestors noted routes disproportionately targeted underprivileged black and Latino neighbourhoods. Instead of freeways, protestors advocated environmental protection, heritage and community preservation, and public transit alternatives. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, these citizen activists achieved widespread success in halting freeways. Their success, scholars argue, was due to their movement beyond grassroots protests to launching legal appeals, efforts which were bolstered by the rising cost of the schemes.⁷

⁶ There is a large body of literature on expressway disputes in the U.S. Key works include: Raymond A. Mohl, "Stop the Road: Freeway Revolts in American Cities," *Journal of Urban History* 30, 5 (2004), 674-706; Gilbert Estrada, "If you build it, they will move: The Los Angeles Freeway System and the Displacement of Mexican East Los Angeles, 1944-1972," *Southern California Quarterly* 87, 3 (2005), 287-315; Richard O. Baumbach Jr. and William E. Borah, *The Second Battle of New Orleans: A History of the Vieux Carré Riverfront Expressway Controversy* (Alabama: University of Alabama Press, 1981); William Issel, "'Land Values, Human Values, and the Preservation of the City's Treasured Appearance': Environmentalism, Politics, and the San Francisco Freeway Revolt," *Pacific Historical Review* 68, 4 (1999), 611-646; Zachary M. Schrag, "The Freeway Fight in Washington, D.C.: The Three Sisters Bridge in Three Administrations," *Journal of Urban History* 30, 5 (2004), 648-673; Michael P. McCarthy, "Baltimore's Highway Wars Revisited," *Maryland Historical Magazine* 93, 2 (1998), 136-157.

⁷ There are differences between highways, freeways, expressways, and parkways. For this study, I am focusing on expressways, which were often called freeways in the U.S. Expressways and freeways were high speed roads typically accessible only by cloverleaf interchanges and usually without intersections. Highways were simply major thoroughfares, with varying speed limits and access points. Parkway were designed like highways, but they were characterized by their aesthetic design, including trees, shrubs, and grassy medians. Parkway were also often literally routed through parkland. Due to the similarities between expressways and freeways, as well as the way in which the terms were used to apply to similar roadways in Canada and the U.S., I use both terms in this work.

While the similarities are striking, there were differences between disputes in the two countries. First, Canadian cities were not as racially divided as American cities, and routes often threatened multiple, diverse neighbourhoods, not just lower income areas occupied by racial and ethnic minorities. This factor meant charges of racial discrimination never defined Canadian disputes although the way in which expressway schemes tended to exacerbate existing inequalities between ethnic and socio-economic groups often animated the debates. Second, in Canada the federal government did not provide critical financial and administrative support to expressway projects. Federal authorities' refusal to actively support their provincial and municipal counterparts' plans or intervene in the disputes meant Canadian expressway protests were shaped by local-provincial government relations and the structure of urban governments, which varied across the country.

Taken together, the literature on American disputes and this study demonstrate the power of citizen activism but at the same time call into question the prominent position and credit many historians award to protestors for affecting change in this era.⁸ On both sides of the border, the popular protests have often overshadowed other factors in expressway defeats. Nowhere is this phenomenon more clearly demonstrated than in public memory and commemoration. This work clearly shows the ways in which public protests dominated the conversation about expressways and shaped the course of the controversies. At the same time, the stories from the six subject cities demonstrate the importance of financing, and in particular,

⁸ The existing literature on expressway disputes in Canada is very limited, with two participant-observer accounts: David and Nadine Nowlan, *The Bad Trip: The Untold Story of the Spadina Expressway* (Toronto: New Press, House of Anansi, 1970); V. Setty Pendakur, *Cities, Citizens & Freeways* (Vancouver: Transportation Development Agency, 1972); and only one scholarly examination: Christopher Leo, *The Politics of Urban Development: Canadian Urban Expressway Disputes* (Toronto: Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 1977).

the ways in which concerns about the non-financial costs of expressways were often key considerations in the decision to grant -- and sometimes rescind -- funding.

The trend of expressway cancellations across Canada and the U.S. were the result of more than a wave of people power sweeping cities. In cities where expressways were defeated, protestors identified and seized the opportunity created by early questions about the wisdom of expensive freeway networks to gain traction for their opposition campaigns. Early objectors fostered and fed doubts and led calls for the plans to be reconsidered. This early phase of questioning in turn raised the profile of expressway schemes in the media and among affected residents. The latter, including commuters as well as inner-city dwellers, took note of the questions being raised on both sides. The resultant emergence of inner city expressway projects as one of the most controversial of the era made all levels of government less likely to pledge available funding. In this way, the availability of funding seemed inextricably linked to the level of public protest but in fact the reluctance of administrations to approve costly expressway schemes actually predated the emergence of protest movements in most cities. Ultimately, governments' early reluctance to finance expressways was unwittingly underwritten by protestors' growing efforts until the opposition to the roads was so widespread that it triggered a shift in the prevailing wisdom on urban planning and the future of cities.

Highways in History

The scope of this work is such that a number of different bodies of literature can be called on to help contextualize this interpretation. Histories of Canadian highways represent a small subset of an already modest literature on autocentric development. There are a handful of

solid studies on auto inspired changes in the urban landscape, including the proliferation of parking lots and service stations, as well as the regulation and restriction of pedestrians.⁹

Academic writers have largely neglected highways, leaving it to popular historians to promote three well worn mythologies. First, they have conceptualized the highway as way to foster nationalism, a tool for drawing the country together and promoting unity, an avenue for greater mobility that will foster connectivity and a heightened awareness of the country as a whole.¹⁰

Second, they have conceptualized the highway as a way to conquer nature, where the power, economic support, and technological innovations required to construct the road represents a human victory in the ongoing struggle against the country's natural terrain and climate.¹¹ Third, popular accounts present the highway as a way to spread progress and modernity because of the

⁹ G.T. Bloomfield, "'I can see a car in that crop': Motorization in Saskatchewan 1906-1935," *Saskatchewan History* 37, 1 (1984), 3-24; Gerald T. Bloomfield, "No Parking Here to Corner: London Reshaped by the Automobile, 1911-61," *Urban History Review* 18, 2 (1989), 139-158; Stephen Davies, "'Reckless Walking Must Be Discouraged': The Automobile Revolution and the Shaping of Modern Canada to 1930," *Urban History Review* 18, 2 (1989), 123-138; Donald F. Davis, "Dependent Motorization: Canada and the Automobile to the 1930s," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 21 (1986), 106-132; Sasha Mullally, "The Machine in the Garden: A Glimpse at Early Automobile Ownership on Prince Edward Island, 1917," *Island Magazine* 54 (2003), 16-25. Canada's car culture remains almost completely untouched by academics, with the exception of Dimitry Anastakis's recent survey, *Car Nation: An Illustrated History of Canada's Transformation Behind the Wheel* (James Lorimer & Company Ltd., Publishers, Toronto: 2008).

¹⁰ Examples include: Edward McCourt, *The Road Across Canada* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1965); Wes Rataushk, *Silver Highway: A Celebration of the Trans-Canada Highway* (Markham, Ontario: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1988); John Nicol, "Halifax to Port Alberni by Automobile – Or Bust," *Beaver* 70, 4 (1990), 16-23; Ron Welwood, "The All Red Route Through the Kootenays," *Canadian West* 7, 1 (1991), 12-17.

¹¹ Examples include: Leonard W. Meyers, "Via the Fraser Canyon," *Beaver* 296, Winter (1965), 26-31; Allen A. Wright, "Yukon Hails Opening of the Dempster Highway," *Canadian Geographic* 98, 3 (1979), 16-21; Richard J. Chamberlin, "Monkman Pass," *Beaver* 312, 1 (1981), 8-13; Madelon Truax, "Alex Monkman's Dream," *Canadian West* 7, 4 (1991), 132-139, 150-151; David A. Harrison, "Opening and Naming of the MacKenzie Highway," *Alberta History* 38, 2 (1990): 24-29.

technological innovation its construction requires, as well as its role in facilitating both personal and commercial mobility.¹²

These mythologies have affected our conception of highways and thus they are beginning to attract critical attention from a new generation of urban scholars. Pushing past the familiar interpretations, they stress the importance of the ideology behind highways, and in turn, the ideological significance of resistance to highway schemes.¹³ The power of the automobile historically was derived primarily from the values and ideals it represented: progress and modernity. Expressway disputes highlight the fact that modernity and progress were neither inevitable nor unilaterally defined. Struggles between expressway champions and opponents were not over whether a modern, progressive city was desirable, but over how a modern, progressive city looked and functioned, and which group would ultimately win the contest to decide. Emphasizing the importance of resistance underscores the fact that autocratic planning as the product of deliberate, conscious, value laden choices.

¹² Examples include: W.R. Marshall, "On the Trail to Banff, 1912," *Alberta Historical Review* 14, 4 (1966), 25-38; Edwin C. Guillet, "Canada Drives Ahead," chapter 14 in *The Story of Canadian Roads* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), 192-213; Charles Whipp, *Road to Destiny: A History of Highway 21* (Petrolia, Ontario: Lambton Editorial Associates, 1983); Jean Larmour, "Jack Douglas and Saskatchewan's Highways," *Saskatchewan History* 38, 3 (1985), 97-107; Rosemary Malaher, "Crossing Western Canada by Car, 1925," *Manitoba History* 41 (2001), 14-17.

¹³ On the ideology behind highways: David W. Monaghan, *Canada's "New Main Street": The Trans-Canada Highway as Idea and Reality, 1912-1956* (Ottawa: Canada Science and Technology Museum, 2002); John C. Van van Nostrand, "The Queen Elizabeth Way: Public Utility Versus Public Space," *Urban History Review* 12, 2 (1983), 1-23; Joan Coutu, "Vehicles of Nationalism: Defining Canada in the 1930s," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 37, 1 (2002), 180-203; A. Suzanne Hill, "A Serpent in the Garden: Implications of Highway Development in Canada's Niagara Fruit Belt," *Journal of Historical Sociology* 15, 4 (2002), 495-514; Matthew Hatvany, "The 'Totem' Poles of Saint-Rock: Graffiti, Material Culture and the Re-Appropriation of a Popular Landscape," *Material History Review* 62 (2005), 49-59. On the significance of resistance: Danielle Robinson, "Modernism at a Crossroad: The Spadina Expressway Controversy in Toronto, Ontario c. 1960-1971," *Canadian Historical Review* 92, 2 (2011), 295-322; "Must everything give way to the automobile?" The Ancaster and Dundas Expressway Proposals in Ontario, 1967-1968," *Ontario History* 100, 1 (2008), 57-79. On resistance and alternatives to autocratic development more broadly, Steve Penfold, "Are we to go literally to the hot dogs? Parking Lots, Drive-ins, and the Critique of Progress in Toronto's Suburbs, 1965-1975," *Urban History Review* 33, 1 (2004), 8-23.

The Politics of Reform

The existing literature on the c. 1960s-1970s reform movements in Canadian cities is uneven. Most of the more traditional urban biographies review the controversy around renewal schemes, and at least mention, although often very briefly, the related fervour over expressway or freeway plans.¹⁴ A profile of Canadian urban development in the postwar period emerges when the smaller case studies of earlier scholars are taken together. This pattern reveals a similar trajectory and series of milestones for all of the six subject cities despite geographic and demographic differences. The highlights include earlier reform efforts that contextualize the

¹⁴ For example, in Vancouver: Walter Gordon Hardwick, *Vancouver* (Don Mills, Ont.: Collier-Macmillan Canada, 1974); Patricia Roy, *Vancouver: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: J. Lorimer., 1980); Graeme Wynn and T. R. Oke, *Vancouver and its region* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992). In Edmonton: John F. Gilpin, Stanley Arthur Williams, and Historical Society of Alberta, *Edmonton, Gateway to the North: An Illustrated History* (Woodland Hills, Calif.: Windsor Publications, 1984); Bob Hesketh and Frances Swyripa, *Edmonton: The Life of a City* (Edmonton, Alta.: NeWest Pub., 1995); James Grierson MacGregor, *Edmonton: A History* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1975); Dennis Person and Carin Routledge, *Edmonton: Portrait of a City* (Edmonton: Reidmore, 1981). In Winnipeg: Alan F.J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1975); Alan F.J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1977). In Toronto: J.M.S. Careless, *Toronto to 1918: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1983); James T. Lemon, *Toronto Since 1918: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1985). In Montréal: John Irwin Cooper, *Montréal: A Brief History* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1969); Annick Germain and Damaris Rose, *Montréal: The Quest for a Metropolis* (Toronto: Wiley, 2000); Paul Andre Linteau, *Histoire de Montréal depuis la Confédération* (Montréal: Boreal, 1992); Jean Claude Marsan, *Montréal in Evolution: Historical Analysis of the Development of Montréal's Architecture and Urban Environment* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1981); Robert Prevost, *Montréal: A History* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1993); John Sobol, *Montréal Inside Out: A New View of the City* (Toronto: ECW Press, 1992). In Halifax, Judith Fingard, David A. Sutherland, and Janet Vey Guildford, *Halifax: The First 250 Years* (Halifax, N.S.: Formac Pub, 1999).

postwar movement,¹⁵ the introduction of comprehensive “master plans” in the 1940s with planned residential, commercial and industrial regions, extensive highway networks, and

¹⁵ For example, in Vancouver: Kay Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown : Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980* (McGill-Queen's: Montréal, 1991); Jean Barman, “Neighbourhood and Community Interwar Vancouver: Residential Differentiation and Civic Voting Behaviour,” *BC Studies* 69 (1986): 97-141; Tom Hutton, “Unsettling the City, Reordering the City: A Review Essay,” *BC Studies* 145 (2005), 97-101; David Monteyne, “From Canvas to Concrete in Fifty Years: The Construction of Vancouver City Hall, 1935-6,” *BC Studies* 124 (1999), 41-68; Andrea B. Smith, “The CCF, NPA, and Civic Change: Provincial Forces Behind Vancouver Politics, 1930-1940,” *BC Studies* 53 (1982), 45-65. In Edmonton: Tracy C. Davis, “Theatrical Antecedents of the Mall that ate Downtown,” *Journal of Popular Culture* 24, 4 (1991), 1-15; John P. Day, “Edmonton Civic Politics 1891-1914,” *Urban History Review* 3 (1978), 42-68; P.J. Smith and L. D. McCann, “Residential Land Use Change in Inner Edmonton,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 71, 4 (1981), 536-51; John C. Weaver, “Edmonton's Perilous Course 1904-1929,” *Urban History Review* 2 (1977): 20-32. In Montréal: Christopher Armstrong and H.V. Nelles, “Suburban Street Railway Strategies in Montréal, Toronto, and Vancouver, 1896-1930,” in *Power and Place: Canadian Urban Development in the North American Context*, 187-218, Gilbert A. Stelter and Alan F.J. Artibise, eds. (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986); Harold Bérubé, “La Ville au Coeur de la Nation: L'utilisation du Passe dans L'elaboration de L'identite Urbaine,” *Urban History Review* 30, 2 (2002), 16-27; Marc Choko and Richard Harris, “The Local Culture of Property: A Comparative History of Housing Tenure in Montréal and Toronto,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 80, 1 (1990), 73-95; Pierre Filion, “Core Redevelopment, Neighbourhood Revitalization and Municipal Government Motivation: Twenty Years of Urban Renewal in Québec City,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 20, 1 (1987), 131-147; Jason Gilliland, “The Creative Destruction of Montréal: Street Widening and Urban (Re)development in the Nineteenth Century,” *Urban History Review* 31, 1 (2002), 37-51; Robert D. Lewis, “A City Transformed: Manufacturing Districts and Suburban Growth in Montréal, 1850-1929,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 27, 1 (2001), 20-35; Sherry Olson, “Downwind, Downstream, Downtown: The Environmental Legacy in Baltimore and Montréal,” *Environmental History* 12, 4 (2007): 845-66. In Halifax: Allen B. Robertson, “City Upon a Hill: Architecture and Identity in Colonial Halifax,” *Journal of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society* 2 (1999), 155-66; Henry Roper, “The Halifax Board of Control: The Failure of Municipal Reform, 1906-1919,” *Acadiensis* 14, 2 (1985), 46-65; R.D.J. Tennant, “The Electric Street Railway: Halifax's Symbol of Municipal Worth,” *Nova Scotia Historical Society Collections* 40 (1980), 133-59.

expanded utilities provisions,¹⁶ the gradual rising opposition to these schemes,¹⁷ and the continued post-1970s emphasis on managing urban and suburban growth.¹⁸

This study engages with interpretive questions that punctuate urban scholars' work. It asks how power and authority are obtained, maintained, and lost in local governments and community based activist groups. Reformers questioned their political representatives -- and dethroned many of them -- while refusing to accept planners and engineers as impartial experts. There was an irony in activists attacking the very basis of civil servants' power -- their expertise -- while simultaneously leveraging their own expertise to establish authority among reformers.

Scholars of urban governance and reform have identified a need for more nuanced accounts of

¹⁶ For example, in Vancouver: Jordan Stanger-Ross, "Municipal Colonialism in Vancouver: City Planning and the Conflict over Indian Reserves, 1928-1950s," *Canadian Historical Review* 89, 4 (2008), 541-80. In Edmonton: Kara Granzow and Amber Dean, "Revanchism in the Canadian West: Gentrification and Resettlement in a Prairie City," *Topia* (University of Toronto Press) 18 (2007), 89-106; Shuguang Wang and P. J. Smith, "In Quest of 'Forgiving' Environment: Residential Planning and Pedestrian Safety in Edmonton, Canada," *Planning Perspectives* 12, 2 (1997): 225-50; Stephen V. Ward, "British and American Influences on Canadian Urban Planning: The Example of Vancouver 1910-1975," *British Journal of Canadian Studies* 13, 1 (1998), 125-39. In Montréal, Marc H. Choko, Jean-Pierre Collin, and Annick Germain, "Le Logement et les Enjeux de la Transformation de L'espace Urbain: Montréal, 1940-1960," *Urban History Review* 15, 2 (1986), 127-36; Michele Dagenais, "Une Bureaucratie en Voie de Formation: L'Administration Municipale de Montréal dans la Première Moitié du XXe Siècle," *Revue d'Histoire De L'Amérique Française* 46, 1 (1992), 177-205; José M'Bala, "Prevenir L'Exurbanisation: Le Plan Greber de 1950 pour Montréal," *Urban History Review* 29, 2 (2001), 62-70. In Halifax: John Bacher, "From Study to Reality: The Establishment of Public Housing in Halifax, 1930-1953," *Acadiensis* 18, 1 (1988), 120-35.

¹⁷ For example, in Vancouver: Arn Keeling, "Sink or Swim: Water Pollution and Environmental Politics in Vancouver, 1889-1975," *BC Studies* 142 (2004), 69-101; Hyung-chan Kim and Nicholas Lai, "Chinese Community Resistance to Urban Renewal: The Case of Strathcona in Vancouver, Canada," *Journal of Ethnic Studies* 10, 2 (1982), 67-81. In Edmonton: Ron Kuban, *Edmonton's Urban Villages: The Community League Movement* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2005); Jack K. Masson, "Decision-Making Patterns and Floating Coalitions in an Urban City Council," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 8, 1 (1975), 128-37; Lisa Watson, "The Edmonton Fluoridation Controversy," *Alberta History* 38, 1 (1990), 15-24. In Montréal: Kwok B. Chan, "Ethnic Urban Space, Urban Displacement and Forced Relocation: The Case of Chinatown in Montréal," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 18, 2 (1986), 65-78. In Halifax: Susan Bugey, "Halifax Waterfront Buildings: An Historical Report," *Canadian Historic Sites* 9 (1975), 119-68; Donald H.J. Clairmont and Dennis W. Magill, *Africville: The Life and Death of a Canadian Black Community* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 1987); Jennifer J. Nelson, *Razing Africville: A Geography of Racism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 2008; Robert Vaison and Peter G. Aucoin, "Municipal Politics in Canada: Class and Voting in the 1968 Halifax Mayoralty Election," *University of Windsor Review* 5, 2 (1970), 68-78.

¹⁸ For example, in Edmonton: Peter Gorrie, "A New Lease on Life for Edmonton's Valley Villages," *Canadian Geographic* 106, 2 (1986), 22-31; James Lightbody, "City Campaigns on the Cusp and the Edmonton Mayoralty Election of 1992," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32, 1 (1997), 112-34. In Montréal: Yves Bussière, "The Automobile and Suburbanization: The Case of Montréal 1901-2001," *Urban History Review* 18, 2 (1989), 159-165; Yves Bussière and Yves Dallaire, "Étalement Urbain et Motorisation: Ou se Situe Montréal par Rapport à D'autres Agglomérations?" *Cahiers De Géographie Du Québec* 38, 105 (1994), 327-343.

the relationships between and within activist groups, and for a similarly nuanced portrayal of the connections between reformers and the bureaucratic class that was often targeted by their reform campaigns.¹⁹

The Question of National History

The scope of this work also inevitably evokes what is the largest question looming over the writing and teaching of Canadian history. Is it possible to write a truly national history? By extension, is it possible to talk about national trends? While previous generations of historians have lamented the death of national narratives, more recent waves have argued the so-called fragmentation of Canadian history actually represents a more accurate accounting of the varied experiences inherent in an incredibly diverse country.

The result of these debates for urban studies, as for many other fields, has been an uneven body of literature. Traditional urban biographies offer sweeping surveys of the lives of cities touching only briefly on reform, while a handful of case studies on the topic are heavily weighted to Toronto and Montréal, and rarely compare the subject city to others within, or

¹⁹ Mary Corbin Sies, "North American Urban History: The Everyday Politics of Spatial Logics of Metropolitan Life," *Urban History Review* 28, 1 (Fall 2003), 28-42; Stephen Bocking, "Constructing Urban Expertise: Professional and Political Authority in Toronto, 1940-1970," *Journal of Urban History* 33, 1 (Nov. 2006), 51-76. Peter Siskind, "Suburban Growth and Its Discontents: The Logic and Limits of Reform on the Postwar Northeast Corridor," chapter 8 in *The New Suburban History*, Kevin M. Kruse and Thomas J. Sugrue, eds. (University of Chicago Press: Chicago, 2006), 161-182. Mary Corbin Sies notes the connections between professional elites as agents as municipal authority and power in capitalist economies have been neglected by scholars.

outside of, the country.²⁰ The principle strength of the comparative approach is that it enhances understanding by contextualizing results. In practical terms, this means it makes the significance of similarities and differences between reform movements clear, and helps in accounting for these variations. In this respect, this study can be regarded as a measure of the feasibility, rewards and limits of large scale national history projects.

With this claim in mind, this project focuses on six cities of varying sizes and from different regions in an effort to establish an understanding of expressway disputes that at once relays the basic nature of the national experience while also highlighting the important differences in the shape and fate of the controversies in each city.

Methodology

This study is based on a wealth of archival sources from numerous repositories across the country, including municipal archives in Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montréal and Halifax, provincial archives in Ontario, Québec and Nova Scotia, and many university archives and public library collections. These repositories hold extensive records from federal,

²⁰ For example, in Vancouver: Katharyne Mitchell, "Reworking Democracy: Contemporary Immigration and Community Politics in Vancouver's Chinatown," *Political Geography* 17, 6 (1998), 729-50; Paul Tennant, "Vancouver Civic Politics, 1929-1980," *BC Studies* 46 (1980), 3-27. In Edmonton: James Lightbody, "The First Hurrah: Edmonton Elects a Mayor, 1983," *Urban History Review* 13, 1 (1984), 35-41. In Winnipeg: David C. Walker, *The Great Winnipeg Dream: The Re-Development of Portage and Main* (Oakville, Ontario: Mosaic Press, 1979). In Toronto: Marie-France LeBlanc, "Two tales of municipal reorganization: Toronto's and Montréal's diverging paths toward regional governance and social sustainability," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 39, 3 (2006), 571-90; Jon Caulfield, *City Form and Everyday Life: Toronto's Gentrification and Critical Social Practice*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994). In Montréal: Pierre Filion, "The Neighbourhood Improvement Plan: Montréal and Toronto: Contrasts Between a Participatory Approach to Urban Policy Making," *Urban History Review* 17, 1 (1988), 16-28; Timothy Thomas, "New Forms of Political Representation: European Ecological Politics and the Montréal Citizen's Movement," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 28, 3 (1995), 509-31; Lydia Ferrabee Sharman, "Design and innovation in Montréal through the 1960s and 1970s," *Material History Review* 61 (2005), 43-51; Shaw, Stephen J, "The Canadian 'World City' and Sustainable Downtown Revitalization: Messages from Montréal 1962-2002," *British Journal of Canadian Studies* 16, 2 (2003), 363-377; Robert K. Whelan, "The Politics of Urban Redevelopment in Montréal: Regime Change from Drapeau to Dore," *Québec Studies* 12 (1991), 155-169. The exception here is Harold Kaplan, *Reform, Planning, and City Politics: Montréal, Winnipeg, Toronto* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982).

provincial and municipal governments including reports, internal memos and other documents, and council transcripts. Collections from activist groups and important figures on both sides of the debates were also central to the project. These files contain position and strategy papers, press releases, personal correspondence and protest letters. This material was also supplemented with print media coverage.

Even with these considerable resources, the decision not to conduct interviews with contemporary participants and observers will undoubtedly attract attention and raise questions. Proponents of oral history argue that the value of the approach is not necessarily in unearthing the absolute or objective truth of history, but rather in better understanding how participants and observers remember and interpret history. Critics argue oral history is not credible because it is susceptible to faulty or false memories as well as the strategic reworking of history in one's own image. In reality, oral history is perhaps no more vulnerable to these shortcomings than documentary sources are, as both can contain incomplete, misinformed and even deliberately deceitful accounts. Similarly, while oral history testimonies are inextricably shaped by hindsight, so too are documentary sources produced in the days, weeks, months and years after the fact. Furthermore, interviews are shaped in much the same way documentary research is: in both cases, the researcher sets his or her own agenda in determining the scope of the inquiry.

Given how alike the strengths and weaknesses of oral and documentary history are, the calls for oral history to complement archival based studies of more recent people, places and events deserve a closer consideration. Oral history often invigorates historical studies by infusing them with the voices of those who might otherwise be omitted from the historical record and by providing a perspective not included in contemporary documentary sources. In the case

of inner city expressway disputes, archives and libraries across the country are well stocked with network plans, reports, maps, memos and all manner of evidence documenting the schemes from their origins to their conclusions. These are the kinds of sources historians would generally expect to find available, but add to this an equal if not greater quantity of records from anti-expressway forces, including publications, meeting transcripts, and numerous internal documents. On both sides of the expressway debates, this archival material illuminates not just the events as they unfolded at the time but offers two additional avenues of insight. First, the documents disclose behind the scenes details and strategies, and second, sources produced after the fact reveal how pro and anti-expressway forces analyzed their perceived victories and defeats as well as the impact of the conflicts. These candid disclosures, many made with the benefit of hindsight, are precisely the kind of valued insights historians turn to oral history to uncover.

A study of this scope will also be subject to questions about the broader framework within which the subject cities are contextualized. Inner city expressway disputes in this era can be studied from a variety of perspectives. The exclusive focus on a particular type of highway -- expressways -- in a particular location -- inner cities -- could give rise to a number of different studies. One approach would be to offer an examination of the inner workings of municipal administrations by detailing the proposal, planning and advocacy of expressways. Another approach would be to delve into the formation, operation and motivations of anti-expressway activists groups. Where a study focusing on city governments might adopt a political science approach, a consideration of activist groups could be written from a sociological perspective.

The frame of reference of this study is broader than either of those possibilities. Here the overarching focus is on the juncture where pro and anti-expressway forces meet, the points of

debate and dispute. This perspective provides insights on the inner workings of municipal governments, including their relationship with provincial counterparts, as well as a sense of the activists' activities. This broader view uses the conversation about expressways as a guide in shaping the narrative. Throughout this study, the focus remains on the interchange.

The topic of urban development controversies, and expressway disputes in particular, also offers a range of possibilities in terms of the geographical context in which a study can be placed. Expressway controversies can be found not only in the United States, where they are best documented, and in Canada, as this study demonstrates, but in a number of countries at similar developmental stages including England and Australia. In all these places, urban governments faced a common set of challenges and proposed much the same solutions. These locales saw not only the same kinds of expressway plans, but also the same kinds of expressway protests. On a broader scale, they all fit into a common profile of cities in this era, which were beset by challenges stemming from fluctuating demographics and besieged by a remarkable number of grassroots activist groups with various agendas. Canadian expressway disputes can therefore be understood as one chapter in a broader history of the ways in which protest and dissent shaped urban development across the globe in the 1960s and 1970s.

Study Structure

This study is divided into six sections, one for each city. The cities represent a cross section of urban centres in Canada, large and small, established and burgeoning, growing and declining. Toronto is examined first and the remaining chapters move across the country from west to east: Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg, Montréal and Halifax. The Toronto chapter

begins the study because the controversy in that city served as a landmark for the others. Debates in all cities were undoubtedly inspired by the unique, transnational spirit of the times, and many Canadian objectors sought to avoid the fate of their freeway-riddled American neighbours. The expressway cancellation in Toronto, however, was much more tangible and local. Across the country, the majority of activist groups formed in direct response to the freeway threat; they began with a very specific goal that would only later evolve into a broader reform vision. With this limited mandate in mind, Toronto showed both expressway supporters and detractors in other cities that expressways could in fact be defeated and that opposition to the routes was not limited to a vocal, radical minority. In this respect, it was a much more important development than any broader culture of protest for pragmatic activists on both sides of the debates.

Each chapter adheres to a similar narrative arc to highlight the similarities and differences between disputes, following a brief city biographical sketch with discussion of the evolution of the expressway controversy including a review of the plans, initial responses and pro and anti-expressway arguments and advocates, and finally the defeat of the plans.

In each city, planners and consultants assigned the task of solving the growing problem of maintaining easy access to, and mobility within, urban centres brought forward extensive expressway plans based on the assumption that the automobile was, and would continue to be, king. The initial mixed response among politicians and some officials to the expressway plans revealed important technical, philosophical and financial questions that citizen protestors later used to their advantage. While some politicians and officials welcomed the introduction of these plans, others were taken aback by the potential impact and incredible costs of the networks. As

some regarded expressways as essential components in their efforts to give their cities a modern makeover, others were concerned about the unstudied consequences and raised questions about the social and environmental impact of the routes. Increasingly, the incredible financial tolls of the roads were evaluated in light of these other costs.

As public opposition grew so too did debates in official circles. The debates were punctuated by furious rhetoric that conceptualized the expressway question as a life or death battle for cities fuelled by groups depicted as imported rabble rousers on one side and nefarious political interests on the other. Between elected and appointed officials, planners were often frustrated by politicians' indecision and reluctance to commit to proposals while politicians were careful to guard their status as decision makers. At the same time, conflicts over financing often pitted municipal and provincial administrations against one another. The ensuing disagreements attracted attention from engaged citizens. Increasing numbers of residents were alarmed about the impact of the expressway schemes on their cities. Their doubts and annoyance culminated in landmark demonstrations and public hearings that marked the peak of the debates. Protestors framed their opposition to expressways as part of broader objections over autocentric planning and challenged pro-expressway authorities to consider an alternate vision for the future of their cities.

The height of the debates was followed by the decline and defeat of expressway networks as a lack of political support combined with strong public opposition resulted in the cancellation or indefinite postponement of many schemes. The real impact of the controversies remains a subject of debate but officials' efforts to learn the lessons of the expressway disputes were evidenced by new directions in transportation planning in the wake of the defeats as well as

efforts to incorporate public participation in the planning process. Expressways were blocked in many cities but for those who fought the schemes, continued autocentric development exemplified by the expansion of major inner city arteries was not a significant departure from the defeated routes.

Chapter 1: Toronto, Ontario: “Stop Spadina, Save Our City!”

In Toronto the controversy revolved around the Spadina Expressway, a route that would descend into the heart of the city, forming an important link in officials’ ongoing efforts to construct two full expressway loops to encircle the city. While the initial plans met with some opposition from concerned ratepayers, the years immediately following the introduction of the Spadina scheme were characterized mainly by arguments between city and metro councils. Metro endorsed and forcefully advocated for the route as a project that addressed regional transportation needs while the city resisted being subjected to a road that they argued demanded inner city sacrifice for the benefit of suburban communities.

In the late 1960s objections to the Spadina route exploded beyond scattered community opposition and became a large, active and energized citizen protest movement. Protestors called for a new direction in city development, away from autocentric planning. They demanded a complete overhaul of planning practices, with more open government that would welcome greater citizen participation. As protests raised the political stakes on the issue, rising cost estimates also made the plans increasingly untenable. Finally after several reviews and appeals, the provincial government cancelled funding for the route, declaring the move a turning point in city planning. Citizen activists upheld the cancellation as a landmark victory for progressive reformers. In reality, the defeat of the Spadina Expressway was due both to the growing costs associated with the scheme and the protests that dominated the public discourse, and the cancellation did not mark a lasting turn away from autocentric planning.

Toronto

Situated on the northwestern shore of Lake Ontario, Toronto is a city surrounded by highways: the Gardiner Expressway, the Don Valley Parkway, and Highways 401 and 400.²¹ These routes were constructed prior to the height of the anti-expressway backlash, starting in the late 1940s and 1950s and concluding by the mid-1960s. For officials, then, the Spadina Expressway represented continuity in transportation planning. At the same time, the city's historical status as a financial centre in the region and the attendant strength of its financial and industrial sectors helped Toronto challenge Montréal's dominance and eventually overtake its eastern neighbour as the largest and most influential urban centre in the country by the mid-1970s.²² As the leading city, Toronto often served as a reference point for other Canadian centres, and planners called for modern transportation infrastructure befitting a national centre.

The postwar age of urban renewal spawned many protracted conflicts in Toronto beyond the Spadina controversy. Scholars have argued that earlier attempts to promote local democracy and citizen participation which fell victim to class, ethnic and political divisions set the stage for battles over planning policies in the 1960s and 1970s.²³ Others have maintained that activism in years preceding the expressway battle was primarily driven by ratepayers' groups advocating for their own neighbourhoods, in contrast to the broader based social and environmental activism

²¹ Observers have argued early highway development in the region set the stage for the continued expansion of networks that shaped suburban growth and its impact on city development in the Spadina era. John Sewell, "Building a Superhighway System," chapter 4 in *The Shape of the Suburbs: Understanding Toronto's Sprawl* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 49-74.

²² For a wide ranging account of the city's early development, J.M.S. Careless, *Toronto to 1918: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1983).

²³ Kevin Brushett, "'People and Government Travelling Together': Community Organization, Urban Planning and the Politics of Post-War Reconstruction in Toronto, 1943-1953," *Urban History Review* 27, 2 (March 1999), 44-58.

driving subsequent movements.²⁴ Trefann Court was the scene of one of the most notorious renewal battles from the mid 1960s to the early 1970s as destructive plans to remake the residential area were defeated by sustained citizen opposition in favour of constructive rehabilitation. Observers and academics are unanimous on the importance of this case as an example of the power of citizen activism and as marking a shift from destructive renewal to revitalization and preservation.²⁵ Toronto historical geographer and Spadina-era activist James Lemon argued this kind of citizen activism shaped the city's development throughout the twentieth century. Lemon identified two political trends in the Spadina era, the simultaneous increases of provincial government involvement and citizen participation in the city. In his assessment, the Spadina controversy was a milestone in the postwar reform battles and a clear indication of the divide between the city and suburbs.²⁶ Scholars have highlighted Toronto's embrace of participatory policy-making in the aftermath of these development battles but remain divided on the importance and influence of American expatriates like Jane Jacobs.²⁷

²⁴ Pierre Filion, "Rupture or Continuity? Modern and Postmodern Planning in Toronto," *International Journal of Urban & Regional Research* 23, 3 (September 1999), 421-444.

²⁵ Graham Fraser, *Fighting Back: Urban Renewal in Trefann Court* (Toronto: Hakkert, 1972). Ryan K. James, "From 'slum clearance' to 'revitalization': Planning, Expertise and Moral Regulation in Toronto's Regent Park," *Planning Perspectives* 25, 1 (January 2010), 69-86. John Sewell was a leading organizer in the Trefann Court battle and prominent reformer, later as alderman and mayor, in the city: John Sewell, *Up Against City Hall* (Toronto: James Lorimer & Company, 1972), and *The Shape of the City: Toronto Struggles with Modern Planning* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993).

²⁶ James T. Lemon, *Toronto Since 1918: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: Lorimer, 1985), especially chapter 5, "Multicultural and Financial Metropolis, 1955-1984," 151-187.

²⁷ On Toronto's embrace of participatory policy making in the post-Spadina years, Pierre Filion, "The Neighbourhood Improvement Plan, Montréal and Toronto: Contrasts Between a Participatory and a Centralized Approach to Policy Making," *Urban History Review* 17, 1 (June 1988), 16-28. While some scholars have argued Jane Jacobs was a transformative figure in postwar Toronto, subsequent works have challenged that interpretation, arguing her influence and impact has been greatly overstated: for the former argument, Christopher Klemek, "From Political Outsider to Power Broker in Two 'Great American Cities': Jane Jacobs and the Fall of the Urban Renewal Order in New York and Toronto," *Journal of Urban History* 34, 2 (January 2008), 309-332; for the latter argument, Richard White, "Jane Jacobs and Toronto, 1968-1978," *Journal of Planning History* 10, 2 (2011), 114-138.

In the postwar era, the city and its neighbouring municipalities were each governed by their own elected council and mayor until 1953 when Metropolitan Toronto was created. Metro was created by provincial legislation and included the City of Toronto, the towns of New Toronto, Mimico, Weston, and Leaside, the villages of Long Branch, Swansea, and Forest Hill, and the townships of Etobicoke, York, North York, East York, and Scarborough. Metro was subsequently reworked into six municipalities in 1967, comprised of the City of Toronto, North York, East York, York, Etobicoke and Scarborough. During these years the population of Toronto expanded almost continuously from 667,457 in 1941, to 675,754 in 1951, to 672,407 in 1961, to 712,786 in 1971 while the Metropolitan Toronto population grew much more rapidly, from 909,928 in 1941, to 1,117,470 in 1951, to 1,618,787 in 1961, to 2,086,017 in 1971.²⁸

Metro's mandate was to coordinate services and planning, including transportation, across municipal territories. While some have detailed the ways in which the creation of regional administrations and rising suburban populations fostered and fed urban-suburban tensions in cities across the country, other scholars have argued provincial officials in Ontario did not intend to restrict municipal autonomy. Instead, they contend, the aim was to strengthen local government by empowering them with a broader planning and implementation mandate, thereby preventing city stagnation and its attendant impact on the province.²⁹ Whatever the intention, the rivalries inherent within a regional government were instrumental in drawing the battle lines that dictated much of the expressway debates.

²⁸ Lemon, "Table I: Population Growth in Toronto and Region, 1911-1981," in *Toronto*, 194.

²⁹ L. Kulisek and T. Price, "Ontario Municipal Policy Affecting Local Autonomy: A Case Study Involving Windsor and Toronto," *Urban History Review* 16, 3 (February 1988), 255-270. John Sewell details the suburban dynamics at length and argues in the case of the Spadina Expressway supporters and opponents were divided along urban and suburban lines: John Sewell, *The Shape of the Suburbs: Understanding Toronto's Sprawl* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 181.

Concerns “largely speculative and difficult to evaluate”

The origins of the Spadina Expressway can be traced back to January 1948 when a city-wide vote of 34,261 to 32,078 approved plans to improve and widen Spadina Avenue and Spadina Road. By 1952, plans referred to Spadina as an arterial road, and by 1953 after the formation of Metropolitan Toronto, the plan had become the \$11,500,000 Spadina Expressway, the cost of which would be split equally between the newly formed Metro government and the province.³⁰ The expressway was slated to run south from Downsview Airport, parallel to Bathurst, shifting east between Eglinton Avenue and St. Clair Avenue West to align with Spadina Road at Davenport Road, then following Spadina Road south to the Gardiner Expressway. The high-speed, limited access portion would stop between Harbord Street and College Street, where the remainder of Spadina Road south to the Gardiner would be reconstructed as a major arterial road. In 1956, the planning board recommended a rapid transit line be installed with the expressway. In December of the following year, the Crosstown Expressway was first proposed, at an estimated cost of \$68,000,000. The Crosstown was slated to connect with the Spadina Expressway and run east across the city. By July 1959, plans for the \$25,000,000 Yorkdale interchange at the northern end of the expressway were approved. The same year, metro council released its official plan for the region. The plan showed two expressway loops, one at the city limits and one circling the inner city, with both loops linked by the planned Richview and Spadina Expressways.³¹

³⁰ Nowlan, *The Bad Trip*, 6.

³¹ James MacKenzie, “How the 20-year political nightmare of the Spadina Expressway happened,” *The Globe and Mail* 20 June 1970.

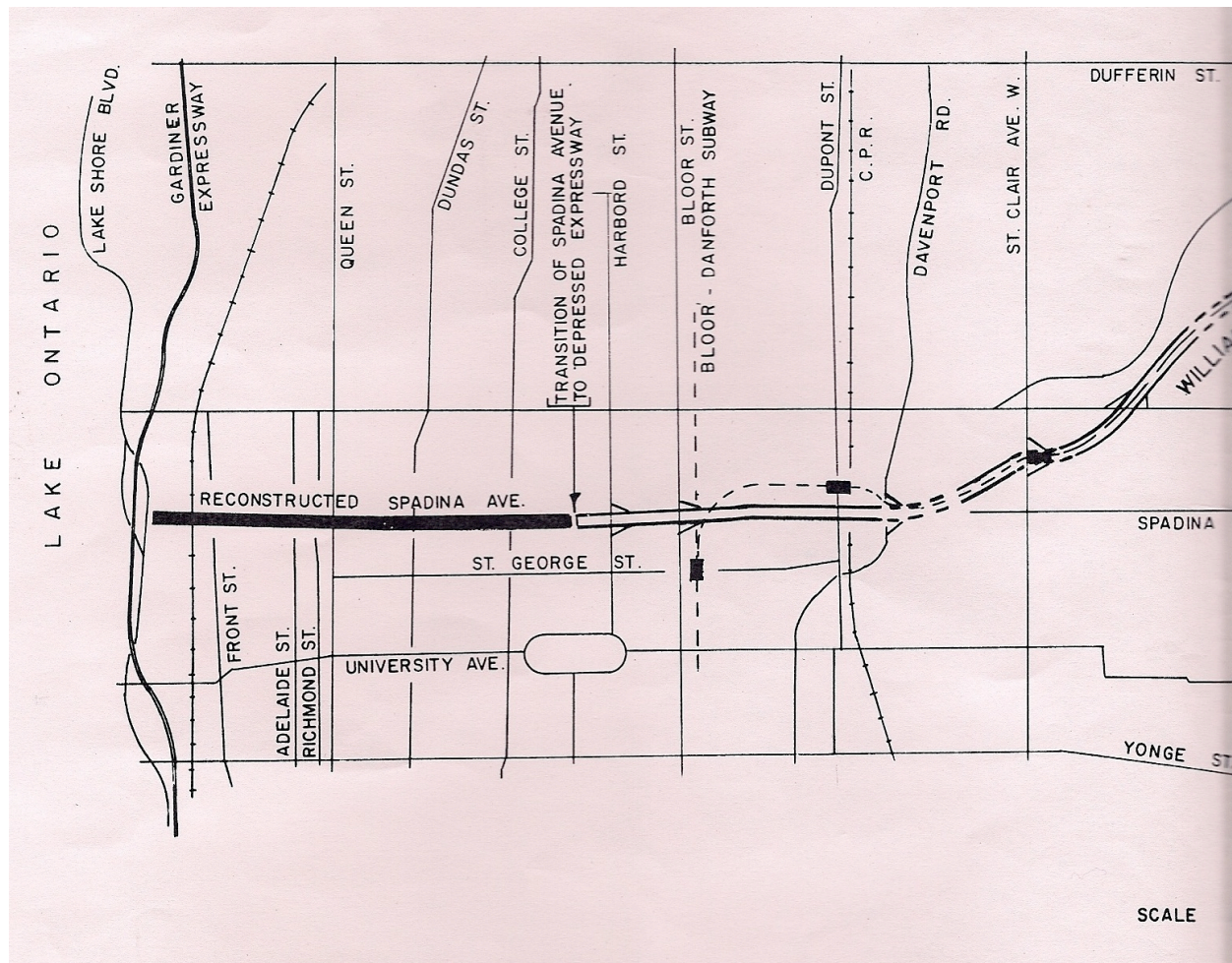


Image 1: "William R. Allen Expressway and Rapid Transit Line, c. 1970 (Part 1 of 2)" Metropolitan Toronto, Department of Roads and Traffic. A Planning Review and Appraisal: William R. Allen Expressway and Rapid Transit Line. February 1970. Courtesy of the City of Toronto.

In October 1961, the Metropolitan Planning Board adopted the Spadina Expressway, subway line, and Crosstown Expressway together. The Spadina plan called for a combined depressed expressway and rapid transit route running through primarily residential areas, and was clearly situated as part of the larger expressway network.³² The planning board said existing city streets could not accommodate the ever increasing volume of traffic, and thus the

³² Ibid.

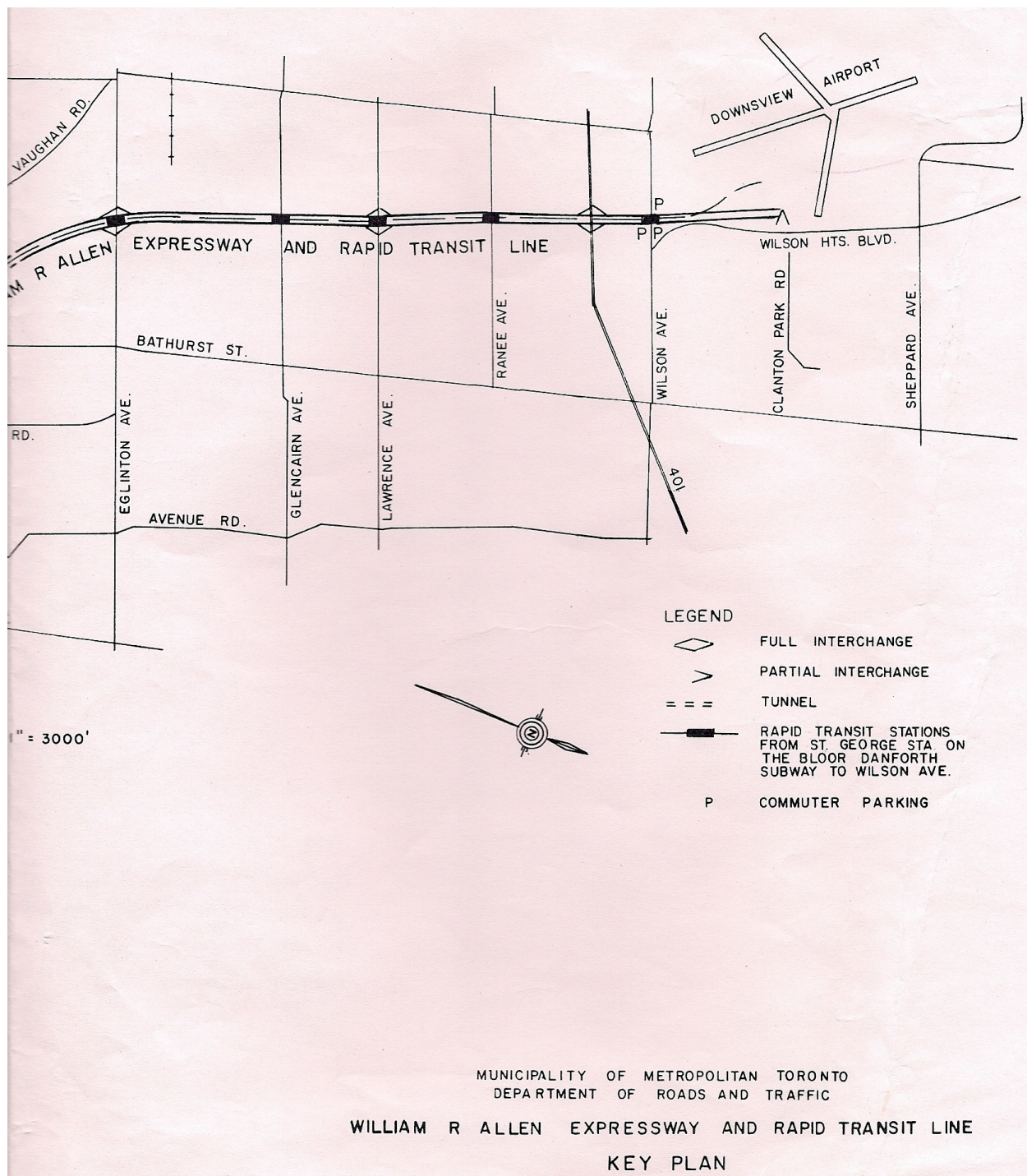


Image 1: "William R. Allen Expressway and Rapid Transit Line, c. 1970 (Part 2 of 2)"
Metropolitan Toronto, Department of Roads and Traffic. *A Planning Review and Appraisal: William R. Allen Expressway and Rapid Transit Line.* February 1970. Courtesy of the City of Toronto.

expressway was needed. Regarding the loss of parkland, they said all compromised areas would be recreated elsewhere in the city, and that although residents in communities bisected by the expressway “may feel somewhat isolated,” such concerns were “largely speculative and difficult to evaluate.”³³ At the time, city council wanted the expressway scheme postponed, advocating rapid transit instead. In addition, forty-five ratepayers’ groups registered their opposition, but despite this opposition, Metro Chairman Frederick Gardiner (1953-61) cast the deciding vote approving the scheme.³⁴ As Gardiner’s biographer Timothy J. Colton noted, Gardiner assumed that pushing the expressway plans through would leave his successors with no choice but to finish the project, but he was wrong.³⁵

A transcript of the public hearings held before the metro council does not exist but in 1962 the council did request that the planning board produce another report responding directly to protestors’ many concerns. In the report, the board argued pollution could only be prevented by completely banning cars. Where downtown congestion was concerned, they argued the expressway would not exacerbate problems, rather it would only bring the same number of cars downtown more efficiently. In response to concerns the expressway would draw consumers out of the core, they argued downtown businesses suffered from the exodus of middle class families to the suburbs, not the creation of roadways designed to increase access between the suburbs and the inner city. The report said complainants’ most common argument against the plan was that rapid mass transit alternatives had not been seriously considered. In response the board argued

³³ “Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board: Report on the Proposed Spadina Expressway and Rapid Transit,” 6-8, 7, 8, 9-13, October 1961, F0417-1975-013/002 (24); Clara Thomas Archives and Special Collections, York University (YUA).

³⁴ “F.G.’s three votes keep expressways alive,” *The Toronto Star* 6 December 1961.

³⁵ Timothy J. Colton, *Big Daddy: Frederick G. Gardiner and the Building of Metropolitan Toronto* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 179.

that expressways were absolutely necessary regardless of rapid transit provisions because each option served different forms of traffic, and neither could be substituted for the other. They also presented one of the most popular arguments of pro-Spadina advocates, which was that they could not control whether people bought cars or how often they used them. Protestors also questioned whether developers of the Yorkdale Shopping Centre exerted undue influence on the planning process, as their centre was situated directly beside the most northern interchange. The board argued the situation was quite the opposite, in that developers chose their site logically based on the city's planned expressway network, instead of the city catering to the developers.³⁶ An earlier report from the Metropolitan Roads and Traffic Committee, however, suggested otherwise – as it stated explicitly that “extensive discussions” were held with representatives from Eaton's about the proposed Yorkdale Shopping Centre in relation to the expressway's development.³⁷ Finally, the board devoted two pages to comparing population density, miles of expressways, and miles of rapid transit in Philadelphia, Boston, Washington, and Toronto in an effort to demonstrate the need for expanded transportation networks.³⁸ Metro Commissioner of Planning Wojciech Wronski later contradicted this line of reasoning. He told a protestor who evoked American examples to demonstrate the folly of urban expressways that “Expressways in

³⁶ “Report on Spadina Expressway Brief and Ratepayer Presentations,” 1-2, 3, 8, 4, 9, 1-2, c. February 1962, Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board, F0417-1975-013/002 (24); YUA.

³⁷ Report No. 24 of the Roads and Traffic Committee, Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto, 1-2, 12 December 1961, F0417-1975-013/006 (05); YUA.

³⁸ “Report on Spadina Expressway Brief,” 10-11, c. February 1962, Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board, F0417-1975-013/002 (24); YUA.

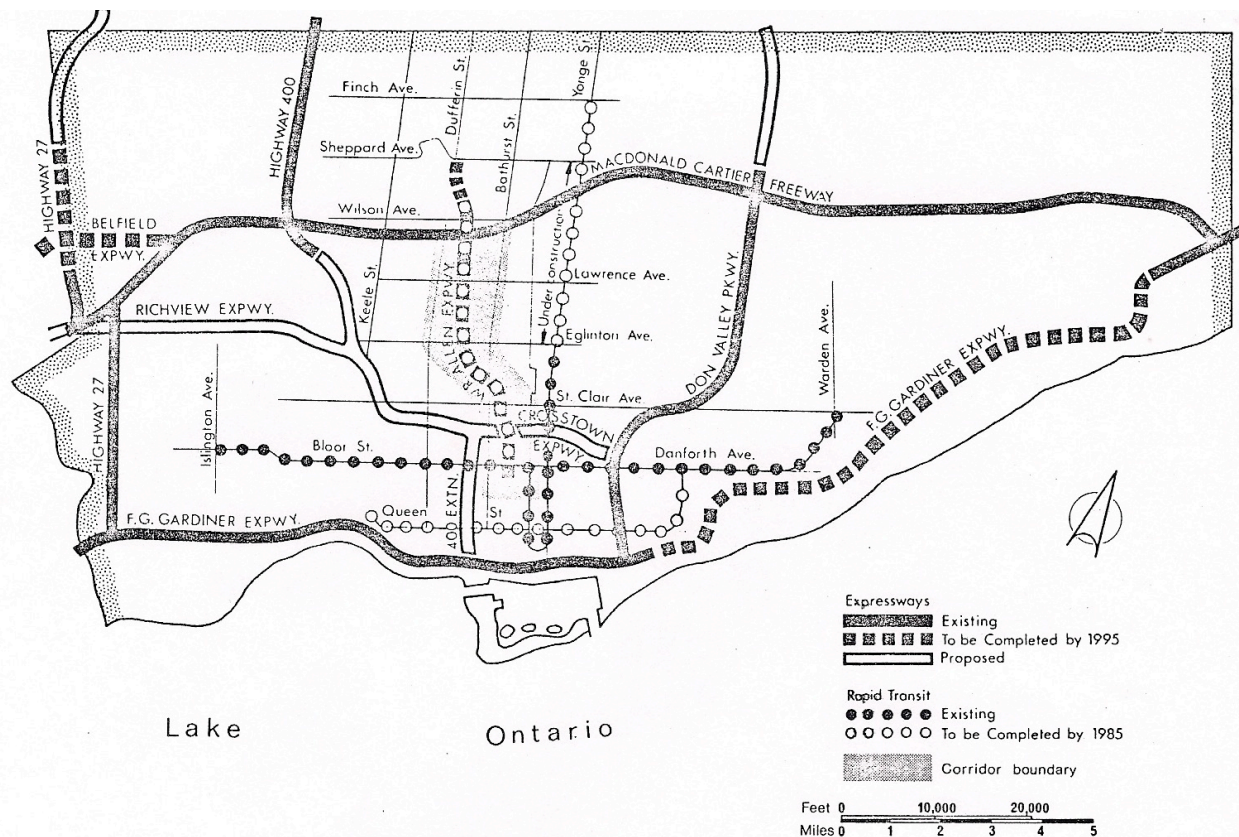


Image 2: "Major Transportation Facilities and Project Corridor," Metropolitan Toronto, Department of Roads and Traffic. *A Planning Review and Appraisal: William R. Allen Expressway and Rapid Transit Line.* February 1970. Courtesy of the City of Toronto.

the large American cities cannot be compared to the Wm. R. Allen [Spadina] Expressway. The problems of the cities in the United States are very different from our problems in Toronto."³⁹

In November 1961, 100 angry objectors attended a Roads Committee meeting headed by Metro Chair Gardiner. Speaking out against the Spadina scheme as well as the Crosstown route, protestors stressed the importance of public transit instead.⁴⁰ A few days later, a ratepayers' federation was formed to oppose the Spadina scheme, arguing it would increase taxes and

³⁹ W. Wronski to Toronto resident, 26 February 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (3); YUA. The William R. Allen Expressway and the Spadina Expressway were the same road – the Allen was the official name chosen for the route but it was rarely used even in government documents.

⁴⁰ "Expressway hearing: Value doubted of Spadina plan," *The Toronto Star* 17 November 1961.

destroy parkland in the Cedarvale and Nordeimer ravines.⁴¹ In December 1961, Gardiner approved the Spadina scheme independent of the Crosstown, at a cost of \$73,600,000 for the expressway, and \$80,000,000 for the subway.⁴² When the plan floundered at a subsequent metro council meeting, ratepayers groups from the Bathurst-Lawrence and Downsview neighbourhoods, both in suburban areas north of the inner city, demanded the plan be revived. At the same time, groups from Forest Hill, York, and the inner city maintained their opposition.⁴³ William Allen, who followed Gardiner as Metro Chairman supported Spadina without the Crosstown link, as did North York Councillor Irving Paisley. There was speculation at the time that Allen, who previously opposed the scheme, had changed his mind when he learned provincial funding would not be available for the Yorkdale interchange where the Spadina route and Highway 401 met if the expressway was shortened.⁴⁴ In March 1962 the plan was revived and approved again by metro council at an estimated cost of \$154,000,000 for the expressway and rapid transit line, and scheduled for completion in 1970.⁴⁵ By August 1963, the Ontario Municipal Board approved the Spadina Expressway at an estimated cost of \$73,600,000.

Over three years later in December 1966, metro council adopted the expressway system outlined in its 1959 report, together with the inner expressway ring and the Crosstown

⁴¹ "Form group to fight Spadina Expressway," *The Toronto Star* 22 November 1961.

⁴² MacKenzie, "How the 20-year political nightmare," *The Globe and Mail* 20 June 1970.

⁴³ Paul Hunt, "Angry ratepayers revive Spadina plan," *The Toronto Telegram* 12 January 1962.

⁴⁴ Robert MacDonald, "Allen does about-face on Spadina," *The Toronto Telegram* 22 January 1962.

⁴⁵ "Metro OKs 154 million Spadina thruway plan," *The Toronto Star* 7 March 1962. Spadina opponents later accused Paisley of working with Yorkdale development company Webb and Knapp to fabricate public support for the Spadina scheme at this time, and were quick to point out that Frederick Gardiner was on the Board of Directors for the Foundation Company of Canada, of which Fenco-Harris – another company involved in the development of Yorkdale – was a subsidiary. The accusations are included in David Nowlan and Nadine Nowlan's book on the expressway controversy, they were also aired in the local newspapers. *The Bad Trip* (Toronto: New Press, House of Anasi, 1970).

expressway. Also in that month, the first northern section of the Spadina Expressway opened from Wilson Heights to Lawrence Avenue, including the Yorkdale interchange.⁴⁶ At the time, Metro Commissioner of Traffic Engineering Sam Cass (1954-78; Metro Commissioner of Roads and Traffic, 1978-89), who regarded the expressway dominated Los Angeles as a model for traffic management, argued that persistent calls for increased public transit funding were unrealistic and instead supported the plan to build more expressways.⁴⁷ Frustrated by the slow pace of construction, metro council postponed the Scarborough Expressway in favour of hurrying progress on Spadina in spring 1969.⁴⁸

In September of that year, mounting protests caused city council to call for a temporary postponement of construction pending a review, and in October, council completed the Official Plan for the City of Toronto. The section on transportation clearly outlined city council's stance. The integration of city and regional transportation networks were a priority, as was insuring all areas enjoyed "a full range of transportation services, predominantly modes of mass transit" centered around the downtown core. The plan prioritized the development and expansion of public transit facilities, especially subway lines. Expressways were supported strictly to serve "commercial and industrial traffic and for those people for whom the use of the automobile [was] essential." Finally, the city council rejected metro's expressway network, noting specifically that the Crosstown Expressway would not be considered unless the need for such a roadway was

⁴⁶ MacKenzie, "How the 20-year political nightmare," *The Globe and Mail* 20 June 1970.

⁴⁷ "Cass: Give them more expressways," *The Toronto Daily Star* 13 December 1966. Of Los Angeles, Cass said, "It has the largest growth rate of any city in the world and the greatest dollar value downtown – it can't be all bad. Basically, traffic moves better in Los Angeles than any other major city in the world." Peter Thurling, "O'er stout Spadina, clouds of discord loom," *The Toronto Telegram* 1 March 1969.

⁴⁸ MacKenzie, "How the 20-year political nightmare," *The Globe and Mail* 20 June 1970.

proven.⁴⁹ Once again, the tensions between city council's plans for the city and metro council's overarching regional designs were evident.

“Citizens arise you have nothing to lose but your city!”

While various ratepayers groups and city council members had objected to the Spadina scheme since its inception, the most raucous and sustained protests began in the late 1960s. The Stop Spadina Save Our City Coordinating Committee (SSSOCCC) was the largest and most active group, officially formed in October 1969 specifically to stop the expressway. SSSOCCC began as a discussion group, and was inspired by Praxis, a research organization with which many of the SSSSOCCC members were involved. Praxis sought to connect social theory and social action.⁵⁰ Many of the original members also came from the pre-existing Committee of Concerned Citizens. As their name suggests, SSSOCCC's principal mandate was to coordinate anti-expressway forces. The group divided its efforts into two main categories – “backstage political work, and the front-stage mobilizing of massive public support,” which they considered their “major role.”⁵¹ Once formed, SSSOCCC served as a conduit for anti-expressway sentiment and support, while also attracting a good deal of enmity from pro-expressway forces.

The group's members were primarily middle class professionals and many lived in the proposed path of the highway. Chairman Alan Powell was a sociology professor at the University of Toronto, and other key members held similar positions. David Nowlan, for

⁴⁹ Official Plan for the City of Toronto Planning Area, City of Toronto Planning Board, 40, October 1969, F0417-1975-013/006 (04); YUA.

⁵⁰ Alan Powell, “Text of Chairman Alan Powel’s [sic] Report to Members and Supporters at Convocation Hall – October 15th, 1970,” 2, SSSOCCC Press Release, F0417-1975-013/006 (03); YUA.

⁵¹ SSSOCCC Untitled letter to supporters, n.d., F0417-1975-013/001 (11); YUA.

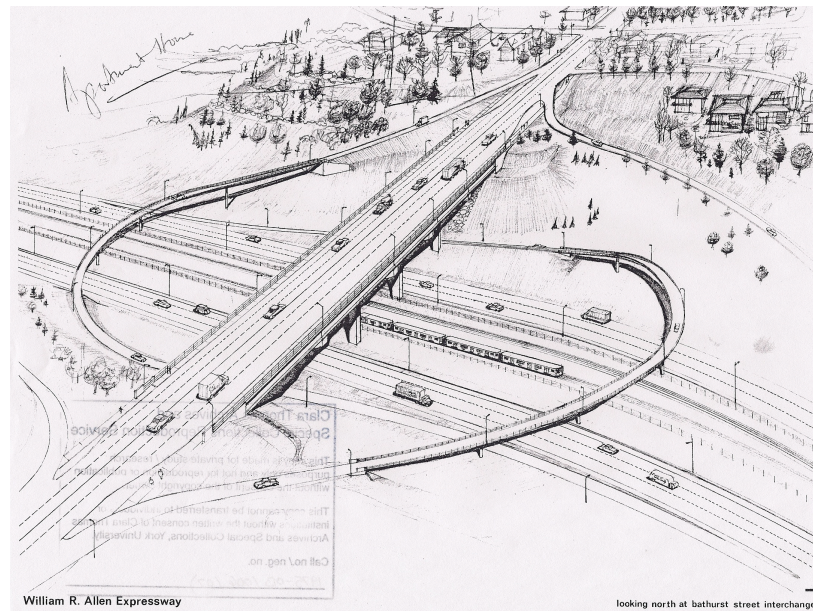


Image 3: “William R. Allen Expressway, looking north at Bathurst Street interchange,” Metropolitan Toronto, Department of Roads and Traffic. Functional Design Report South from Eglinton Avenue: William R. Allen Expressway and Rapid Transit Line. February 1970. Courtesy of the City of Toronto.

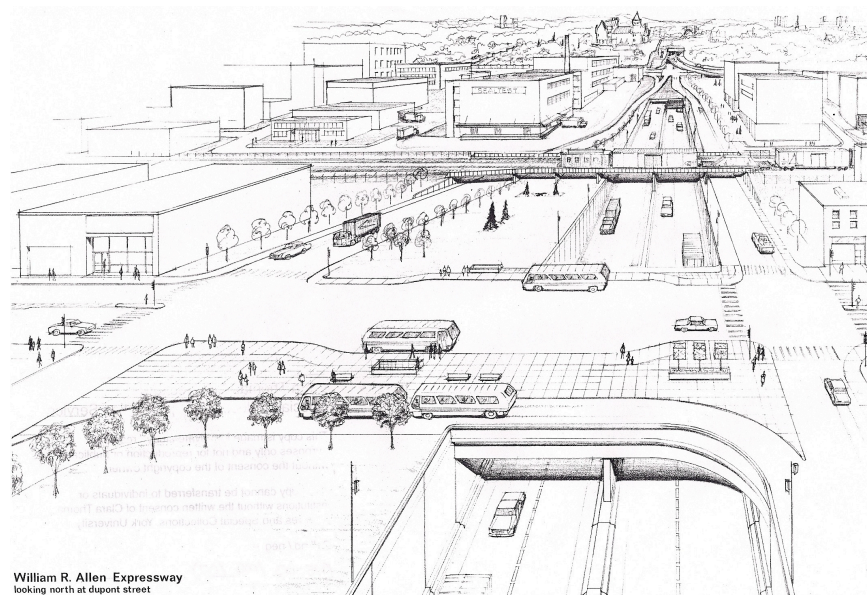


Image 4: “William R. Allen Expressway, looking north at Dupont Street,” Metropolitan Toronto, Department of Roads and Traffic. Functional Design Report South from Eglinton Avenue: William R. Allen Expressway and Rapid Transit Line. February 1970. Courtesy of the City of Toronto.

example, was an economics professor at York University, John Sewell was a Toronto Alderman and later served as the Mayor of Toronto, and Colin Vaughan was an architect. Powell identified the group as “distinctly middle-class” but still broadly based in the city.⁵² In March 1970, he estimated SSSOCCC boasted over 1,500 active members.⁵³ In one of his many articles covering the Spadina controversy for *The Globe and Mail*, journalist James Mackenzie described the group’s membership succinctly:

Of the near-sixty core organizers of Stop Spadina today, twenty-four are university academics and the rest are professional people like librarians, architects, writers, stockbrokers and planners. There are no labour leaders on the leadership rolls, and few working-class people in the general ranks. Few are suburbanites or, if they are, they are generally York University students or staff.⁵⁴

Despite their membership profile, SSSOCCC did not have a staid middle class image, rather it was known as an energetic and perhaps even radical protest group. Their tactics, which attracted much media attention and certainly promoted public awareness of the Spadina issue, also hurt the group in some respects. In one particularly fiery speech, for example, Powell condemned local politicians “who are clearly capable of stopping the rape of our city by big merchants and greedy corporate interests – only our vow to defeat the worm-eaten trouts [sic] of the Old Guard at the next election can Save Our City. Citizens arise you have nothing to lose but your city!”⁵⁵ Although this type of rhetoric attracted a lot of attention, it also turned many people

⁵² Alan Powell to M.P. Collins (Professor, School of Environmental Studies, University College London), 14 May 1970, F0417-1975-013/002 (08); YUA.

⁵³ Alan Powell to Paul Hellyer (MP), 25 March 1970, 1975-013/001 (4); YUA.

⁵⁴ James MacKenzie, “If nothing else, Stop Spadina members learn hard politics,” *The Globe and Mail* 14 March 1970.

⁵⁵ Press Release of Text of Chairman Alan Powell’s Report to SSSOCCC Members and Supporters at Convocation Hall, 15 October 1970, F0417-1975-013/006 (03); YUA.

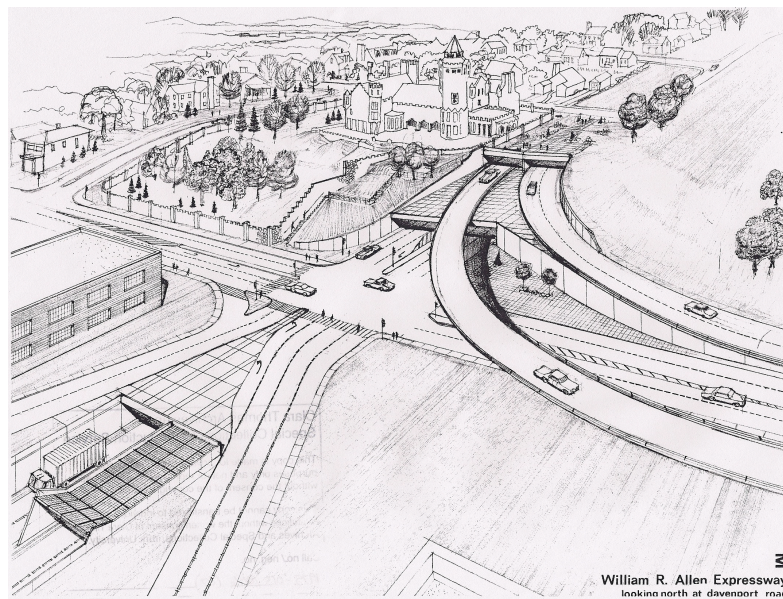


Image 5: “William R. Allen Expressway, looking north at Davenport Road,” Metropolitan Toronto, Department of Roads and Traffic. Functional Design Report South from Eglinton Avenue: William R. Allen Expressway and Rapid Transit Line. February 1970. Courtesy of the City of Toronto.

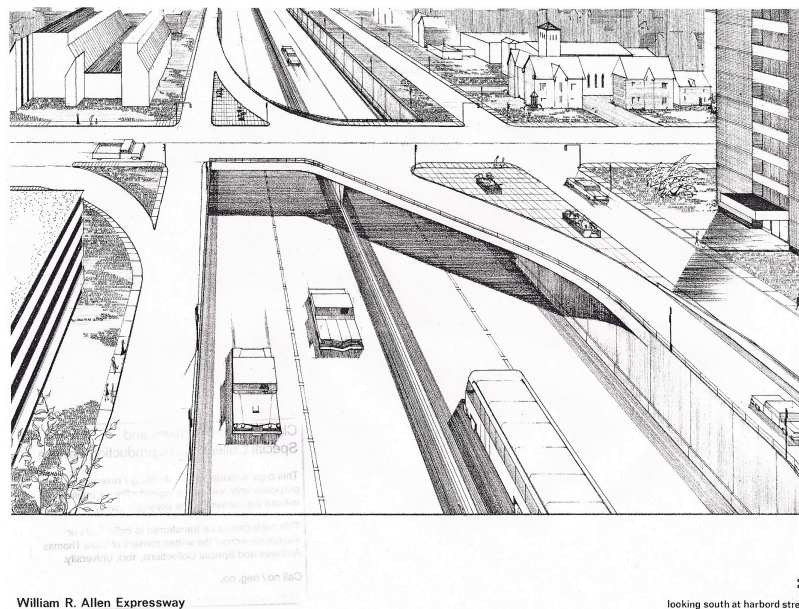


Image 6: “William R. Allen Expressway, looking south at Harbord Street,” Metropolitan Toronto, Department of Roads and Traffic. Functional Design Report South from Eglinton Avenue: William R. Allen Expressway and Rapid Transit Line. February 1970. Courtesy of the City of Toronto.

off. As one finance report for the perpetually under-funded group said, “most of the money came from concerned upper middle class people – academics, professionals, ratepayers, teachers, etc. . . . student organizations were very generous. The upper class – Rosedale and lower Forest Hill – was useless. We lacked restraint and good breeding.”⁵⁶ But it was organized.

All members and volunteers were assigned specific tasks, including political and legal lobbying, publicity, education and promotion, petitions, and so forth.⁵⁷ The group networked with like-minded activists and frequently staged media friendly events. SSSOCCC staged its first public protest on 16 December 1969 when group members dressed in Victorian costumes paraded horse drawn carts through the city to underscore their argument that the expressway proposal was a product of outdated thinking. To draw further attention to their cause, famous urban theorist and activist Jane Jacob’s attendance at the event was highlighted on the press release.⁵⁸ SSSOCCC carefully publicized support from numerous prominent Torontonians in order to bolster their cause. A publicly released December 1969 SSSOCCC petition against the expressway, for example, was cosigned by University of Toronto President Claude Bissell, author Pierre Berton, Toronto General Hospital Chief Surgeon Robert Mustard, famed theorist Marshal McLuhan, architect Ray Moriyama, and Royal Ontario Museum Director Peter Swann, among others.⁵⁹ Despite such high profile support, SSSOCCC leaders wisely recognized the volatile nature of the controversy, deliberately refraining from making the expressway a key

⁵⁶ “Informal Observations About SSSOCCC Finances,” Bob Tennant, n.d., F0417-1975-013/004 (06); YUA. SSSOCCC Untitled Memo, n.d., F0417-1975-013/007 (02); YUA.

⁵⁷ “Press Release from: SSSOCCC,” n.d., F0417-1975-013/007 (05); YUA.

⁵⁸ “Press Release, SSSOCCC,” 16 December 1969, F0417-1975-013/007 (01); YUA.

⁵⁹ “Press Release,” 13 February 1970, F0417-1975-013/007 (05); YUA.

issue in the November 1969 municipal elections so that the potential victory of pro-Spadina candidates could not be interpreted as public support for the project.⁶⁰

SSSOCCC's protests became more sophisticated as the group grew. In February 1970 two members hand-delivered valentines to Metro Chairman Ab Campbell (1969-73) and Mayor William Dennison (1966-72),⁶¹ and in April the group celebrated the first Earth Day by planting five trees – silver maples and Douglas firs – directly in the expressway's proposed route.⁶² Both events earned front page coverage in city newspapers. Also in April, SSSOCCC co-chairman at the time, prominent Canadian historian Jack Granatstein presented an interim report on an anti-expressway petition and called once again on metro council to commission an independent review.⁶³ SSSOCCC even applied to air a one minute anti-Spadina spot as a paid commercial on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), but the film was rejected "because of the topic's controversial and political aspects."⁶⁴ In May, SSSOCCC lent its support along with another activist group with a broader mandate, Pollution Probe, to "The City is for People Day," a festival held in Nathan Phillips Square outside City Hall. The event celebrated the notion that "Toronto is not just a collection of buildings and streets. Toronto is a living organism."⁶⁵ This

⁶⁰ Christopher Leo, *The Politics of Urban Development: Canadian Urban Expressway Disputes* (Toronto: Institute of Public Administration of Canada, 1977), 36.

⁶¹ "Press Release," 25 April 1970, F0417-1975-013/007 (05); YUA.

⁶² "Dawn ceremony sees SSSOCCC planting trees," *The Globe and Mail* 23 April 1970.

⁶³ "Press release," 25 April 1970, F0417-1975-013/007 (05); YUA.

⁶⁴ R.E. Leitch (Assistant Network Supervisor, Institutional Broadcasts, Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) to Anelle Parker (SSSOCCC member), 20 March 1970, F0417-1975-013/002 (17); YUA.

⁶⁵ "The City is for People Day," n.d., F0417-1975-013/002 (13); YUA. "Pollution Probe: Press Release," 7 May 1970; F0417-1975-013/003 (09); YUA.

festival included performances from a local trio, led by Ned Jacobs, who called themselves The Spadina Singers, and performed protest songs such as “Hey Mr. Cass,” and “The Bad Trip.”⁶⁶

One of the biggest events presented by SSSOCCC was the double bill premiere of “The Burning Would,” billed as “a film statement by Marshal McLuhan,” and the first public talk delivered by Jane Jacobs about the expressway at the University of Toronto in October 1970. The film was a fifteen minute commentary on the ills of urban expressways in general, and the Spadina scheme in particular. In a complimentary review in *Toronto Citizen*, Brian Johnson summarized the film as “. . . an ironic and macabre insight into the politics of urban life-style. Corporate objectives destroy human objectives through a congested maze of concrete . . . We see crowds of people who have no control over their environment . . . They’re alienated by the physical structure of their own transportation patterns.”⁶⁷

Despite their efforts, the group continually struggled to draw support from the suburbs surrounding the city. Consequently, it designed literature specifically for those areas. One pamphlet written by John Sewell for distribution in North York, for example, reviewed the typical arguments against the expressway – that it would cause congestion; that it was the first step in realizing the 1964 metro plan for an expressway network estimated at \$2,000,000,000 to \$3,000,000,000; and, that instead of the ever more expensive road, public funding should be poured into alternatives such as buses, the creation of exclusive bus lanes, rapid transit, and more broadly into housing, pollution, parks, and education.⁶⁸ The call to divert funds to broader community issues was consistent with the larger preoccupations of many anti-Spadina protestors

⁶⁶ “Hey Mr. Cass ‘One Man’s Opinion’,” Ned Jacobs, F0417-1975-013/007 (04); YUA; “The Bad Trip,” Ned Jacobs, F0417-1975-013/007 (04); YUA.

⁶⁷ Brian Johnson, “A macabre insight,” *Toronto Citizen*, 24 September 1970, F0417-1975-013/007 (11); YUA.

⁶⁸ SSSOCCC Untitled pamphlet draft, John Sewell, 25 February 1970, F0417-1975-013/002 (20); YUA.

who wanted to preserve and enhance their communities. Sewell's pamphlet also stressed the financial toll of the expressway, arguing the rapid transit alternate plan not adopted from the 1964 Metro Transportation Plan would cost \$912,000,000 less.⁶⁹

SSSOCCC members also tried to strengthen their forces by networking locally and internationally. In Toronto, members worked with another new group Pollution Probe, founded in 1969. One lengthy handout from Pollution Probe entitled, "The Spadinosaur," reiterated many of the key arguments of SSSOCCC members. They began by blasting the city's "automobile oriented economy that poisons the air, congests the city, disrupts it with noise and parking lots, ravages parkland and destroys communities to build ever more expressways." They argued that the expressway would depress property values, which would trigger an exodus of the inner city middle class to suburban areas, which in turn would trigger the decline of inner city neighbourhoods. The handout also lamented the possible loss of an estimated 23,000 jobs for semi-skilled immigrant workers in the Kensington area garment industry, the loss of parkland in ravines from Eglinton Avenue to Casa Loma, and the unknown effects of increased air pollution. Arguing the expressway would exacerbate congestion instead of relieve it, Pollution Probe members joined SSSOCCC activists in voicing their concerns that the interests of the corporations behind the Yorkdale Shopping Centre and "upper income" earners who could afford cars were being prioritized over the majority of citizens who relied on rapid transit alternatives.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ The adopted plan called for 175 miles of expressway and 29 miles of rapid transit, while the alternative plan called for 81 miles of expressway and 88 miles of rapid transit lines. SSSOCCC Untitled pamphlet draft, John Sewell, 25 February 1970, F0417-1975-013/002 (20); YUA.

⁷⁰ "The Spadinosaur," Pollution Probe Handout, c. January 1970, F0417-1975-013/003 (06); YUA.

Outside of the city, SSSOCCC Chairman Alan Powell contacted anti-expressway activists in his former home of London, England, as well as groups in the U.S. Powell was most concerned with whether activists abroad were making progress, and how similar or different the protests in London and Toronto were. While the London activists said a re-evaluation of the city's transportation plans was under way due to public pressure, they also noted they were only protesting the innermost portions of a proposed network.⁷¹ Indeed the perspective of London protestors seemed quite different from that of Toronto activists. As one correspondent explained to Powell, "In England you have to play this very cool to have a hope of winning. Emotional stuff about the horrors of the motor car and the need for rapid transit systems etc. are not enough. *Some* expressways are necessary in any city."⁷² SSSOCCC members also reached out to anti-expressway movements in the U.S., including those in Baltimore, Maryland, and Washington, D.C. Co-Chairman Paul Reinhardt exchanged promotional literature with American activists. As he explained in a letter to the Movement Against Destruction group in Baltimore, SSSOCCC members regarded protests across North America as all being part of a broad movement, where each victory boosted the chances for another, and they believed if Spadina was stopped, it would set a precedent in Canada.⁷³

⁷¹ Alan Powell to T. Martin (Secretary, London Amenity and Transport Association), 26 November 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (06); YUA; J.M. Thomson (Professor, London School of Economics and Political Science) to Alan Powell, 13 March 1970; F0417-1975-013/002 (08); YUA.

⁷² Emphasis in original. Viscount Esher to Alan Powell, 2 April 1970, F0417-1975-013/002 (08); YUA.

⁷³ Paul Reinhardt to Movement Against Destruction, 3 February 1970, F0417-1975-013/003 (11); YUA; Untitled promotional literature from the Emergency Committee on the Transportation Crisis, Washington, D.C., 26 November 1969, F0417-1975-013/002 (08); YUA. Paul Reinhardt, SSSOCCC Letter (Packaged with new copies of *The Bad Trip*), F0417-1975-013/001 (3); YUA.

“A minority group of radicals”

Despite the political savvy of SSSOCCC leaders and their well organized protests, the group had weaknesses. They were chronically short of money, and thus could not fund more expensive moves such as the work of a later activist group – the Spadina Review Corporation – created specifically to ensure anti-expressway voices were represented during the subsequent Ontario Municipal Board (OMB) hearings in March 1970. Ironically, the group’s pairing of a primarily professional middle class membership with what some called radical tactics both helped and hindered its cause. The socio-economic status of the members lent weight to their political protests and objections, but at the same time, the movement seemed aloof to the working class Torontonians. Furthermore, its stalwart defence of the inner city played off the traditional binary between urban and suburban residents. As journalist James MacKenzie noted when interviewing Alan Powell and SSSOCCC treasurer Robert Tennent, “They hadn’t noticed that most of the group’s spokesmen have British or American accents; that their use of the word city in their ‘Save our City’ slogan smacks of arrogance or selfishness to suburbanites; that too many leading members sound elitely [sic] upper middle class, that [some think] the movement is simply unreal.”⁷⁴

Though criticism of activists on either side of the protest was not always as thoughtful as MacKenzie’s analysis, it did illuminate the ideological struggle that lay behind the expressway controversy. Some of the criticism was simply inflammatory, such as Downsview liberal Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) Vernon Singer’s characterization of anti-expressway

⁷⁴ MacKenzie, “If nothing else,” *The Globe and Mail* 14 March 1970.

protestors as “hairy, snaggle-toothed academics.”⁷⁵ Others referred to protestors as ‘kids’ who were immature and out of touch with the needs of the city.⁷⁶ More commonly, citizens who wrote to various government officials urging the construction of the expressway reminded politicians that they “expect them [elected officials] to carry out the wishes of the majority of the people,” and not yield to the “unreasonable demands of what is without question a very small, but vocal, minority,” or in other words, “a minority group of radicals.”⁷⁷

There was little change in the way Spadina supporters characterized protestors from the early 1960s through to the 1970s. Spadina supporters frequently accused protestors of being self centered in attempting to preserve their own communities instead of accommodating transportation developments that would benefit many citizens. One letter writer told provincial Minister of Economics W. Darcy McKeough that it was only “a small band of a noisy selfish group” that opposed the roadway, while North York businessman Archie Ginsberg was more direct, calling opponents “selfish idiot[s].”⁷⁸ Vocal pro-Spadina *The Toronto Star* columnist Dennis Braithwaite argued protestors were simply unrealistic. He wrote: “More and more expressways will be built in, around and through metro and anyone who believes otherwise is a romantic, Quixotic fool. Expressways are put there to serve King Automobile and are therefore

⁷⁵ Untitled Spadina Protest Flyer from The Annex Ratepayers Association, April 1970, F0417-1975-013/007 (10); YUA.

⁷⁶ Anonymous letter to SSSOCCC, n.d., F0417-1975-013/001 (06); YUA.

⁷⁷ Toronto resident to William Allen (Metropolitan Transportation Committee Chairman), 19 January 1962, F220-11-103225-6 William R. Allen Expressway: Miscellaneous Correspondence: Part 1 (1962); City of Toronto Archives (CTA). Toronto resident to William Allen, 15 January 1962, F220-11-103225-6 William R. Allen Expressway: Miscellaneous Correspondence: Part 1 (1962); CTA. Toronto resident to William Davis (Premier of Ontario), 7 June 1971; F220-11-47193-3 Spadina Expressway: Miscellaneous Correspondence Re: Provincial Decision (1971-1974); CTA. Toronto resident to William Allen, 10 January 1962, F220-11-103225-6 William R. Allen Expressway: Miscellaneous Correspondence: Part 1 (1962); CTA.

⁷⁸ Toronto resident to W. Darcy McKeough (Minister of Economics), 18 August 1971, RG 6-2 Container b 399467 File: Spadina Expressway; Archives of Ontario (AO). “North Yorker dreads traffic tangles on every trip downtown,” *The Toronto Daily Star* 21 February 1970.

sensible, useful and above all inevitable. King Automobile's domain is expanding, not contracting and the end is nowhere in sight."⁷⁹ Braithwaite's commentary included the key issue which pro and anti-Spadina activists virulently disagreed on – the rightful place of automobiles in the urban landscape.

“Who cared about pollution in 1962?”

The biggest question in the chronological trajectory of the Spadina controversy was, why now? Why, when the expressway plans had been public knowledge since 1953, and when construction had been under way since 1962, did the most raucous and determined objections not arise until the late 1960s? *The Toronto Daily Star* writer William Bragg asked pro-Spadina Metro Commissioner of Roads and Traffic Sam Cass this question in January 1970. He responded: “The only answer that I can give – and I don’t think it’s a satisfactory answer – is that in very recent years we have seen a tremendous change in the attitude of some people generally which has resulted in protests by primarily youth, but not necessarily, against almost every social and physical institution that has been accepted in the past.”⁸⁰ Cass was partially correct -- he and his pro-Spadina advocates were witnessing a significant shift in attitudes, but it was not just youth, and their objections were not as unfocussed as he thought.

The great fervor over the Spadina Expressway in the late 1960s and early 1970s can be explained by recognizing the importance of new ideas about citizen participation, technology, and the environment. Growing numbers of people were no longer assuming politicians would

⁷⁹ Dennis Braithwaite, “Allen Expressway will save Toronto,” *The Toronto Star* 23 January 1970.

⁸⁰ William Bragg, “The unflappable official at the centre of the Spadina Expressway row,” *The Toronto Daily Star* 17 January 1970.

act in their best interests. Increasingly, those who rejected traditional notions of modernism and progress that prioritized technology without concern for its impact on human communities and the environment made their voices heard. The debate was not just among the general public nor was it strictly between residents and politicians – the growing divide was also evident between politicians. Anti-Spadina Alderman and Metro Transportation Committee member Ying Hope (1969-1985) offered scathing criticism of his colleagues, asking:

Will metro fail in its handling of the Spadina Expressway issue? Will the old time politicians in metro continue on a one-track course, in the time honored manner of conducting a series of token hearings, then dismissing them as if they had never been heard, and finally rendering a verdict conceived in the glazed thinking of previous councils?⁸¹

Hope's analysis was very much in line with other anti-Spadina protestors, one of whom said simply, "I suppose it's hopeless to think we'll really be able to stop the juggernaut of metro govt."⁸²

These debates were not between two warring factions, one championing progress, and the other resisting the concept of progress outright, rather they were over what constituted progress. Pro-Spadina advocates such as R.M. Wilcox, a member of the Businessmen's League Against Spadina Termination (BLAST), argued the accommodation and encouragement of growth and expansion in the city as well as the suburbs had to be a priority, and that transportation systems must be designed accordingly. Wilcox regarded the Spadina region as one in need of a modern makeover which would "enable modern high-rise apartments and office buildings to replace outdated and run-down stores and homes." He concluded with a warning: "Fish markets must not

⁸¹ Ying Hope, "Metro can't ignore the expressway hearings'," *The Toronto Daily Star* 1 June 1970.

⁸² Toronto resident to John Sewell (Toronto Alderman), 9 February 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (3); YUA.

stand in the way of progress.”⁸³ The rejection of this notion of progress was fundamental to anti-expressway protestors. As SSSOCCC Chairman Alan Powell argued, they were not against progress, but the notion that expressways were progressive.⁸⁴ Another protestor rejected the association of growth with progress, arguing corporations “motivated by ‘The Growth Ethic’” were “destroying the majority for the betterment (short term only) of the wealthy, powerful minority.”⁸⁵

Pro-Spadina advocates like Frederick G. Gardiner, the first Metro Council Chairman who retired in 1962 after pushing the scheme through, also claimed their version of progress was inevitable. In a guest column for *The Toronto Daily Star*, Gardiner argued that 600,000 motor vehicles in the city had to be accommodated to ensure commercial and industrial businesses were allowed to flourish and grow.⁸⁶ In Gardiner’s estimation, the ever-growing dominance of automobiles was inevitable, particularly because people could not be compelled to leave their cars.⁸⁷ Gardiner ignored public transit and assumed that the unlimited growth of Metropolitan Toronto was both inevitable and desirable – a view which had grown increasingly unpopular as the 1960s wore on.⁸⁸ The response to such logic from anti-expressway proponents was that automobiles would only dominate the urban landscape as far as humans would allow them to,

⁸³ R.M. Wilcox (President of Do It International Plastics Ltd., and BLAST member) to Alan Powell, n.d., F0417-1975-013/001 (06); YUA.

⁸⁴ James MacKenzie, “If nothing else,” *The Globe and Mail* 14 March 1970.

⁸⁵ Toronto resident to J.J. Young (Clerk of the Executive Council), 12 March 1971, RG 4-2, Box 474, B222119, File: Spadina Expressway, 1976 (2); AO.

⁸⁶ Frederick G. Gardiner, “Gardiner: ‘We must finish the expressway’,” *The Toronto Daily Star* 1 November 1969.

⁸⁷ This argument was popular among pro-Spadina advocates. For example, A.J. Dakin (Chairman, Department of Urban and Regional Planning, University of Toronto), “Defending the Spadina Expressway,” (letter to the editor), *The Globe and Mail* 27 December 1969.

⁸⁸ Colton, 174-179.

and that many people would willingly leave their cars behind if extensive rapid transit networks were available instead.⁸⁹ As one protestor asked, “Who are the expressways for: the people or the cars?”⁹⁰ Others, including architects Howard Walker and Harvey Cowan argued that cars would eventually be replaced by alternative forms of transportation, whether it would be public transit or more experimental modes such as electric cars and hovercrafts.⁹¹ Cowan called the expressway a “killer” but told Torontonians, “the life of your city is at stake and there’s still time to stop the homicide.”⁹²

Part of the protestors’ rejection of expressways and the unthinking prioritization of the automobile was the introduction of an alternative vision of what constituted modernism, and this new vision revolved around broadly defined environmental concerns. *The Globe and Mail*’s editor, who aligned with the expressway opponents, wrote, “The crux of the matter is that the Spadina was conceived and begun in an age much different from what the 1970s promise to become. Who cared about pollution in 1962?”⁹³ Many protest letters reflected this newfound concern about the environment at large. A biologist lamented the “rape of natural resources and the apathy of our society,” saying “A great deal about the threats of nowadays waste has been written, (e.g. *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carlson [sic]) . . . one thing I would like to mention again is the unrivaled contribution to the destruction of our complicated, delicately balanced biosphere

⁸⁹ See, for example, Anonymous letter to Archie Chisholm (Ward 2 Alderman), c. March 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (3); YUA; Scarborough resident to Alan Powell, 26 March 1970; F0417-1975-013/001 (4); YUA.

⁹⁰ Toronto resident to Metro Council, n.d., F0417-1975-013/001 (06); YUA.

⁹¹ Howard Walker, “‘The automobile has had its day’,” Letter to the Editor, *The Toronto Daily Star* 27 February 1970. Harvey Cowan, “Spadina Expressway/No,” *The Toronto Daily Star* 20 January 1970.

⁹² Harvey Cowan, “Spadina Expressway/No,” *The Toronto Daily Star* 20 January 1970.

⁹³ “Creeping concrete and how to cut it,” *The Globe and Mail* 17 February 1970.

by the automobile's combustion engine. Hence I fully support the war against the car."⁹⁴

Another writer urged Premier John Robarts (1961-71) to "put the motor vehicles under control before they choke the human race with their junk and poisonous gasses."⁹⁵ Others voiced concerns about the impact of pollution on human health, complaining of irritated eyes and heavy breathing due to the smog, while still others in the Annex neighborhood complained older trees were already suffering from the pollution and many birds that used to inhabit the area had disappeared.⁹⁶ A SSSOCCC advertisement made the links between rising environmentalism and the anti-expressway movement clear, presenting DDT, thalidomide, phosphates, cyclamates, carbon monoxide, and expressways as all examples of so-called "progress" that were actually "deadly."⁹⁷

This shift was also recognized, and succinctly summarized, by W.G Wigle, an engineer in the Provincial Department of Highways. In a memo titled "Implications of the Spadina Expressway Cancellation," Wigle argued the rise of environmental concerns had completely changed the political landscape for planners, and that if citizen protests continued, transportation and planning departments at all levels were in danger of being effectively paralyzed and powerless. As Wigle wrote:

The fundamental fact to emerge from a study of the Spadina Avenue situation is the sudden emergence of 'The Environment' as a popular planning consideration. In 1963 when the metro council asked OMB to approve the Spadina Expressway project, the hearings were completed in two days and the matter was considered so routine that no

⁹⁴ Rexdale resident to SSSOCCC, 3 February 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (3); YUA.

⁹⁵ Toronto resident to John Robarts, 16 March 1970, RG 3-26, Box 168, B280692, File: Municipal Roads – Spadina Expressway, April 1-31/70 – Highways; AO.

⁹⁶ Toronto resident to J.J. Young (Clerk of the Executive Council), 12 March 1971, RG 4-2, Box 474, B222119, File: Spadina Expressway, 1976 (2); AO; Toronto resident to Director of Toronto Humane Society, 23 April 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (07); YUA.

⁹⁷ SSSOCCC Advertisement, c. 1970, F0417-1975-013/007 (11); YUA.

transcript was taken. During the next six years, fired by noted urbanologist Jane Jacobs, opposition to the Expressway became intensely organized and extremely vocal. So much so, indeed, that when metro council applied to OMB, in January 1971, for funds to complete the construction, the hearings lasted three weeks and approval was given in a split decision.⁹⁸

Jane Jacobs' status as a provocative popular writer on American cities meant her perspective on the Toronto situation attracted a lot of attention. Claiming the Spadina scheme "the single greatest menace to this city," she frequently used American comparisons to warn about the impact of inner city expressways.⁹⁹ In one article for *The Globe and Mail* titled "A city getting hooked on the expressway drug," Jacobs recalled her shock and dismay when she heard Metro Roads Commissioner Sam Cass regarded Los Angeles as a model city. Her perspective was quite different – she called L.A. the city:

where at rush hour the cars on the great freeways crawl at ten miles an hour, the same speed the horses and buggies used to achieve, where the poor have no practicable way to reach jobs, where the exhausts have turned the air into a crisis, where expressways, interchanges, and parking lots occupy some two-thirds of the drained and vacuous downtown.¹⁰⁰

In the view of Jacobs and other anti-Spadina protestors, the impact of city planning and development could no longer be ignored or downplayed. As one historian said of American anti-expressway protestors, "Concerns over air and water quality, the physical beauty of the landscape, neighbourhood amenities, safe and healthy housing, unique and historic features of

⁹⁸ "Implications of the Spadina Expressway Cancellation," Memo, W.G. Wigle (Program Engineer, Department of Highways, Ontario) to A.T.C. McNab (Deputy Minister), 21 July 1971, Interim Box 737, File: District No. 6 Toronto: [Spadina Expressway] 1971; AO.

⁹⁹ "Author says Spadina Expressway is city's single greatest menace," *The Globe and Mail* 5 February 1969.

¹⁰⁰ Jane Jacobs, "A city getting hooked on the expressway drug," *The Globe and Mail* 1 November 1969.

the environment, and local control over land use decisions represented absolute values, not susceptible to bargaining or compromise.”¹⁰¹

“The conflict of generations, the struggles to reconcile the isolated Old Politics with the grass-roots New Politics”

In January 1970, the Metro Transportation Committee bowed to pressure from anti-Spadina proponents and city council, halting construction pending reviews from Metro Roads Commissioner Sam Cass and Planning Commissioner Wojciech Wronski.¹⁰² City council members specifically called for a full investigation of the scheme with special attention to its effects on the surrounding communities, and they also requested that the results be submitted to the various municipal councils so that local residents were able to voice their opinions before a final decision was made.¹⁰³ Metro officials recognized how serious a threat the controversy over Spadina was to their expressway network plans and they consequently stopped buying land for the eventual construction of the Richview Expressway, slated to link Highway 401 and the planned Highway 400 extension.¹⁰⁴ North York Controller Irving Allan Paisley expressed the frustration of many pro-Spadina suburban representatives when he argued the majority of the 500,000 people living in North York supported the expressway, and that metro council should not bow to “minority voices.”¹⁰⁵ Scarborough Controller Karl Mallette made similar comments in response to a protestor, saying the common good must not be sacrificed to individual interests.

¹⁰¹ Issel, 617.

¹⁰² “Halt ordered on expressway work,” *The Toronto Telegram* 26 January 1970.

¹⁰³ “Spadina Expressway and Transportation in Metropolitan Toronto,” Copy of City Council Motion, 23 January 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (08); YUA.

¹⁰⁴ “Spadina row forces halt in plans for 10-lane Richview thruway,” *The Toronto Daily Star* 6 March 1970.

¹⁰⁵ Irving Allan Paisley to Toronto resident, 17 March 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (4); YUA.

He also reiterated the familiar arguments that people could not be forced to use public transit instead of private automobiles, and that public transit in any case wouldn't serve the needs of the business community.¹⁰⁶ These pro-Spadina voices were supported by renowned city planner and University of Toronto lecturer Hans Blumenfeld, who argued the expressway and rapid transit lines must both be built, because neither on its own could fully satisfy the needs of metro citizens and businesses.¹⁰⁷

The requested review was released by the metropolitan council in March 1970, and recommended the completion of the Spadina Expressway as well as the accompanying subway line, now estimated at \$143,000,000 and \$95,000,000 respectively.¹⁰⁸ The total cost of metro's transportation network at this point was estimated at \$1,250,000,000, including rapid transit, arterial roads, and expressways. From the report, it was clear that metro officials were planning for the future. Among the many signs of growth in the city, they cited the increase in office floor space from 19,000,000 to 33,000,000 square feet between 1953 and 1968; the increase in apartments from 11,000 in 1959 to 21,000 in 1969; a jump in enrollment at the University of Toronto from 11,000 in 1954 to 23,000 in 1969; a similar increase at Ryerson Polytechnical Institute from 2,000 students in 1957 to 6,000 in 1969; the increase in hospital beds from 5,800 in 1956 to 7,400 in 1969; the construction of new buildings with values totaling \$800,000,000 between 1960 and 1969; and the creation of the O'Keefe Centre, the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts, the renovated St. Lawrence Hall and the St. Lawrence Market, the McLaughlin Planetarium, the new City Hall, and the Court House.

¹⁰⁶ Karl Mallette to Toronto resident, 31 March 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (4); YUA.

¹⁰⁷ Hans Blumenfeld, "Spadina Expressway/Yes," *The Toronto Daily Star* 19 January 1970.

¹⁰⁸ "Report urges approval of Spadina," *The Globe and Mail* 10 March 1970.

In the report, metro authorities addressed protestors' concerns as they had in the past. For example, they argued air pollution would decrease because expressway conditions allowed for continuous travel instead of stop and go traffic, while the depressed design of the road would stifle noise. Aesthetically, the design was "simple, contemporary and geometrically pleasing," and functionally, it included many controlled crossings for auto and pedestrian traffic. In terms of the parkland that would be lost in Viewmount Park in North York, Cedarvale Park in the Borough of York, and the Nordheimer Ravine between Spadina Road and St. Clair Avenue, planners said all parkland required for the expressway would be recreated in alternative locations. They downplayed concerns that widespread redevelopment would follow, saying high density residential developments were already becoming more prevalent in some areas.¹⁰⁹ In reality, the pressure for high rise redevelopment along the expressway route had been public knowledge for at least a year, as residents in the path of the expressway learned whether they would be targeted by metro for expropriation, or by construction companies offering far more money to redevelop the land. York University Professor James Lorimer even went so far as to call high rise developers the "real" forces behind the expressway.¹¹⁰

City council also requested its own reports, one from the City of Toronto Planning Board under the leadership of Chairman Loren A. Oxley and another from the City of Toronto Department of Public Works under the guidance of Commissioner R. M. Bremner. The reports were supposed to help inform city council's decision of whether to vote for or against the revised expressway plans. The city's report was written in an obviously more cautious tone than metro's

¹⁰⁹ *A Planning Review and Appraisal: William R. Allen Expressway and Rapid Transit Line*, Metropolitan Toronto Planning Board, February 1970, 116, 12-13, 77-80, 93-97, 97-98, 99-102, 108-112, F0417-1975-013/006 (05); YUA.

¹¹⁰ James MacKenzie, "The Spadina road to riches," *The Globe and Mail* 13 March 1969. James Lorimer, "The real supporters behind the Spadina route," *The Globe and Mail* 13 April 1970.

reports. The board began by saying the report would not consider whether the expressway was actually needed, but rather evaluate the positive and negative aspects of the scheme. They did, however, stipulate that transportation needs were subjective, as people would use the transportation means available, so if more expressways were built, they would use them, but if they were not built, they would find other ways to move around the city. Despite their earlier declaration, this statement in itself clearly indicated the city planning board was much less convinced of the need for the expressway than the metropolitan planning board. It also noted that while the city council stated there would be no Crosstown Expressway in its 1969 Official Plan, the Minister of Municipal Affairs changed the stipulation to match metro's stance, which was that further study of the Crosstown would be required before a final decision was made.

The board further emphasized the importance of public transit alternatives and questioned whether the Spadina route would still be chosen as the best location for a rapid transit line if the expressway was not already planned. They were concerned about noise pollution from the expressway which had yet to be addressed, as well as the destruction of hundreds of homes and the pressure for high density development in the Spadina corridor which planners predicted would intensify if the expressway was built. The board also expressed concern about the impact of the expressway on the Spadina community, saying:

Toronto is not proto typical of many North American cities. The poorer or modest districts that abut its Central Area at Spadina Road are not 'problem' communities, but important ethnic populations playing a lively, varied and important role in the community. The role of the Central area as an important residential, as well as commercial core is growing, which requires a great deal of sympathetic and patient debate before change takes place.¹¹¹

¹¹¹ Evaluation of the W.R. Allen Expressway, City of Toronto Planning Board, 1, 9, 10, 11, 10, 19-22, 10 April 1970, F0417-1975-013/004 (12); YUA. Evaluation of the W.R. Allen Expressway, 27, 10 April 1970, F0417-1975-013/004 (12); YUA.

Or, as *The Toronto Telegram* reporter Michael Fitzgerald said, the Spadina region's garment industry and clusters of small shops that attracted immigrants had "character."¹¹² While the board concluded by acknowledging that the ownership of private cars was rapidly rising, and that officials could not control people's use of their cars, the body of the report seemed to suggest that what was within the city's control, with metro's compliance, was how far the car would be accommodated to the detriment of communities and the environment.¹¹³

The report from the City of Toronto's Department of Public Works Commissioner R.M. Bremner was more in line with Metro Roads Commissioner Sam Cass and Metro Planning Commissioner Wojciech Wronski's reports. Bremner began by declaring the Spadina Expressway "a fundamental and integral part of an overall expressway system which has been planned to meet the needs of the metropolitan area and the City of Toronto." He also stressed the importance of designing transportation facilities with the future growth of the city in mind, and in particular ensuring easy access to the central city. Here again Spadina advocates' emphasis on facilitating future growth and preventing decay in the downtown core was evident. Bremner argued the plan had many strengths, including drawing heavy traffic away from residential streets which would improve the quality of life in those neighbourhoods bordering the expressway while simultaneously reinforcing the city centre by accommodating traffic heading in that direction. Bremner also contended that communities bisected by the road would be preserved by pedestrian and auto bridges over the expressway, and that noise abatement

¹¹² Michael Fitzgerald, "Its people fear the worst," *The Toronto Telegram* 1 March 1969.

¹¹³ Evaluation of the W.R. Allen Expressway, 35, 10 April 1970, F0417-1975-013/004 (12); YUA.

measures were already in place. Finally, he skirted the question of air pollution by simply saying provincial authorities were responsible for pollution control and monitoring.¹¹⁴

By this point in the controversy, critics including the Confederation of Resident & Ratepayer Associations of the City of Toronto, and Liberal and New Democratic Party (NDP) provincial politicians were calling for Premier John Robarts to intervene with a provincial review of the scheme, but he refused.¹¹⁵ *The Globe and Mail* ran a number of editorials opposing the expressway, including “Queen’s Park is in this.” The editors argued the province was not truly detached from the controversy, as provincial authorities had not only already funded the Highway 401 interchange at Yorkdale, but were also building Highway 403 outside the city limits which increased pressure for more inner city expressways. Furthermore, it was provincial politicians who had created the two tier metro council and city council governance structure for Toronto that the editors argued disenfranchised Torontonians.¹¹⁶ Robarts rejected the argument in a form letter sent to petitioners, explaining that Spadina was under metropolitan, not provincial jurisdiction. Furthermore, he said he was satisfied that metro council had conducted the appropriate research and studies to support its scheme.¹¹⁷ In response to SSSOCCC Chairman Allan Powell’s accusation that metropolitan officials had created “a most undemocratic and unhealthy political atmosphere,” Robarts suggested local officials were best equipped to

¹¹⁴ Report on Functional Design: William R. Allen Expressway, 1, 6, 1, 8, 12, 14, 15, City of Toronto Department of Public Works, April 1970, F0417-1975-013/006 (06); YUA.

¹¹⁵ “Robarts rejects pleas to step into row over Spadina Expressway,” *The Toronto Star* 11 March 1970.

¹¹⁶ “Queen’s Park is in this,” (editorial), *The Globe and Mail* 11 March 1970.

¹¹⁷ John Robarts to Toronto residents, 21 January 1970, RG 3-26, Box 168, B280692, File: Municipal Roads – Spadina Expressway January 1970-March 1970; AO. John Robarts to Toronto resident, 25 February 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (3); YUA.

make local planning and policy decisions, and that provincial interference at the local level would be undemocratic.¹¹⁸

In reality, the politicization of planning broadly, and transportation networks specifically, was a development of the 1970s that was new to Robarts, and his hands-off approach to Spadina was likely due at least in part to the newfound importance of city planning as a political issue.¹¹⁹ Other provincial officials, notably Minister of Highways George Gomme (1966-71) and MPP Allan Grossman, used the same reasoning as Robarts in their responses to concerned constituents, with Grossman explaining that the province only “exercise[d] an audit function” to ensure provincial funding was properly used.¹²⁰ Provincial politicians were also aware that however democratic or undemocratic such interference might be, it would establish a precedent which they feared would result in metro authorities passing all expressway planning responsibilities to the province.¹²¹ Gomme also advised one protestor that “numerous attempts [had] been made to obtain Federal assistance in solving our urban transportation problems unsuccessfully.”¹²²

¹¹⁸ Allan Powell to John Robarts, 12 March 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (4); YUA; John Robarts to Alan Powell (Chairman of the Stop the Spadina Save Our City Coordinating Committee), 17 March 1970, RG 3-26, Box 168, B280692, File: Municipal Roads – Spadina Expressway January 1970-March 1970; AO.

¹¹⁹ Robarts biographer A.K. McDougall discusses changing political dynamics towards the end of Robarts time as Premier of Ontario in “Entering the Seventies,” chapter 17 in *John P. Robarts: His Life and Government* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1986), 234-250.

¹²⁰ Allan Grossman (Minister of Correctional Services, MPP) to Toronto resident, 28 January 1970, RG 3-26, Box 168, B280692, File: Municipal Roads – Spadina Expressway January 1970-March 1970; AO. Gomme took the same hands-off approach as Robarts and Grossman. For example, “Spadina length is up to Metro, Gomme says,” *The Globe and Mail* 3 March 1970; “Gomme says Spadina still Metro’s decision,” *The Toronto Daily Star* 3 March 1970; “Your man at Queen’s Park,” (editorial), *The Globe and Mail* 2 March 1970; and, George Gomme to Donald C. Macdonald (MPP), 20 January 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (3); YUA.

¹²¹ “Re: Spadina Expressway,” (Memo), 7 April 1970, RG 3-26, Box 168, B280692, File: Municipal Roads – Spadina Expressway January 1970-March 1970, AO.

¹²² George E. Gomme to Toronto resident, 20 January 1970, F0417-1975-013/001 (3); YUA.

In addition to the reviews, the Metro Transportation Committee also held public hearings in April. It received 230 applications to present briefs, ninety-nine percent of which Toronto Alderman and anti-Spadina proponent Ying Hope said opposed the expressway.¹²³ The hearings were heated with anti-expressway speakers and pro-expressway metro council members shouting each other down and trading insults. Most of the news coverage of the hearings highlighted the contentious atmosphere of the often raucous sessions. *The Toronto Daily Star* headline read “Spadina foes call controller ‘pig,’ ‘Fascist’.”¹²⁴ While some journalists regarded the proceedings as chaotic, others like James MacKenzie had a different perspective. Mackenzie wrote: “The hearings point up to the conflict of generations, the struggles needed to reconcile the isolated Old Politics with the grass-roots New Politics. They show that what, in the broadest and vaguest terms, can be called The Revolution has filtered to Toronto.”¹²⁵

During the hearings, protestors touched on all the major complaints against the scheme, often employing rhetoric that demonstrated their concern for the environment and hostility towards the uncritical prioritization of the automobile within the urban landscape. A brief from the Students’ Health Organization of the University of Toronto (SHOUT), for instance, cited air pollution as a major contributor to respiratory and cardiac diseases. The group argued metro’s approval of Spadina would amount to the “raping, maiming and crippling of many of the communities in Toronto.”¹²⁶ The Association of the Teaching Staff and the Students Administrative Council of the University of Toronto both filed briefs opposing Spadina as

¹²³ “Plan Monday start for Spadina hearing; 230 briefs are filed,” *The Globe and Mail* 2 April 1970.

¹²⁴ William Bragg, “Taunts, jibes and name-calling mar Spadina Expressway hearing,” *The Toronto Star* 25 April 1970. “Spadina foes call controller ‘pig,’ ‘Fascist,’” *The Toronto Daily Star* 27 April 1970.

¹²⁵ James MacKenzie, “Spadina hearings: first test of citizen participation,” *The Globe and Mail* 4 May 1970.

¹²⁶ “Students’ Health Organization of the University of Toronto (SHOUT): Brief to the Metro Transportation Committee Re: Spadina Expressway,” April 1970, F0417-1975-013/003 (01); YUA.

well.¹²⁷ Opposition from the university community in Toronto was echoed by the York University Student Council, which complained that public transit lines accessible to all citizens were needed instead of expressways that only wealthy car owners could use.¹²⁸

SSSOCCC also submitted a brief for the hearings, authored by group member Paul Reinhardt. He began by advocating increased citizen participation in government and the redistribution of power so that city council could reclaim its power over metro council and the provincial authorities on housing, transportation, and welfare issues. Specifically addressing the expressway, Reinhardt called for alternative measures such as higher parking rates to discourage auto commuters, tolls for cars with only one occupant, and commuter buses sponsored by the city for every neighbourhood.¹²⁹ Another brief cosigned by a large group of economists, architects, planners, and engineers called for an independent inquiry. The group blasted the government's failure to explore "real alternatives" to the expressway, and further argued the purpose of the expressway in facilitating north-south movement had been preempted by the development of suburban centres north of Toronto in the mid to late 1960s.¹³⁰

Other petitioners relied on the familiar anti-expressway rhetoric to make their case. One Toronto resident attempted to characterize planners as Social Darwinists who abided by "survival of the fittest" theory by serving the ultimate symbols of "middle America," the suburban home

¹²⁷ "A Brief concerning the Spadina Expressway Proposal from the Association of the Teaching Staff and the Students Administrative Council of the University of Toronto," April 1970, F0417-1975-013/005 (03); YUA.

¹²⁸ Brief from the Council of the York Student Federation, the York University Student Council, to the Metropolitan Toronto Transportation Commission, April 1970, F0417-1975-013/005 (02); YUA.

¹²⁹ "Brief on the 'Goals, Objectives and Priorities of this City Council'," Paul Reinhardt, 2,10-11, April 1970, F0417-1975-013/006 (02); YUA.

¹³⁰ Untitled Brief, April 1970, F0417-1975-013/006 (02); YUA.

and the car.¹³¹ Prominent Torontonians continued to weigh in on the dispute as well, including broadcaster Adrienne Clarkson, who deemed the expressway a “meaningless, dumb, expensive strand of concrete.”¹³² Other protestors targeted the commercial interests behind the plan, particularly the developers behind the Yorkdale Shopping Centre. As one resident of Cedarvale area in York noted, “They [Eatons and Simpsons] are reaping a golden harvest in dollars while we the citezens [sic] of Metropolitan Toronto are paying and will continue to pay for amny [sic] years for the roads leading to their Yorkdale Plaza.”¹³³ In contrast, North York Alderman Robert Yuill wrote one of the few briefs supporting Spadina. Noting that his borough boasted a population of 45,000, Yuill said local newspapers gave the wrong impression by providing excessive coverage of the opposition. He argued expressways such as the 401 enhanced the surrounding communities, warning metro politicians that “the silent majority expects you to do all that is possible to proceed with the construction of the Allen Expressway and rapid transit line.”¹³⁴

In addition to the two-tier local government and provincial involvement, municipal decision-making in Toronto was complicated by the involvement of the Ontario Municipal Board (OMB), an independent administrative body that adjudicated a range of municipal disputes including planning disagreements. After deciding to proceed with Spadina construction in June 1970, metro council applied to the Ontario Municipal Board for approval to obtain another loan

¹³¹ “A Brief in Opposition to the Spadina Expressway,” April 1970, F0417-1975-013/005 (04); YUA.

¹³² “Re: The Spadina Expressway,” (brief), Adrienne Clarkson, April 1970, F0417-1975-013/005 (07); YUA.

¹³³ Untitled brief, April 1970, F0417-1975-013/006 (01); YUA.

¹³⁴ “Brief re: Allen Expressway,” Robert Yuill, March 1970, F0417-1975-013/005 (04); YUA.

to complete the project.¹³⁵ During the council's debates, Councillor Anthony O'Donohue was among those who spoke out against the expressway. He argued that the number of cars in the city had increased from 320,000 in 1954 to 900,000 in 1964, that to continually accommodate the auto presence was "not a sign of progress," and furthermore that council should "not be afraid to say that we have been making mistakes." When challenged by pro-Spadina Controller Karl Mallette that he had only been swayed from his earlier support for the expressway because of protestors, O'Donohue replied: "I'm influenced by the new thinking on the environment, of the relationship of the automobile to people. This is what I'm influenced by . . . as I've said before, is the new thinking of the 70's, that have made people more aware of this, and I think it's about time that we became in touch with these problems now and try and solve them."¹³⁶

O'Donohue's comments show that "new thinking" had taken hold with many politicians as well.

The Ontario Municipal Board held hearings on metro council's application as well as the Spadina Review Corporation's counter request to deny approval for the loan -- which would effectively cancel the Spadina scheme -- in January 1971.¹³⁷ The Spadina Review Corporation (SRC) was formed in November 1970 by anti-expressway advocates to orchestrate a massive fundraising drive to support anti-Spadina forces during the OMB hearings.¹³⁸ The corporation was operated by a board of twenty-two directors, headed by architect Colin Vaughan. Boasting

¹³⁵ "Expressway inquiry refused: Spadina plan approved," *The Globe and Mail* 2 June 1970. William Bragg, "Metro votes 23-7 to resume Spadina foes plot next move," *The Toronto Star* 17 June 1970. For more on the role of the OMB in the Spadina controversy, refer to Ian Milligan, "'This Board Has a Duty to Intervene': Challenging the Spadina Expressway Through the Ontario Municipal Board, 1963-1971," *Urban History Review* 39, 2 (Spring 2011), 25-39.

¹³⁶ Metro Council Transcript 1970, 16 June 1970, F0417-1975-013/002 (21); YUA.

¹³⁷ "Spadina from start to finish," *The Globe and Mail* 4 June 1971.

¹³⁸ Untitled Spadina Review Corporation Press Release, 5 February 1971, F0417-1975-013/004 (02); YUA. Jeffrey Sack to Alan Powell, 10 November 1970, F0417-1975-013/004 (02); YUA.

the same widespread support the preceding anti-expressway campaign had attracted, the corporation sought to raise \$40,000 in part to hire lawyer J.J. Robinette to speak for the ratepayers associations, residents' groups, professional associations, home and school associations, churches, conservationist groups, business groups, apartment tenants and owners all represented by the corporation.¹³⁹ In a bid to make their plea as broadly appealing as possible, SSSOCCC protestors had increasingly focused on the skyrocketing costs of the expressway, and the Spadina Review Corporation adopted this approach as well, emphasizing the disparity between the original cost of \$73,000,000 and the latest \$142,000,000 estimate.¹⁴⁰ They also argued the Spadina question was about more than just one road – that the Crosstown, Richview, Christie, Parkside, Scarborough expressways and the Highway 400 extension would all be affected.¹⁴¹ Although SSSOCCC Chairman Alan Powell was also a board member for SRC, the two organizations did not form an alliance. SSSOCCC member Paul Tennant noted SRC members “couldn’t understand” why the former group didn’t help fundraise, but said “our style was quite different and would have conflicted. We went after the general public, whereas they went after their friends. Our rabble-rousing would have destroyed their attempts to create a responsible image.”¹⁴²

¹³⁹ Untitled Spadina Review Corporation Press Release, 3 December 1970, F0417-1975-013/004 (02); YUA. “Spadina Review Corporation,” Brochure, n.d., F0417-1975-013/004 (02); YUA. Lawyer J.J. Robinette was actually hired to represent “twelve resident and ratepayer associations” interests at the OMB hearings in August 1970; the formation of the Spadina Review Corporation by members of the original group followed a couple months later to address fundraising needs. Untitled Press Release, 4 August 1970, F0417-1975-013/007 (05); YUA.

¹⁴⁰ “Press Release: Toronto’s Spadina Expressway Costs All Ontario Taxpayers \$40 Each,” 11 March 1971, F0417-1975-013/007 (05); YUA. Chris Leo also noted the shift from protestors’ original emphasis on safeguarding the “appearance and livability” of Toronto to highlighting escalating costs in an effort to mobilize as broad a support base as possible. Leo, 36.

¹⁴¹ “Spadina Review Corporation,” Brochure, n.d., F0417-1975-013/004 (02); YUA.

¹⁴² Bob Tennant, “Informal Observations About SSSOCCC Finances,” n.d., F0417-1975-013/004 (06); YUA.

In February 1971, the OMB announced an unprecedented split two to one verdict approving the loan, at which point the Spadina Review Corporation appealed to the Provincial Cabinet to reverse the decision.¹⁴³ The decisions from all three board members underscored how much questions about the social and environmental costs had shaped the arguments and subsequent judgements both for and against the road.¹⁴⁴ OMB members W. Shub and R.M. McGuire both approved metro's application. Shub acknowledged the "very strong opposition that has developed," but rejected protestors' claims that the scheme was inadequately researched by metro officials. He was satisfied that metro authorities had accurately measured the impact of the proposed expressway on the affected neighbourhoods, and maintained, "it is necessary to brush aside some of the human and emotional factors which governed the position taken by a large body of the opposition."¹⁴⁵ In his decision, McGuire noted that applications for more funding were typically only considered in light of whether the municipality in question could shoulder the increased financial burden, but because of the application against the Spadina scheme, the board undertook a broader review. In announcing his approval of metro's application, McGuire argued protestors' fears of "a deterioration of their stable downtown residential neighbourhoods" were "overstated." Instead, he argued, "A metropolitan community

¹⁴³ Claire Hoy, "Municipal board approves Spadina Expressway," *The Toronto Daily Star* 18 February 1971.

¹⁴⁴ Ian Milligan explores the way in which tensions over urban development manifested in the hearings in "'This Board Has a Duty to Intervene': Challenging the Spadina Expressway Through the Ontario Municipal Board, 1963-1971," *Urban History Review* 39, 2 (Spring 2011), 25-39. Milligan argues the split decision made it "palatable, legitimate, and respectable" for the province to subsequently overturn the decision, thus cancelling the route.

¹⁴⁵ *Ontario Municipal Board Decision on the Spadina Expressway*, 10, 13, February 1971, reprinted by The Spadina Review Corporation, 4-5, F0417-1975-013/003 (06); YUA.

is a place for earning a livelihood,” and accordingly, the accommodation and encouragement of expansion and growth must be a priority.¹⁴⁶

The dissenting vote came from J.A. Kennedy. In his judgment, Kennedy said noise and air pollution, the uprooting of established residential areas, and the destruction of the “natural beauty” of the threatened ravines all meant the plan should be reconsidered. He was particularly displeased by expert’s suggestion that the expressway would inevitably be congested in the future. Kennedy argued: “The almost cruel social cost in terms of disruption of established communities seemed to engender growing opposition and resentment on the part of those citizens ‘down stream’ who did not require the transportation but were asked to tolerate the invasion.” Contrary to his colleague’s accusations, he was careful to note opponents were not fuelled by “emotion or lack of realism.” Kennedy engaged the rhetoric of the new movement, concluding, “Machines are made to serve man, not man to serve machines, regardless of whether the machine is an automobile or a computer.”¹⁴⁷

While the Spadina Review Corporation’s appeal sat before the Provincial Cabinet, the OMB prohibited further land purchases for the anticipated Scarborough Expressway.¹⁴⁸ *The Globe and Mail*’s editorial board once again trumpeted its opposition to the expressway, applauding the “clear mind and great deal of courage” shown by OMB Chairman J.A. Kennedy in making his decision against the scheme. The board further argued the cabinet was the right body to make a final call because it would decide in the new “climate of opinion” that “puts the quality of life for human beings ahead of the automobile, and sees expressways as an assault on

¹⁴⁶ *Ontario Municipal Board Decision*, 15, 21-22, February 1971, F0417-1975-013/003 (06); YUA.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 4-5, 6, 4, 7.

¹⁴⁸ James MacKenzie, “OMB orders halt on Scarboro route,” *The Globe and Mail* 21 April 1971.

that quality of life.”¹⁴⁹ The board also noted that the upcoming provincial election would motivate cabinet members to ensure they gauged the majority opinion accurately.

In the meantime, further evidence of the tensions between city and metropolitan councils came in May 1971 when city council met to draft “A Blueprint for Our Time,” which was a statement of goals and objectives to guide the council’s operations. The impact of the expressway disputes was clear, as council specifically called for “better communication between the Council of the City of Toronto, its administration and the public,” and called on the metro council to use similar guidelines in governing the entire Metropolitan Toronto region.¹⁵⁰ The most striking part of the document addressed the power struggle between metro and the city: “*This council is the one which must ultimately provide the impetus and energy to direct the future destinies of our Toronto. This council must fashion the goals for our future, with a vision which goes far beyond the day-to-day concerns of civic administration.*”¹⁵¹

“If we are building a transportation system to serve people, the Spadina Expressway is a good place to stop”

Finally in June 1971, Premier Bill Davis (1971-85) announced the reversal of the OMB decision, thus denying metro permission to obtain the loan needed to complete the road, effectively putting an end to the Spadina Expressway.¹⁵² Like OMB member Kennedy, Davis

¹⁴⁹ “The expressway issue goes to the right court,” *The Globe and Mail* 21 April 1971.

¹⁵⁰ “Toronto – A Blueprint for Our Time,” 3, 6, City Clerk’s Department, City of Toronto, 7 May 1971, F0417-1975-013/001 (11); YUA.

¹⁵¹ Emphasis in original. “Toronto – A Blueprint for Our Time,” 2, City Clerk’s Department, City of Toronto, 7 May 1971, F0417-1975-013/001 (11); YUA.

¹⁵² “Spadina from start to finish,” *The Globe and Mail* 4 June 1971. Although Davis cancelled provincial funding in 1971, the portion of the roadbed between Lawrence Avenue and Eglinton Avenue that was already fully prepared was subsequently paved in the mid 1970s. In February 1985, provincial authorities granted a 99 year lease on a three foot strip of land directly abutting the abbreviated expressway at Eglinton Avenue to ensure the plan would not be revived.

referred to the social and environmental costs of the road repeatedly in explaining his position. He said his government knew it was making a precedent setting decision, and recognized what he referred to as the “symbolic” importance of the issue as a power struggle over planning and development. Instead of the expressway, Davis stressed the importance of developing alternative transport, mainly rapid transit services, which he said the province would help fund. He argued that although his decision went against the elected metro politicians, “growing evidence and accumulative experience gathered elsewhere on this continent demonstrates the ultimate futility of giving priority to the passenger car as a means of transportation into and out of cities.” He cited the prevention of further pollution and environmental destruction as well as the preservation of quality of life in urban neighbourhoods as reasons for halting construction, while also admitting concern over the escalating costs of the scheme. The most often quoted part of Davis’ decision was the point at which he declared transportation systems must be built to serve people, not cars, and that the expressway did not fit that mandate: “If we are building a transportation system to serve the automobile, the Spadina Expressway is a good place to start. But if we are building a transportation system to serve people, the Spadina Expressway is a good place to stop.” Protestors’ rhetoric was prominent in his statement but he made the link even more explicit when he said, “One might borrow some of the popular rhetoric and say . . . that the streets belong to the people.” Davis further situated himself within new modes of thinking about the environment and citizen participation in city planning when he concluded by declaring his decision “both positive and progressive.”¹⁵³

¹⁵³ Transcript of Statement by the Honourable William Davis, Prime Minister of Ontario, on the Future of the Spadina Expressway in the Legislature, Thursday, June 3rd, 1971, 2, 5-7, 2-4, 8, F0417-1975-013/003 (05); YUA

While Davis's decision surprised some, the way in which protests raised awareness and concerns about the financial, social and environmental costs of the scheme actually created the opportunity for him to make a decision that was politically savvy. The premier's proclaimed affinity for protestors' alternative vision helped define him as a politician but was also further reflected in his new transportation policy, announced weeks after the Spadina cancellation. Davis approved increased municipal subsidies for road work from twenty-five to thirty percent, and increased funding for public transit to "provide alternatives to the private motor vehicle and to encourage municipalities to view public transportation as a better alternative to spending ever-increasing funds for road improvements."¹⁵⁴

Locally, the defeat of Spadina effectively ended metro council's expressway network plans for the Metropolitan Toronto Region. As in cities across the U.S. and others in Canada, the freeway revolt marked the end of not just one road, but an entire network. The Toronto controversy also acted as an incubator for reformers in the city, the most notable example being anti-Spadina Alderman John Sewell, who later became mayor. As Sewell noted, the 1969 and 1972 City Hall elections "brought fresh voices to express the sentiments of those opposed to the new ways of planning."¹⁵⁵

The significance of the Spadina Expressway controversy was not limited to local reverberations. The episode was an example of what happened to modernism when it hit a crossroad. It was not simply a case of "not in my backyard," or NIMBY. Protestors fought against the expressway and the network they knew would follow as a whole. Debates over

¹⁵⁴ Claire Hoy, *Bill Davis: A Biography* (Toronto: Methuen, 1985), 86-88, 89, as quoted in Hoy, 225.

¹⁵⁵ John Sewell, "Rejection of Modern Planning," chapter 5 in *The Shape of the City: Toronto Struggles with Modern Planning*, 136-171 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 171.

interchanges, and on-ramps, and off-ramps, and four lanes versus six were all irrelevant – no expressway, no matter where in the Greater Toronto Region it was located, would have been acceptable. Similarly, aesthetic considerations such as landscaping adjacent to the planned route were irrelevant. No number of trees would appease protestors because this dispute was about fighting the expressway unconditionally. Furthermore, while the rhetoric of class based conflicts was adopted by protestors to some extent, there was no slum clearance mandate in Toronto, and the negative impact of the expressway would have affected just as many upper middle class residents, if not more, as working class counterparts.

The Spadina Expressway controversy was created and fuelled by the intersection of a number of different movements – increased citizen activism, the politicization of city planning, and the rise of environmentalism – all of which contributed to the clashing conceptions of modernism that characterized the debates. Despite other factors that contributed to the road's demise, the Spadina episode remains an important benchmark for activists who continue to uphold the cancellation as a monument to the power of citizen action. In the numerous articles that followed the death of Jane Jacobs in April 2006, her role in the Spadina victory was always portrayed as being substantial and hailed as one of her most significant contributions as a Canadian citizen.¹⁵⁶ The defeat of the expressway is also frequently cited in coverage of current transportation planning disputes. One writer criticized new transportation schemes in Toronto by arguing that the Spadina controversy “should have taught us the hard lessons about super-sized roads.”¹⁵⁷ Furthermore, in June 2006, the anniversary of the Spadina defeat was commemorated with a celebratory reception in Toronto titled “Thirty-Five Years Without the Spadina

¹⁵⁶ Barry Wellman, “Jane Jacobs the Torontonians,” *City & Community* 5, no. 3 (Fall 2006).

¹⁵⁷ John Lorinc, “Road Warriors,” *Toronto Life* 39, no. 2 (February 2005), 51-54.

Expressway,” where “the important work of community members in saving the city and our neighbourhoods from the perils of superhighways” was acclaimed.¹⁵⁸ Less than a year later “The Spadina Expressway Affair,” an exhibit applauding the defeat of the scheme, opened in The Market Gallery located in Toronto’s St. Lawrence Market.¹⁵⁹

A key reference point to both pro and anti-expressway activists across the country, the defeat of the Spadina Expressway occupies an important place in Canada’s urban history. The conviction and zeal with which both sides pursued the issue was sometimes written off as unrealistic and utopian or alternatively, as excessively rigid and authoritarian. But the often furious nature of the battle must be understood as more than just a shortsighted or emotional clash over a road. The rejection of expressways resulted in a fundamental shift in the relationship between citizens and government, as activists sought to bring politicians in touch with their desire to create a livable city, and install more accessible civil servants who supplemented their training and expertise with community consultations.

In this respect, when Bill Davis delivered his dramatic announcement effectively cancelling the Spadina Expressway, he struck a powerful blow on behalf of all activists in the battle against expressways while co-opting the cause for his own legacy. At the heart of Davis’s decision to overturn the OMB ruling was an acknowledgement that the costs of expressways far exceeded the financial terms, and that any decision about the roads had to take the broader costs into account. The long term implications of the controversy, however, are less clear. The episode was undoubtedly a landmark battle; one that continues to occupy a central place in the

¹⁵⁸ “Thirty-Five Years Without the Spadina Expressway,” *Upcoming* <http://upcoming.org/event/82219/>.

¹⁵⁹ “‘Spadina Expressway Affair’ exhibit at the Market Gallery,” City of Toronto, 15 February 2007, <http://wx.toronto.ca/inter/it/newsrel.nsf/7017df2f20edbe2885256619004e428e/d5761075eb369017852572830056ba60?OpenDocument>.

city's mythology, even garnering anniversary celebrations marking the cancellation of the road. The reality of Toronto post-Spadina, though, is not that of an expressway free pedestrian paradise. The city is still very much shaped by the high speed arteries that surround it. From the outskirts to the core, accommodating automobiles remains a key consideration in planning and development decisions as tensions between motorists, public transit users and cyclists rise. Ultimately, Spadina's legacy is mixed, as what seemed like a shift in planning priorities at the highest levels did not translate into a willingness to adopt protestors' vision wholeheartedly, including many of the most important tenets of their philosophy that would have really transformed the city.

Chapter 2: Vancouver, British Columbia: “What kind of city do we want to be?”

Vancouver’s expressway debates unfolded in two stages, each associated with a section of the city’s planned expressway network. Like many cities across the country in this era, Vancouver faced the dual problem of downtown congestion and restricted access to the city’s core. Particularly in the communities on the north shore suburban sprawl increased the stress on the existing transportation infrastructure as ever growing numbers of commuters, mostly in automobiles, moved in and out of the city on a daily basis. Planners proposed an expressway network to remedy the burgeoning mobility problems. It looked much like the double ring standard of the era, with adjustments for Vancouver’s peninsula situation. The initial local response was generally cautious approval, but the provincial government’s position was firmly in opposition to expressways in Vancouver. Over the years subsequent provincial administrations seemed more open to the prospect of expressways in the city, but none would make the substantial funding commitments needed for city council to move forward with the freeway plans.

The reality of limited local resources and the reluctance of provincial officials to support the schemes did not result in a quick or complete defeat of freeways, as expressway advocates remained committed to the roads. In limiting local authorities’ power to advance the freeway agenda, the provincial position created an opening for freeway opponents to gain traction as they waged a sustained campaign against the roads. The public protests centered around two parts of the planned network, the Chinatown or Carrall link, and the third crossing between the city and the north shore. Vancouver’s activists worked together to organize a sophisticated and coordinated campaign to defeat freeways. After the first wave of controversy concluded with the

defeat of the Chinatown link, officials responded not with resignation but with a landmark study that renewed the city's commitment to freeways with a network plan that was almost entirely unchanged from the original version. This move was met with a second wave of opposition focused on the next project to move forward, the plans to construct the third crossing.

In the case of both the Chinatown link and the third crossing, protestors mobilized in opposition to a particular component of the freeway network but opposed freeways in the city at large and their activism reflected the related broad based concerns. The debates concluded with the defeat of the third crossing and effectively, the entire network. During both waves of protests, the lack of provincial funding hindered local expressway supporters' efforts to push the plans forward and lent weight to protestors' appeals about the unacceptability of not only the social and environmental costs, but also the financial.

Vancouver

Situated on the country's west coast, Vancouver's location on a peninsula surrounded by the Burrard Inlet, the Strait of Georgia, the Fraser River and the Rocky Mountains posed a challenge to transportation planners in the postwar era. At the same time, pressure on the existing facilities increased due to expansion by immigration, migration and the annexation of two neighbouring municipalities -- Point Grey and South Vancouver -- in the late 1920s. During the postwar era, Vancouver's population rose from 275,353 in 1941, to 344,833 in 1951, to 384,522 in 1961, to 426,256 in 1971, while the Greater Vancouver Region grew from 388,687 in

1941, to 554,188 in 1951, to 769,006 in 1961, to 985,689 in 1971.¹⁶⁰ The west end was home to more affluent communities while disadvantaged residents were concentrated in the east. The city's status as a major international trade port on the strength of its forestry, mining and fishery sectors also brought it into competition with other flourishing cities like Edmonton to supplant Winnipeg's traditional status as the dominant western Canadian city.¹⁶¹ This competition between cities contextualized the expressway debates, as each aspired to regional dominance and national prestige.

The proposed expressway network was not the only transformative project planned for Vancouver in the post-World War II era. During this time, the city was widely redeveloped with massive office towers, expansive hotels, shopping centres and numerous high rise apartment buildings crowding the downtown landscape. Scholars have framed this transformation within the broader context of the inner urban challenges in the 1960s and resultant efforts to prevent Canadian cities from meeting the same fate as American counterparts.¹⁶² Key renewal projects included the remaking of False Creek from its former industrial use into a residential community, a project initiated in the late 1960s and carried out in the 1970s and early 1980s. Another high profile project in the 1970s was the reworking of a neighbouring industrial area, Granville Island, into a popular entertainment district. The historic Strathcona neighbourhood was also targeted

¹⁶⁰ Patricia Roy, "'Table II: Vancouver City as a Proportion of Greater Vancouver, 1901-1971,'" in *Vancouver: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1980), 168. The municipalities included in the Greater Vancouver figures are Burnaby, Coquitlam, Delta, Indian Reserves, New Westminster, North Vancouver City, North Vancouver District, Point Grey, Richmond, South Vancouver, Surrey, University Endowment Lands, Vancouver and West Vancouver.

¹⁶¹ Robert A.J. McDonald, *Making Vancouver: Class, Status, and Social Boundaries, 1863-1913* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1996). McDonald argues that social status in early Vancouver was determined by a combination of factors beyond class, including family status and ethnicity or race. R.A.J. McDonald, "The Business Elite and Municipal Politics in Vancouver," *Urban History Review* 11, 3 (February 1983), 1-14.

¹⁶² Robert N. North and Walter G. Hardwick, "Vancouver Since the Second World War: An Economic Geography," in Graeme Wynn and Timothy Oke, eds., *Vancouver and Its Region* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992), 200-233.

by urban renewal schemes that destroyed much of the area in the 1950s and 1960s until community resistance triggered a turn towards rehabilitation in accordance with the move away from large urban renewal projects. Historians have noted the broad-based nature of citizen activism in this period, as questions about individual projects quickly evolved into broader objections to downtown development plans and calls for more open government.¹⁶³ Some like Patricia Roy have also pointed to the public disapproval of the massive, multi-use Pacific Centre and its imposing presence downtown as a motivating force for citizen activists and a direct contributor to the abandonment of Project 200, another mega-development connected to the expressway plans.¹⁶⁴

The politics of urban renewal were further complicated by Vancouver's demographics, especially by the presence of a well-established and substantial Chinese community. Historians have covered the history of Asian immigrants in Vancouver thoroughly. Initial accounts of the group's history focused on the racism to which they were subjected.¹⁶⁵ More recent scholars have acknowledged that racism often made the Chinese community insular and encouraged the formation of political cliques, but also stress the nuances within immigrant Asian communities

¹⁶³ David Ley, Daniel Hiebert and Geraldine Pratt, "Time to Grow Up? From Urban Village to World City, 1966-91," in Graeme Wynn, *Vancouver and Its Region* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992), 234-266. Ley, Hiebert and Pratt also note that while pro-growth Mayor Tom Campbell (1966-72) was in office during the height of renewal debates, the reformist impulse outlasted his tenure, encouraged perhaps in part by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau's 1968 promise of an "open society."

¹⁶⁴ Roy, *Vancouver*, 148.

¹⁶⁵ Examples include, Howard H. Sugimoto, "The Vancouver Riot and Its International Significance," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 64, 4 (Winter 1973), 163-174 and Gillian Creese, "Organizing Against Racism in the Workplace: Chinese Workers in Vancouver Before the Second World War," *Canadian Ethnic Studies* 19, 3 (1987), 35-46. Two more comprehensive surveys of the community's history in Vancouver are Kay Anderson, *Vancouver's Chinatown: Racial Discourse in Canada, 1875-1980* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991); Wing Chung Ng, *The Chinese in Vancouver, 1945-80: The Pursuit of Identity and Power* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999); and a number of Patricia Roy's books, including *A White Man's Province: British Columbia Politicians and Chinese and Japanese Immigrants, 1858-1914* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1989), *The Oriental Question: Consolidating A White Man's Province, 1914-1941* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003), and *The Triumph of Citizenship: The Japanese and Chinese in Canada, 1941-67* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007).

that have been overlooked.¹⁶⁶ These observers argue that urban renewal fights like those to save the downtown neighbourhood of Strathcona and the Chinatown commercial district from freeways bonded the community in a way that would not be sustained in subsequent decades as the population dispersed.¹⁶⁷

Vancouver was governed by a council of aldermen and a mayor and distinguished by its tradition of party politics at the local level, an unusual feature in Canada cities. Municipal politics also played a role in shaping the expressway debates. City politics had long been dominated by the Non-Partisan Association (NPA) which arose in the late 1930s as an alliance between Liberals and Conservatives in response to the social-democratic Co-operative Commonwealth Federation. The renewal related disputes of the 1970s led to the emergence of a new political force -- The Electors Action Movement (TEAM) -- led by reformers who were active anti-expressway protestors.¹⁶⁸ In 1967, metro government was introduced in the form of the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), an elected administrative board whose responsibilities included planning, housing and transportation.¹⁶⁹ Social geographer and political theorist David Ley has understood this era in municipal governance as a response to an earlier conception of modernism that focused on establishing order for mass society. In the post-1960s

¹⁶⁶ Edgar Wickberg, "Chinese and Canadian Influences on Chinese Politics in Vancouver, 1900-1947," *BC Studies* (1980), 37-55. Yuen-Fong Woon, "Social Discontinuities in North American Chinese Communities: The Case of the Kwaan in Vancouver and Victoria, 1880-1960," *Canadian Review of Sociology & Anthropology* 15, 4 (November 1978), 443-452.

¹⁶⁷ Laura Madokoro, "Chinatown and Monster Homes: The Splintered Chinese Diaspora in Vancouver," *Urban History Review* 39, 2 (Spring 2011), 17-24.

¹⁶⁸ Fern Miller, "Vancouver Civic Political Parties: Developing a Model of Party-System Change and Stabilization," *BC Studies* (1975), 3-31. Paul Tennant, "Vancouver Civic Politics, 1929-1980," *BC Studies* 46 (1980), 3-27. For a more detailed account of party politics in this era, refer to Ley, Hiebert and Pratt in Wynn, *Vancouver and Its Region* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992), 259-265 and Roy, *Vancouver* (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1980), 152-157.

¹⁶⁹ For a more detailed account of the creation of the Greater Vancouver Regional District, its function and operations, refer to Roy, *Vancouver* (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1980), 157-159.

era, he argued, modernism was about combatting a sense of placelessness and addressing the need for urban community. Accordingly, municipal government was dominated by liberal professionals who sought to build a postmodern city in that image.¹⁷⁰

“The major deficiencies are such that they can only be solved efficiently and practically by constructing an entirely separate system of high speed facilities, called freeways”

Vancouver’s expressway plans followed the model of the era, with adjustments for the city’s unique geography. Instead of two concentric rings linked by connectors, planners called for a modified design with one ring around the downtown core and connectors emanating from that route to connect with existing provincial routes beyond the city’s borders. The city’s location on a peninsula shaped other key features of the design as well, making the connecting routes to the burgeoning suburban communities on the north shore particularly important. Indeed the remarkable and continuing growth of communities on the north shore created much of the demand that was overloading the existing transportation infrastructure. Without sufficient access points between the north shore and city, many commuters were forced to travel along the Burrard Inlet and back along the peninsula to access the city centre. While access to the city was a leading concern, so too was mobility within the urban core. Leaders in the commercial districts downtown worried that growing congestion would deter potential customers from traveling downtown, and as a result, nurture competing commercial regions in the suburbs. Like in other cities, consultants were asked to solve the twin problems of access and mobility with a freeway centered solution and, as a result, the final plans were shaped primarily by the consultant’s limited mandate which reflected the transportation planning trends of the era.

¹⁷⁰ David Ley, “Styles of the Times: Liberal and Neo-Conservative Landscapes in Inner Vancouver, 1968-1986,” *Journal of Historical Geography* 14, 1 (January 1987), 40-56.

Officials began to seriously consider expressways as a solution to the Vancouver region's burgeoning traffic problems in the early 1950s, as growth in the region put stress on the existing transportation infrastructure. The city's unique geography complicated the issue, requiring bridge or tunnel crossings to span the Burrard Inlet on the north side and False Creek on the south side to provide downtown direct access to those living in neighbouring communities. Two existing crossings on the south side and one on the north were not enough. Explosive development north of the city was of particular concern, and simply was not adequately serviced by the existing Lions' Gate Bridge crossing. The only other option for motorists heading into the city was to take a detour to the east and then wind back around to the west to reach the urban core.

By 1954 officials were already reporting on the need for a second Burrard Inlet crossing. Officials pointed to the number of North Vancouver residents making the daily commute into the city to explain the increased pressure on the existing crossing. Their solution at the time was a four lane crossing to match the existing Lions' Gate Bridge at the first narrows, as well as a four lane crossing to replace the existing aging structure at the second narrows.¹⁷¹ Over the next few years several studies on the traffic problems facing the region emerged, and by the end of the decade, Vancouver had its first expressway network proposal. A highway planning committee declared Vancouver's existing highways inadequate in 1956, adding that freeways were a necessity for the city.¹⁷² Planning Director Gerald Sutton Brown (1953-59) estimated

¹⁷¹ Technical Sub-Committee on Burrard Inlet Crossings, Committee on Burrard Inlet Crossings, *Report on Burrard Inlet Crossings* (Vancouver, BC: 1954), 1-5. Government Publications, Vancouver Public Library (VPL).

¹⁷² "Highway network vital," *The Province* 9 January 1956.

\$300,000,000 would be required for road construction, including freeways, over the next twenty years.¹⁷³

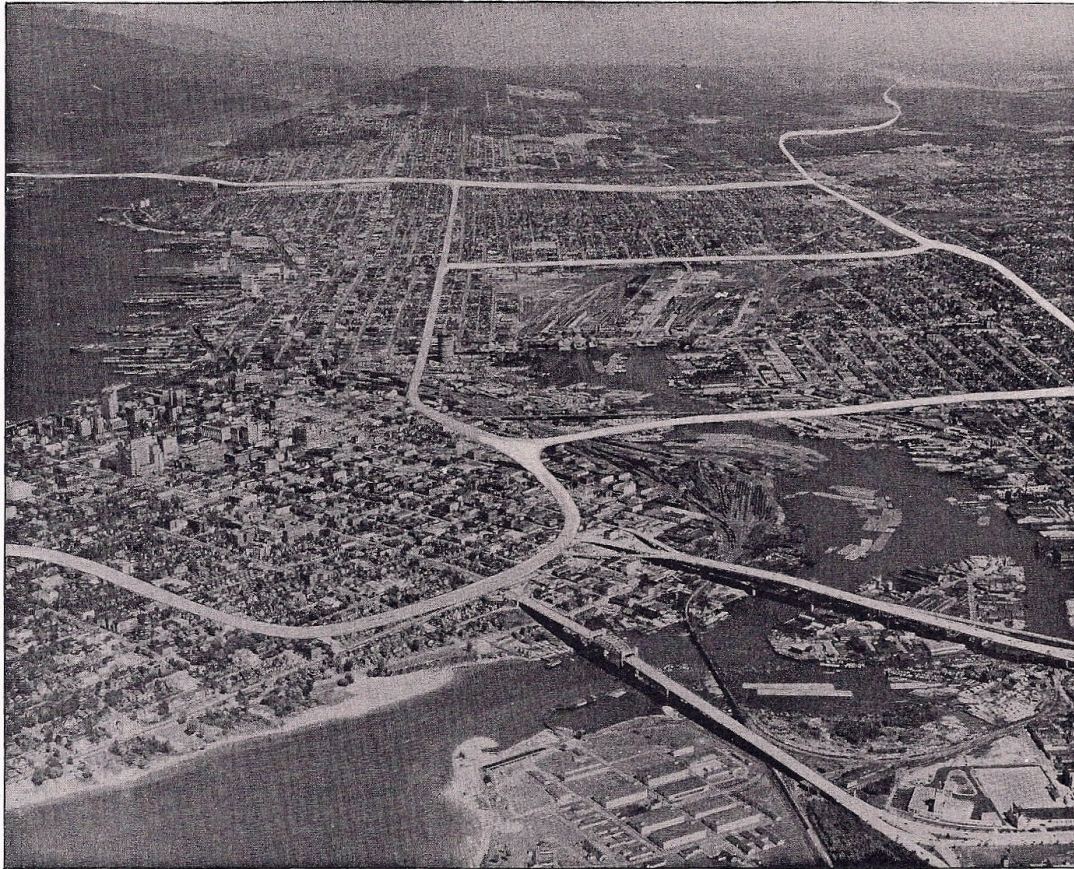
In April 1959 the plans for Vancouver's freeway network were officially released. Like most other cities across the country, Vancouver had experienced explosive growth in the postwar period. City officials identified rising population and the attendant growth as "the area's problem," to which the expressway-centered plan was the solution. The plan, they noted, must be designed to accommodate population projections, be consistent with area development, and also be flexible.¹⁷⁴ The network included forty-five miles of freeways at an estimated cost of \$340,000,000, including two Burrard Inlet crossings, two Fraser River crossings, an eight lane elevated freeway traversing the downtown, a completely rebuilt Georgia Viaduct, and a rapid transit component comprised of a "freeway-express-bus."¹⁷⁵ \$120,000,000 of the budget was reserved for a bridge at the first narrows, Cambie Bridge, and the Georgia Viaduct together.¹⁷⁶ Freeways facilitated uninterrupted high speed travel for large volumes of traffic for private

¹⁷³ "'Fantastic future' seen for Vancouver," *The Vancouver Sun* 11 April 1956. Once again, the troublesome congestion was blamed on significant increases in downtown traffic volumes in Vancouver as well as the neighbouring communities of Burnaby, New Westminister, Richmond and Coquitlam. "Freeways for city needed," *The Vancouver Sun* 13 November 1956. The Metro Highway Planning Commission issued their official report in November 1956 declaring expressways a necessity for the city. The \$300,000,000 estimate planning director Brown provided did not include the cost of integrating existing streets into the new system.

¹⁷⁴ Technical Committee for Metropolitan Highway Planning, *A Study on Highway Planning for the Metropolitan Area of the Lower Mainland of BC: Part I* (Vancouver, BC: 1956-1959), 1-5a. Government Publications, VPL. Also, a behind the scenes assessment: Civic Design Section, City Planning Department, "Preliminary Assessment: Freeways in Relationship to the Downtown Area," 28 January 1958, 1-7 and Planning Department, "Land Use Planning Criteria for Assessing Freeway Networks," 20 January 1958; City Planning Department Fonds, Director's General Files 1958, 925-F-4, File 2, City of Vancouver Archives (CVA).

¹⁷⁵ "45-mile freeway plan urged here," *The Province* 21 April 1959.

¹⁷⁶ Jack McCaugherty, "'City will need 4 new bridges'," *The Province* 22 April 1959. This figure did not include funding for the Trans-Canada Fraser River bridge.



A PORTION OF THE RECOMMENDED FREEWAY NETWORK

ARTIST'S SKETCH

VANCOUVER, B.C.

Image 1: "A portion of the recommended freeway network," page 70, Technical Committee for Metropolitan Highway Planning, A Study on Highway Planning for Metropolitan Vancouver, British Columbia: Part 2: Freeways with Rapid Transit (Vancouver, B.C.: April 1958-1959).

vehicles as well as public transit buses.¹⁷⁷ A rapid rail transit system was deemed too expensive.¹⁷⁸

The essential problem, according to planners, was that the city's existing roads could not handle projected traffic volumes. As they explained:

¹⁷⁷ Technical Committee for Metropolitan Highway Planning, *A Study on Highway Planning for Metropolitan Vancouver, British Columbia: Part 2: Freeways with Rapid Transit* (Vancouver, BC: April 1959-1959), 23, 46.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid*, xi, chapter 6, 44. The expense of rail systems such as monorails and subways were both rejected because the cost was prohibitive (55).

If these deficiencies are not alleviated, severe congestion will result throughout the downtown area, over a wide portion of the Burrard Peninsula and on the major crossing facilities of Burrard Inlet, False Creek, and the North and South Arms of the Fraser River. It is estimated that, if these deficiencies are not overcome, the annual costs of congestion resulting from increased vehicle mileage costs (excluding the value of time losses) would increase from between \$1,000,000-\$2,000,000 per year today to about \$50,000,000 per year by 1976.¹⁷⁹ The further adverse consequences of such congestion upon real estate values, retail and wholesale trade, and the general economy and livableness of the area would be significant.

Planners warned that part of the cost of unaddressed congestion would be shared by motorists and transit users alike, in the form of longer travel times. In addition, delays in public transportation trips would decrease the attractiveness of the service, in turn increasing the number of private motorists on the road, reducing transit revenues, and eventually, service. Furthermore, planners cautioned that property may be devalued because of proximity to heavy traffic volumes, while congestion may deter retail and wholesale customers from visiting central areas, eventually forcing businesses to relocate.¹⁸⁰

The freeway network solution offered by officials was not surprising given their mandate and the terms of reference for the study which called for a report on “future arterial highway requirements.”¹⁸¹ In accordance with their mandate they concluded that: “The major deficiencies are such that they can only be solved efficiently and practically by constructing an entirely separate system of high speed facilities, called freeways.” Officials also carefully described the routes they envisioned, explaining, “Freeways have no cross traffic at grade and have no access to or from abutting property. Connections to major streets and other highways are made at

¹⁷⁹ The cited increase cost was estimated “in terms of extra vehicle operating costs.”

¹⁸⁰ Ibid, 1, 21-22.

¹⁸¹ Ibid, 1.

specially designed interchanges.”¹⁸² The study authors acknowledged the beliefs underlying their plans, noting that they assumed that the city and province would continue to grow, that commuters’ habits would not change significantly, that cars and transit would continue to be the primary forms of transportation, and that air transport or other alternatives such as monorails would not impact current urban transportation challenges significantly.¹⁸³ The committee rejected alternative solutions to the city’s traffic problems, including making the downtown a transit-only zone and staggering work hours, branding such suggestions “impractical,” and insisting people would not change their habits.¹⁸⁴

Finally, planners touched on funding but did not offer specifics. Their report stipulated that users would bear the freeway costs without detailed breakdowns. Emphasizing the need for users to bear a significant portion of the financial burden of the expressways, officials even raised the possibility of tolls for the downtown network.¹⁸⁵ They were also careful to note other implications of the extensive freeway scheme, mainly the roads’ potential influence on land development patterns, and called for a thorough land use plan for highway corridors to manage the expected boom in high rise residential and commercial development as well as ensure the roads did not have the unintended and undesirable effect of decentralizing of Vancouver’s central business district.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸² Ibid, xi.

¹⁸³ Ibid, 3-4

¹⁸⁴ “45-mile freeway plan urged here,” *The Province* 21 April 1959.

¹⁸⁵ Technical Committee for Metropolitan Highway Planning, *A Study on Highway Planning for Metropolitan Vancouver, British Columbia: Part 2: Freeways with Rapid Transit* (Vancouver, BC: April 1959-1959), 71-74.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid, Chapter 4: “Implications of the plan.” The loss of taxable land in Vancouver and neighbouring municipalities was also mentioned as evidence of the scheme’s “mixed blessings” (71).

“When people say that cars should be kept at home they mean the other fellow’s car”

Early reaction to the expressway plans was mixed. Many local officials and media outlets welcomed the proposal as fitting for a modern city. The argument among expressway proponents throughout the debates was that expressways represented an essential feature of a modern city, and Vancouver must be made modern. In all cities the creation and maintenance of a modern urban infrastructure was of paramount importance to ensure continued growth and vitality. This vision of a thriving yet uncluttered metropolis came to life in artists’ sketches of the proposed routes. The ability of cities to compete on a national and international level was important to many civic leaders, and the construction of modern transportation infrastructure was regarded as essential in that regard.

Many local officials and the city’s largest newspapers welcomed the scheme as an essential move in the development of a modern, competitive city. Regarded by most as a cutting-edge plan that employed the latest techniques, the plan was applauded by some aldermen as a “boldly conceived” freeway scheme.¹⁸⁷ *The Province*’s editorial board also approved of the plans, saying they would encourage the formation of a metropolitan government.¹⁸⁸ The board argued the municipalities needed to work together with the province to institute the expressway plans, adding the network must be implemented in its entirety. In addition, they advocated dedicated bus lanes to ensure public transit was an attractive alternative.¹⁸⁹ *The Sun*’s editorial board echoed *The Province*’s assessment, calling the network a necessity for the city.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁷ “Finance problem facing freeway,” *The Vancouver Sun* 21 April 1959.

¹⁸⁸ The possibility of forming a metropolitan government was under study by a special committee.

¹⁸⁹ “Expressways: The beginning of Metro . . . and high speed public transit . . .” (editorial) *The Province* 22 April 1959.

¹⁹⁰ “Metro traffic can either circulate or strangle,” *The Vancouver Sun* 22 April 1959.

Support also came from business and automobile advocacy groups. The Downtown Business Association favoured freeways so strongly that they rejected plans for rapid rail transit to accompany the highways, arguing there was insufficient traffic density to support such a system and that public transit demand could be handled by buses using the freeways.¹⁹¹ Not surprisingly, the British Columbia Automobile Association also favoured the freeway plans. The association sponsored a forum that foreshadowed early objectors' community meetings, where dire congestion forecasts were issued and provincial and municipal governments were urged to take action on the city's transportation problems. Norman Lea of the Foundation of Canada Engineering Corp Ltd. participated in the forum, advocating freeways with mass transit.¹⁹² Lea outlined his argument in favour of freeways, explaining:

Canada's cities require modern freeways with parking. Only in this way can the urban traffic problem be solved and urban transportation be supplied in the most economical form. These facilities will remove isolation from certain communities and give access and communication; they will protect investment already made in highways and motor vehicles; they will save lives; they will save dollars in property values and congestion; they will maintain a high level of employment.¹⁹³

Not everyone welcomed the expressway scheme. Provincial officials were strangely ambivalent about the plans and their noncommittal response set the tone for the subsequent conversation about freeways between provincial and municipal authorities. From the outset, provincial officials seemed to support freeways for Vancouver as long as local officials would

¹⁹¹ "Citizen probe of freeways urged," *The Vancouver Sun* 10 February 1960.

¹⁹² Frank Walden, "Traffic jams to cost city \$50 million yearly by '76," *The Vancouver Sun* 2 June 1960.

¹⁹³ Norman D. Lea, "Will Freeways Solve Our Urban Traffic Problems?" *Public Works in Canada* (Reprint: June 1959); Office of the City Manager Fonds, Board of Administration, Commissioners' Subject Files 1960-1967, 114-A-3, File 17, CVA. Lea elaborated on financing strategy, arguing an extensive freeway network would pay for itself: "Sufficient freeways should be provided to make the total transportation bill a minimum. The financing of this optimum rate of freeway construction will require new sources of revenue. The method of financing which is used will, itself, have an important influence upon the effectiveness of the freeways and, from this point of view, financing in part through tolls would appear the most desirable."

take the lead in planning, implementing and financing the routes. Minister of Highways Phil Gaglardi responded to the plans by remarking, “By the time we are through building them they will be obsolete. But think how horrible it will be if they aren’t built.”¹⁹⁴ He also requested a meeting with officials from the municipalities affected by the expressway network, explaining that he wanted to see the city and municipalities take the initiative on the project and hoped it would spur the creation of a metropolitan government.¹⁹⁵

Detractors’ doubts revealed fundamental misgivings that would plague the plans, as critics raised questions about the potential impact of freeways in the city and even asked whether the roads were necessary for Vancouver. These detractors also issued the first of many calls for a comprehensive regional transportation plan. Many candidates in the civic election deemed the plans unrealistic and too expensive, calling the scheme a “dead duck.”¹⁹⁶ Community opposition focused on the potential impact of the plans on Vancouver’s beloved Stanley Park. The Division One Vancouver Centre Liberal Association, for example, singled out the planned section that would traverse the west end of the park. Group member Humphry Mostyn said of the route, “It would turn our famous park into a city slum like the Loop did to Chicago.”¹⁹⁷ The West End Community Council’s Burrard Inlet Crossing Committee also questioned the freeway plans, as did the Planning Institute of British Columbia. These groups were among the first to organize

¹⁹⁴ “Gaglardi cautious on freeway,” *The Vancouver Sun* 27 April 1959.

¹⁹⁵ “‘Gov’t will co-operate on freeways’,” *The Vancouver Sun* 23 April 1959. “Gaglardi cautious on freeway,” *The Vancouver Sun* 27 April 1959. Cost sharing and technical studies were still required for the freeways. “Freeway financing top civic problem,” *The Vancouver Sun* 6 May 1959. In June 1959 the provincial government debated financing their share of the \$340,000,000 cost of the expressway network. “Gov’t debating freeway share,” *The Vancouver Sun* c. June 1959.

¹⁹⁶ “Freeway plan pipe dream to all civic candidates,” *The Province* 5 December 1959.

¹⁹⁷ “Liberals fight freeway plan,” *The Province* 27 June 1959. Division One, Liberal Association as a Community Service, “Wake Up! West Enders,” Meeting Poster, c. June 1959; Pamphlet Collection, PAM 1959-176, CVA.

public meetings to discuss the plans.¹⁹⁸ The Vancouver Branch of the Community Planning Association of Canada also challenged the notion that freeways were necessary for Vancouver. They acknowledged that the transportation problems were both complicated and urgent, but raised concerns over the city's lack of comprehensive transportation policy and argued the preferred routes were chosen without any consideration of the impact of freeways on the areas they traversed.¹⁹⁹ Other early critics of the plans included Warnett Kennedy, the executive director of the Architectural Institute of British Columbia. Kennedy called on municipal authorities to enact measures to "deter" automobile traffic in the downtown core but was rebuffed by Commissioner John Oliver who argued mass transit had to be as efficient as the automobile if it was to compete with private transportation, saying, "When people say that cars should be kept at home they mean the other fellow's car."²⁰⁰

Even local officials who championed the plans were divided on a number of details, including which routes should take priority in the construction schedule and whether neighbouring municipalities should bear some of the financial burden. Engineers said the east-west freeway in Vancouver would be the first priority, but that the second first narrows crossing

¹⁹⁸ The West End Community Council advocated for a tunnel crossing instead of a bridge, opposed any freeway routing that would traverse Stanley Park, and were concerned about the impact of the proposed network on the city's west end. West End Community Council meeting notice c. September 1959, 114-A-3, File 17, CVA. Planning Institute of British Columbia, 23 March 1960, 114-A-3, File 17, CVA.

¹⁹⁹ Vancouver Branch of the Community Planning Association of Canada to Minister of Highways, Councils of the Cities of Vancouver and New Westminster and the Municipalities of Burnaby and Richmond, "Community Planning Association of Canada Comments on A Study on Highway Planning for Metropolitan Vancouver Prepared by the Technical Committee for Metropolitan Highway Planning," 7 February 1961, 1-9; City Council and Office of the City Clerk Fonds, Office of the City clerk, Subject Files (Including Council Supporting Documents) 1959-1970, 20-G-5, File 6, CVA.

²⁰⁰ Cliff MacKay, "Car deterrent plan crumbles at Hall," *The Vancouver Sun* 23 March 1962.

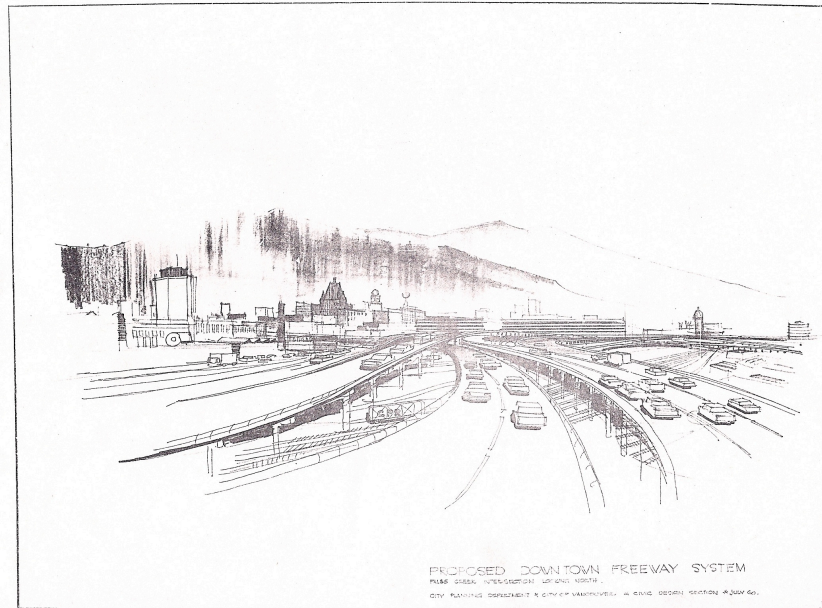


Image 2: Sketch Series, "Proposed Downtown Freeway System: False Creek Intersection Looking North," Slide 2, 1960; City Planning Department Fonds, Maps, plans and drawings, Microfiche copies -- chronological set, 137-F-2 1960 B1469. Courtesy of the City of Vancouver Archives.

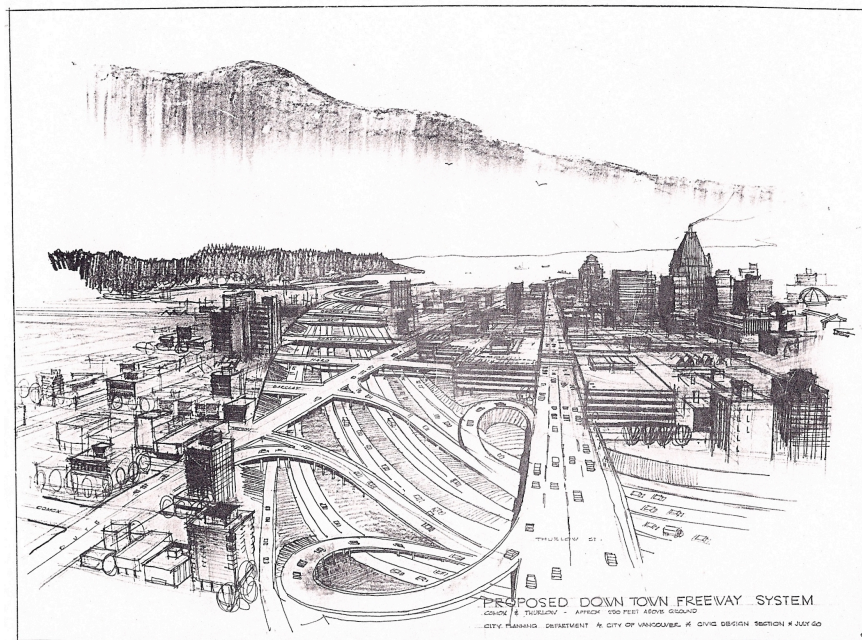


Image 3: Sketch Series, "Proposed Downtown Freeway System: Comox and Thurlow -- Approx. 250 Feet Above Ground," Slide 6, 1960; City Planning Department Fonds, Maps, plans and drawings, Microfiche copies -- chronological set, 137-F-2 1960 B1469. Courtesy of the City of Vancouver Archives.

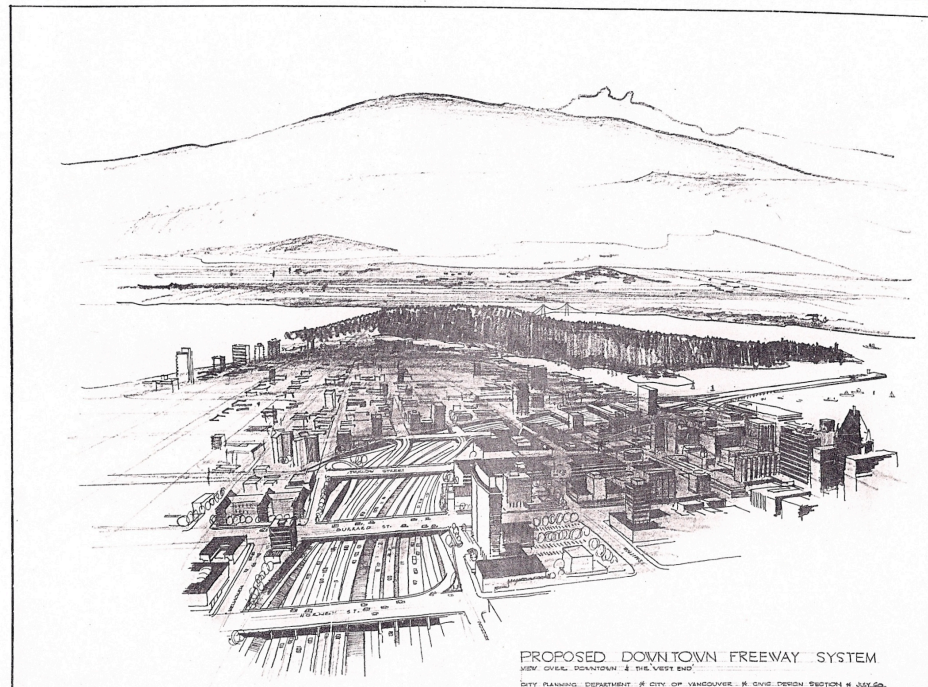


Image 4: Sketch Series, "Proposed Downtown Freeway System: View Over Downtown and the 'West End'," Slide 9, 1960; City Planning Department Fonds, Maps, plans and drawings, Microfiche copies -- chronological set, 137-F-2 1960 B1469. Courtesy of the City of Vancouver Archives.

was also needed.²⁰¹ The north and west Vancouver councils, however, argued the second first narrows crossing should be the priority route, and urged that it not be dependent on the east-west expressway.²⁰² At the same time divisions over the form the crossing should take emerged, as the city's crossing committee recommended consultants' favoured bridge plan be replaced by a tunnel scheme, arguing the bridge would waste land and be more expensive at \$95,000,000 compared to \$79,000,000 for the tunnel.²⁰³

²⁰¹ Gordon McCallum, "Freeway more urgent than span say experts," *The Province* 9 September 1959. A report to Gaglardi and the first narrows crossing committee was rumoured to set a start date of 1966 for the second first narrows crossing. Ben Metcalfe, "Freeway comes first," *The Province* 28 April 1959.

²⁰² "North shore asks span now: 'Don't wait for freeway'," *The Vancouver Sun* 10 September 1959.

²⁰³ "West end pressures for tunnel," *The Province* October 1959. Burrard Inlet Crossing Committee to Commissioner J.C. Oliver, 21 September 1959; Office of the City Manager Fonds, Board of Administration, Commissioners' Subject Files 1960-1967, 114-A-3, File 17, CVA. The Council held public meetings on the issue: Burrard Inlet Crossing Committee, Meeting Poster, September 1959; Office of the City Manager Fonds, Board of Administration, Commissioners' Subject Files 1960-1967, 114-A-3, File 17, CVA.

During the winter of 1959 to 1960, the growing divisions on city council over freeways became increasingly clear. While most debated the scheme under the assumption that freeways would indeed be built in Vancouver, councillors' positions represented the full range of opinions on the scheme, from complete support, to complete opposition, to advocating a compromise plan. Alderman Frank Frederickson (1958-63), for example, advocated public transit over freeways, insisting, "The aim of city planning is to create greater freedom of movement for the individual not to increase road space for an increasing production of autos" with "gargantuan freeways."²⁰⁴ Alderman Bert Emery (1959-65) called for roads to be widened while Alderman Reg Atherton (1957-68) criticized provincial officials' for not being as generous as American states in funding urban roads that would benefit the whole province. The freeway costs, Atherton noted, exceeded the metro region's financial capacity.²⁰⁵ By May 1960 a provincial freeway financing study was underway. Alderman Atherton again weighed in on the situation, telling his colleagues: "We have got to do something about traffic soon. If we don't, we're going to be choked."²⁰⁶

Vancouver's city councillors did not find allies in their municipal counterparts in communities outside the city. The freeway plans actually gave rise to some local tensions, as politicians from other communities argued the network was designed to benefit the city and, as such, it should be the city's financial responsibility. North Vancouver Councillor Vic Barber

²⁰⁴ "Freeze not city freeway policy," *The Province* 6 November 1959.

²⁰⁵ Los Angeles Mayor Norris Poulson argued Vancouver needed freeways like his city had, adding transit alone would not solve the area's traffic problems. Ken Clark, "Los Angeles mayor says Vancouver needs freeway," 22 March 1960. Alderman Bert Emery opposed the west end route. Frank Walden, "City to pay \$46,000 for freeway financing study," *The Vancouver Sun* 1 February 1961.

²⁰⁶ Frank Walden, "Freeway finance study under way," *The Vancouver Sun* 27 May 1960. Atherton later the councillor changed his position, announcing that he "opposed freeways in principle" because the roads would destroy the downtown shopping area. Frank Walden, "City to pay \$46,000 for freeway financing study," *The Vancouver Sun* 1 February 1961.

argued freeways that directed traffic into the city centre should be the city's responsibility, noting, "The freeways are designed to funnel everybody into downtown Vancouver."²⁰⁷ Shortly thereafter city council commissioned a \$115,000 freeway financing study,²⁰⁸ but the north Vancouver council voted against cost sharing for the report, arguing financing freeways was a provincial responsibility and rejecting the high cost of the work.²⁰⁹

"Everyone is in favour of good environment but agreement on the detailed items of what constitutes good environment is less unanimous"

The relationship between provincial and city authorities for the duration of the freeway debates was fraught with tension. Initially provincial officials failed to adopt a clear position on the freeway scheme, only encouraging local officials to take the lead if they wanted to move forward with expressways. Before long, though, provincial officials strongly opposed the plans, flatly refusing funding and even echoing local officials skepticism about the need for freeways altogether. Provincial officials' refusal to support expressways for Vancouver set the tone for intergovernmental relations throughout the debates. While subsequent provincial administrations were more open to the plans, the relationship remained antagonistic and the continuing tension between local and provincial authorities significantly impacted the ability of the city to implement the plans.

²⁰⁷ Lew Thomas, "Reeve attacks high cost of freeways," *The Vancouver Sun* 22 June 1960. Barber's claim that the route served downtown was likely a strategic move to downplay his municipality's benefit from, and resultant financial responsibility for, the route.

²⁰⁸ Frank Walden, "City to pay \$46,000 for freeway financing study," *The Vancouver Sun* 1 February 1961. The study was to investigate the estimated costs of the roads as well as alternative sources of revenue and revenue raising methods to finance the plans.

²⁰⁹ "North Van rejects freeways study," *The Vancouver Sun* 7 February 1961.

Discord between provincial and municipal officials first emerged when Mayor Alsbury requested provincial funding for a freeways feasibility study in the early 1960s. Provincial officials' immediate reluctance to invest in feasibility studies set the tone for the discussions between the two levels of government throughout the expressway debates. Over the years, local authorities continually appealed to their provincial counterparts to make a firm financial commitment to the scheme. Provincial officials refused each request and even went so far as to question the need for expressways in Vancouver. Privately Alsbury expressed his frustration over the lack of support from provincial officials,²¹⁰ but publicly the two provincial politicians who exerted the most influence over the issue had already come out against the scheme. Premier W.A.C. Bennett (1952-72) told reporters his government opposed freeways because the roads would not solve congestion and would occupy large swathes of otherwise taxable land and Minister of Highways Phil Gaglardi's (1955-68) position mirrored the premier's, as he called for rapid rail transit over freeways.²¹¹

²¹⁰ Alsbury reminded provincial Minister of Highways P.A. Gaglardi that the city had cooperated by funding part of a rail-rapid transit study "at your insistence" that proved transit infrastructure could not supplant freeways. He explained, "The BC Research Council has stated that rail-rapid transit is not feasible at the present time, and that by 1976, which is the target date for completion of the initial freeway system, only one line would be feasible." A.T. Alsbury to P.A. Gaglardi, Minister of Highways, 4 April 1962; City Council and Office of the City Clerk Fonds, Office of the City Clerk, Subject Files (Including Council Supporting Documents) 1959-1970, 20-G-5, File 6, CVA. The BC Research Council reported that the city would not be large enough to support even a 5 mile subway line until 1980, but recommended planners consider including rail lines with each freeway, which at a minimum they estimated would cost \$66,200,000. "In another 20 years, we may have a subway," *The Province* 2 March 1963.

²¹¹ Bud Elsie, "Freeway plan gasping its last?" *The Province* 24 April 1962. Province city columnist Bud Elsie attributed the lack of progress on freeway plans to changing public opinion and a recent provincial announcement about the lack of funding available for the scheme. Elsie also credited the apparent stalemate to, "A swing in public opinion -- at least what there is of it -- from freeways to rapid transit." Bud Elsie, "Freeway plan gasping its last?" *The Province* 24 April 1962. *The Vancouver Sun's* editorial board was critical of Bennett's lack of support for the city's freeways and skeptical of his October 1964 pledge of funding for northern roads in the province as the Vancouver plans continued to stall. Cliff MacKay, "Can Bennett spare Metro freeway monkey?" *The Vancouver Sun* 3 October 1964. Bennett had previously made a proposal to Vancouver officials, offering the existing Lions Gate Bridge to the city including the toll proceeds from the link, if they built a new crossing. The move was designed to combat criticism the province was stalling on the third crossing but the municipalities rejected the offer, insisting the third crossing was a provincial responsibility. Vancouver Mayor Tom Alsbury called the proposal "delightfully vague." "Bennett: 'Build span, get 1 free,'" *The Vancouver Sun* 1 October 1959.

In the meantime, while many studies on all components of the city's wide ranging transportation plans were commissioned, the replacement of the Georgia Viaduct was the first major project to be undertaken. The viaduct was regarded by many as a potential gateway project, one that would necessitate the construction of an entire freeway network for Vancouver. The scheme was designed to replace an existing structure, and while planners made provisions for the viaduct to be integrated into the full scale freeway network, the revitalized structure could stand alone without the freeway component. The preliminary engineering report for the \$7,400,000 Georgia Viaduct replacement was released in July 1963.²¹² City engineers estimated the aging structure handled over 20,000 vehicles daily and was long overdue for replacement. It was designed to fit seamlessly with the expressway links including the east-west freeway to the Trans-Canada Highway, the north-south freeway to the Deas Tunnel Thruway, the downtown loop freeway and the Burrard Inlet waterfront alternate.²¹³ The structure would connect with Georgia Street heading into the city and Dunsmuir Street heading out of the core.²¹⁴

Although the viaduct was meant to be a self-sufficient component of the city's transportation infrastructure and one that did not require freeways to function effectively, the engineers made their belief in the necessity of freeways clear. Downtown traffic volumes were such, they added, that freeways were essential. They conceded the viaduct could function without freeways but maintained, "The provision of the new viaduct will not by itself significantly improve the environment. A comprehensive plan for a downtown bypass, transit

²¹² Traffic Division, Vancouver Engineering Department, *Georgia Viaduct Replacement: Preliminary Engineering Report* (July 1963), Summary. Government Publications, VPL.

²¹³ Ibid. The viaduct originally opened in 1914.

²¹⁴ Ibid, 29.

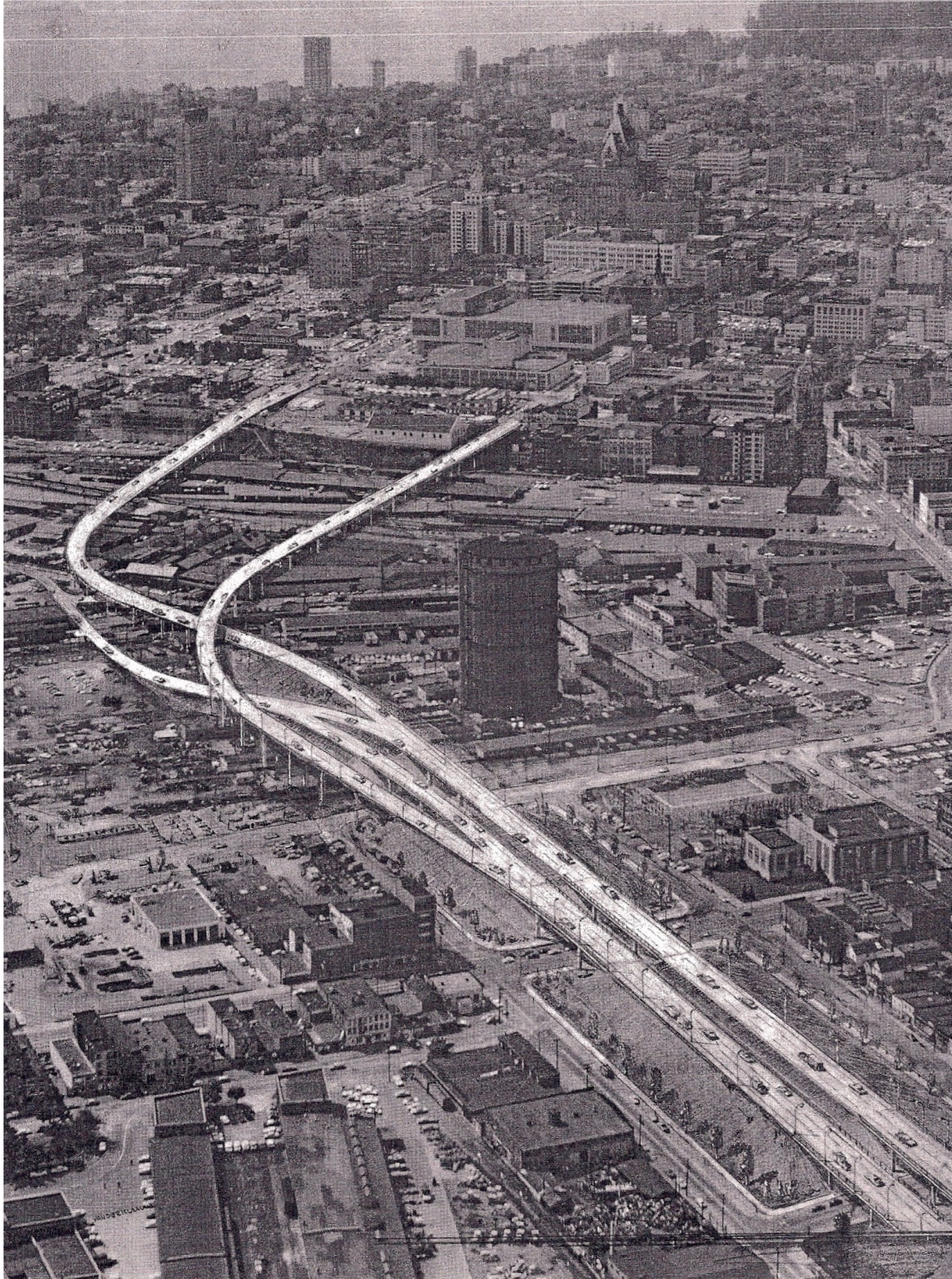


Image 5: Untitled Cover Image of Georgia Viaduct Routes, Traffic Division, Vancouver Engineering Department, Georgia Viaduct Replacement: Preliminary Engineering Report (July 1963).

facilities, integrated parking garages, and separation of pedestrians and vehicles is needed.”²¹⁵

The viaduct engineers acknowledged the structure would impact Vancouver’s downtown and stressed that good design would be the key to ensuring the effect was positive. Officials circumvented questions about the environmental impact by stating: “Everyone is in favour of good environment but agreement on the detailed items of what constitutes good environment is less unanimous.” In the most general terms, they offered a description of the ideal downtown core as “pleasant and interesting,” an easily accessible area that would be home to a concentration of offices, hotels, shopping and entertainment and cultural venues.²¹⁶

“Nowhere on the continent has a government kept in mind the problems of a large city more than in BC”

Debates over freeway financing continued through the early to mid-1960s as municipal and provincial politicians argued over each administrations’ responsibilities. Some municipal politicians outside of the city called for a fifty percent gas tax to be imposed on motorists in the lower mainland to help fund the freeways. North Vancouver Mayor Frank Goldsworthy insisted a gas levy instead of a property tax must fund the freeways, reasoning that the burden of paying for the routes should fall on the “the user.” The mayor also argued there should be federal financing for Vancouver’s scheme because some of the links would connect with existing Trans-Canada routes. Minister of Highways Phil Gaglardi disagreed, stressing the importance of municipal funding. Vancouver, he maintained, must shoulder part of the financial responsibility

²¹⁵ Ibid, 4-7.

²¹⁶ Ibid, 21.

for the freeways, saying it was time the city “stopped passing bucks and started spending some.”²¹⁷

The provincial stance frustrated many local officials, perhaps none more than Alderman Phillip Lipp (1962-65), who was so enraged that he said southern British Columbia (BC) should secede from the northern part of the province and Vancouver Island if the province refused to fund the freeways.²¹⁸ Premier Bennett insisted that accusations of provincial indifference or even disdain for Vancouver were completely unfounded, saying, “Nowhere on the continent has a government kept in mind the problems of a large city more than in BC.” The premier argued the province had fulfilled its obligation to Vancouver by purchasing the Lions Gate Bridge, constructing the Second Narrows Bridge and the Oak Street Bridge, as well as offering to construct a twin to the Lions Gate bridge if the municipalities would construct the freeways. Bennett further noted that provincial authorities had designed the existing freeways to circumvent the city to prevent unnecessary congestion, thereby “protecting them [Vancouverites].”²¹⁹

Bennett’s response to the growing frustrations of local officials seemed to only further inflame the situation, as Vancouver Mayor Bill Rathie (1963-66) publicly released a letter he sent to Bennett regarding negotiations to obtain \$20,000,000 of federal funding for the east-west

²¹⁷ Goldsworthy rejected tolls because such systems slowed traffic flow. “Mayors say: Use gas tax for freeways,” *The Vancouver Sun* 7 October 1964. Gaglardi recommended a joint municipal-provincial committee to determine the division of costs. This was not the first time the minister had stressed the importance of cost sharing between road users and municipal, provincial and federal authorities. “Metropolitan gov’t needed to finance new freeway,” *The Vancouver Sun* 21 April 1959.

²¹⁸ “Lipp turns separatist,” *The Vancouver Sun* 13 October 1964.

²¹⁹ Ian MacAlpine, “‘We’ve completed our obligations’,” *The Vancouver Sun* 24 October 1964.

expressway by making it part of the Trans-Canada.²²⁰ City officials insisted there should be a federal contribution by pointing to other cities where substantial federal funding helped build highways, including the Trans-Canada through Québec City, the National Harbours Board (NHB) road projects in Montréal, and highways in the Maritimes.²²¹ Provincial authorities were unmoved, as Minister of Highways Gaglardi expressed doubts the federal government could be persuaded to contribute,²²² and Premier Bennett maintained the east-west freeway was unnecessary, reiterating his position that freeways should not run through cities. Local government supporters of the route were unsurprisingly annoyed with Bennett, and Mayor Rathie dismissed the premier's comments with an insult, saying Bennett often recanted and likely would again.²²³

While provincial officials remained cool to some of their municipal counterparts' freeway plans, they began to look to federal authorities for funding on select components of the network, particularly the proposed first narrows crossing. In August 1965, Gaglardi presented a \$109,000,000 bridge and tunnel scheme for the first narrows at Brockton Point, but provincial authorities still had yet to make a firm commitment to the plan, and more importantly, no funding arrangements were in place.²²⁴ Shortly after Gaglardi's presentation, Premier Bennett

²²⁰ The plan was to begin at the Trans-Canada terminus at Boundary Road, run the expressway downtown and connect it to the proposed new first narrows bridge.

²²¹ Cliff MacKay, "City freeway talks bared by Rathie," *The Vancouver Sun* 13 November 1964. In Québec City, the \$175,000,000 Trans-Canada route cost was shared by federal (\$40,000,000), provincial (\$100,000,00), and city (\$35,000,000) authorities. In the Maritimes, 90 percent of highway costs were covered by the federal government and some routes in Newfoundland were completely covered by federal government.

²²² "'Show me freeway money': Phil," *The Vancouver Sun* 14 November 1964. "Phil won't count on Ottawa," *The Province* 16 November 1964.

²²³ Ian MacAlpine, "Bennett scotches plan for freeway," *The Vancouver Sun* 17 November 1964.

²²⁴ Frank Rutter, "1st Narrows link bared by Gaglardi," *The Vancouver Sun* 5 August 1965.

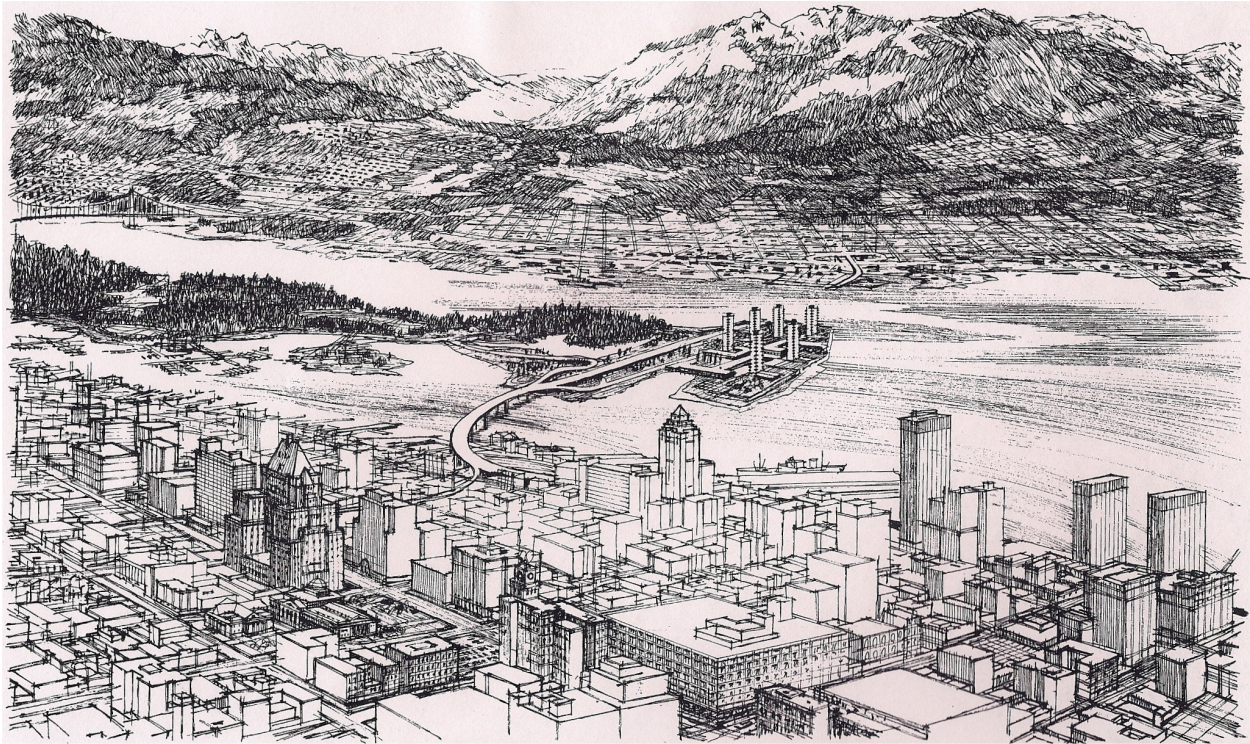


Image 6: Untitled Sketch of Third Crossing Tunnel and Bridge at Brockton Point, Christiani & Nielsen of Canada Ltd., Burrard Inlet Tunnel Crossing: A Comprehensive Proposal for Handling Traffic Across Burrard Inlet (1963).

announced he approved of the route in principle but rejected his minister's plan because it did not include municipal funding. At the same time, the premier raised the issue of possible federal funding for the crossing route by criticizing his federal counterparts' lack of support for downtown projects, remarking, "They're still thinking around Toronto and Montréal. The place where the action is is in BC."²²⁵

As both provincial and local authorities began looking for ways to secure federal funding, they considered three main avenues of support: obtaining Trans-Canada designation for the new routes, applying through urban renewal programs to the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), or appealing to the NHB for assistance with waterfront routes and

²²⁵ "Bennett dumps Gaglardi's bridge," *The Vancouver Sun* 9 August 1965.

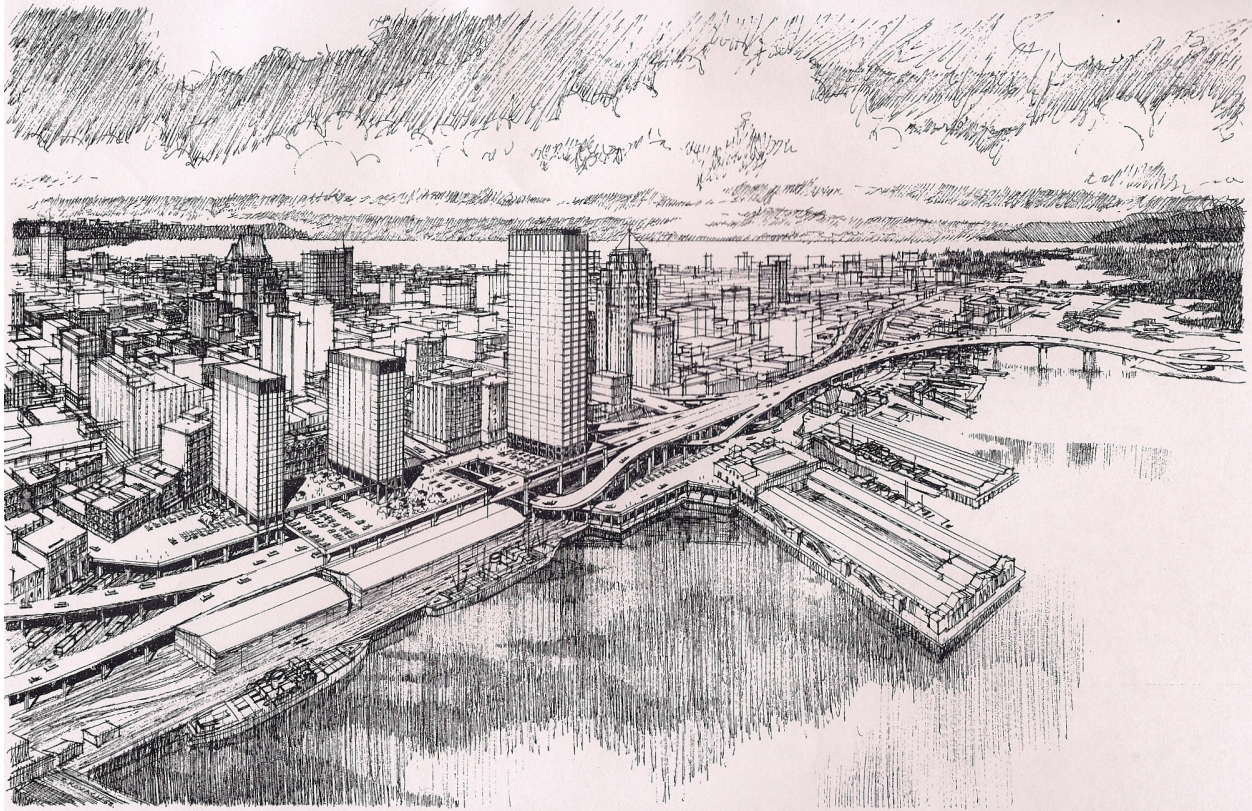


Image 7: Untitled Sketch of Third Crossing and Waterfront Freeway, Christiani & Nielsen of Canada Ltd., Burrard Inlet Tunnel Crossing: A Comprehensive Proposal for Handling Traffic Across Burrard Inlet (1963).

crossings. Coast-Capilano Member of Parliament and Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister Lester Pearson, Jack Davis (1962-74) reported that Pearson (1963-68) had confirmed the crossing route would be eligible for federal funding if it was changed from a provincial highway to become part of the Trans-Canada. Davis suggested federal funding could be channeled through the NHB since the project would qualify as a waterfront improvement like the Jacques Cartier and Champlain bridges did in Montréal. Alternatively, he suggested, the route could be modified so that it would become part of the Trans-Canada, thus qualifying as a public works

project.²²⁶ City officials were eager to take advantage of the opportunity to access federal funding for the route and, accordingly, outlined four ways in which the project could qualify: the route could be designated part of the Trans-Canada; the route, traversing a number of urban renewal areas, may be eligible for funds under the National Housing Act; the impact of the waterfront section on renewal efforts in the area may qualify the route for federal funds; and finally, the waterfront redevelopment component would include harbour facilities, and as such, it may have qualified the project for NHB funding.²²⁷

A few months later, local officials followed through on their plans to pursue federal funding for the city's expressways. First, city aldermen asked Premier Bennett to reroute the Trans-Canada so that it would include the proposed east-west and waterfront freeways, the Georgia Viaduct, and the first narrows crossing near Brockton Point. The officials' hope was that the modifications would qualify the route for both federal and provincial funding, but Bennett refused the request. The premier told local expressway advocates that rerouting the Trans-Canada would require provincial and federal cooperation, and that his administration would not participate in any such discussions.²²⁸ He also maintained that traffic should be routed around, not through, the city, reiterating his position that downtown freeways only exacerbated congestion.²²⁹

²²⁶ "Davis says Ottawa should share plan," *The Vancouver Sun* 23 August 1965. Davis noted Vancouver was a national harbour just as Montréal was.

²²⁷ Planning Department, City of Vancouver, *Trans-Canada Highway Route Through Metropolitan Vancouver and Burrard Inlet Crossing* (c. late August - December 1965), 1-2. Government Publications, VPL. Officials also noted the Jacques Cartier and Champlain Bridges, both in Montréal, as well as the Saint John Bridge in New Brunswick and Burlington Skyway in Ontario had all benefitted from federal funding. Planning Department, *Trans-Canada Highway Route*, "Federal Aid -- Various Highway Bridges" [unnumbered page].

²²⁸ Keith Bradbury, "Aldermen will ask Bennett to re-route Trans-Canada," *The Vancouver Sun* 21 January 1966. Bennett added, "The federal government can no more relocate the highway (without provincial agreement) than fly to the moon."

²²⁹ Dave Arlett, "City freeways are 'life-blood'," *The Vancouver Sun* 21 January 1966.

Soon after encountering the premier's resistance to rerouting the Trans-Canada, local officials encountered another roadblock in their efforts to secure federal funding, this time from the CMHC. City officials attempted to access federal funding through CMHC by presenting components of the city's transportation plans as part of overarching urban renewal efforts, which included revamping the government centre, Chinatown, the downtown East side, the Old Granville Townsite and the southern sector warehouse area.²³⁰ In March, however, the corporation notified Vancouver Planning Director W.E. Graham that the organization would not fund two freeway studies, explaining, "We do not consider that the \$75,240 cost relating to a study of the Georgia Street Freeway Ramp and the N/S [North-South] Freeway location to be a legitimate charge against Section 23A, since it appears to be more appropriately a charge against normal municipal planning operation."²³¹

After local officials were rebuffed twice in their efforts to access federal funding, Premier Bennett came forward with an offer of provincial support for one third of the cost of the planned waterfront freeway, but it was contingent on an equal federal grant. Instead of focusing on the proven difficulty of obtaining a federal contribution, Vancouver Mayor Bill Rathie welcomed the premier's announcement. Telling reporters he was confident federal authorities would agree to

²³⁰ W.E. Graham, Director of Planning for the City of Vancouver to Board of Administration, "City of Vancouver Urban Renewal Program: Request for Financial Assistance for Preparation of Urban Renewal Scheme No. 4," 3 January 1966; City Planning Department Fonds, Director's General Files 1965-1969, 926-E-5, File 6, CVA. Includes map of urban renewal areas outlined. New transportation infrastructure was regarded as an essential part of urban renewal efforts. "Report of the Board of Administration to the Standing Committee on Civic Development, Re: Urban Renewal Transportation Studies," 17 January 1965; City Planning Department Fonds, Director's General Files 1965-1969, 926-E-5, File 6, CVA.

²³¹ R.G. Clauson, Regional Supervisor for the BC Region of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, to W.E. Graham, Director of Planning for the City of Vancouver, "Re: Vancouver Urban Renewal No. 4 -- Proposed Section 23A Scheme," 2 March 1966; City Planning Department Fonds, Director's General Files 1965-1969, 926-E-5, File 6, CVA.



Image 8: “1985 Recommended Freeway Plan,” Stanford Research Institute, Wilbur Smith and Associates, Review of Transportation Plans: Metropolitan Vancouver, B.C. Prepared for the Department of Highways, Province of British Columbia, Cities of Vancouver and North Vancouver, Districts of North Vancouver and West Vancouver, 1964.

the arrangement, the mayor said the plan “shows we have a place in BC.”²³² Setting the Trans-Canada and CMHC initiatives aside, Rathie added that the city should receive the federal portion from the NHB and through Ottawa’s urban renewal program because the freeway was connected

²³² “Rathie delighted with road offer,” *The Vancouver Sun* 24 March 1966. The announcement did not represent a change in Bennett’s opposition to inner city freeways, as the premier maintained the network routes “must be thruways not freeways.” As the author noted, “Bennett did not explain the difference [between thruways and freeways].” The waterfront route ran from the Bayshore Inn, over the CPR tracks, east to Columbia, linking with the Georgia Viaduct to the Port Mann Freeway. Highways Minister Gaglardi shared Rathie’s confidence that federal funding would come through for the first narrows crossing even if the route was not designated as part of the Trans-Canada. Wayne MacDonald, “Gaglardi sure Ottawa to aid in another narrows crossing,” *The Vancouver Sun* 22 December 1966. Despite the premier’s offer, some continued to criticize provincial funding of Vancouver area highways. NDP Vancouver East Alex Macdonald said, “In rural areas they [the province] pay all highway costs, in small cities and villages they pay 50 per cent, in the city of Vancouver they pay practically nothing.” The province granted the city \$350,000 annually for roads but received an estimated \$14,000,000 through the gas tax.

to a \$50,000,000 NHB dock and “Skid Road” in the east end. Waterfront revitalization efforts -- of which the highway was an essential component -- were central to the city’s broader renewal agenda, he stressed.²³³

“Planning is too serious a matter to leave solely to the professional civic officials”

By January 1966, several signs that the nature of the freeway debates were changing began to emerge. City officials admitted the freeway network was on hold while they reviewed Gaglardi’s new first narrows crossing plan. In addition, Mayor Rathie suspended discussions of American consultants’ 1964 review of the city’s freeway plans. It was at this time that the mayor proposed a change in terminology, from freeway to parkway. As journalist John Taylor explained, “On Thursday the mayor said in a speech that the term freeway should be dropped anyway and one more acceptable to the public -- possibly parkway -- replace it. He explained today that he was thinking in terms of more landscaping along freeways to make them pleasanter and safer.”²³⁴ *Province* city affairs columnist Bud Elise had a different view on the situation. He noticed Rathie’s change in terminology, particularly after Bennett insisted repeatedly that his administration would only fund thruways, not freeways. It seemed Rathie had followed the Premier’s lead in dispensing with the “freeway” label. Parkway was a friendlier label, Elise explained: “A freeway is six or eight (or more) lanes of concrete slashed indiscriminately through the city. It is usually clogged with speeding cars, clouded in exhaust fumes and, all in

²³³ Keith Bradbury, “Federal help sources seen for thruway,” *The Vancouver Sun* 25 March 1966. Rathie’s adoption of the new terminology -- thruway instead of freeway -- demonstrated his understanding of the importance of Bennett’s prior speech on the importance of finding language that was amenable to the general public’s changing mood, as well as the premier’s insistence that his administration would fund thruways, not freeways.

²³⁴ John Taylor, “Crossing plan halts freeway study,” *The Vancouver Sun* 29 January 1966.

all, is an eyesore . . . A parkway is a different thing. Sweeping curves, plenty of landscaping and, best of all, hidden from view.”²³⁵

As politicians tried to frame the expressway plans in terms palatable to local residents, architects and planning experts fed the growing consternation surrounding the plans. Warnett Kennedy, the executive director of the Architectural Institute of BC, had previously supported the plans, but expressed doubts in early 1966. Kennedy feared Vancouver would be webbed in freeways by 1984, and that the situation would drive residents from the core. “The tendency to scatter and decentralize,” Kennedy explained, “will be irresistible and like lemmings we shall flee up the Fraser Valley. And I think the Fraser Valley will be a planless, tasteless jumble of scattered buildings characterized by a sense of nowhere.” According to Kennedy, the root of the problem was that no architects were involved in planning the freeways. “I have no confidence that our freeways will be beautiful,” he complained, arguing, “They will be designed by engineers alone and architects won’t get a look in.”²³⁶

At the same time, American planners cautioned their neighbours to the north about repeating their mistakes. Dr. A.L. Grey, a professor of urban planning at the University of Washington told the Western Canadian Roadside Development Conference that Vancouver should not repeat the mistake of Seattle and other American cities by constructing a raised waterfront freeway because it would cause environmental blight.²³⁷ The president of the American Society of Planning Officials echoed his colleagues’ sentiments, also criticizing elevated waterfront and downtown freeways as he told attendees at a public meeting in

²³⁵ Bud Elsie, “Anyway -- we need one,” *The Province* 29 March 1966.

²³⁶ “‘Ugly freeways will cross city,’” *The Vancouver Sun* 19 February 1966.

²³⁷ “Study Seattle, planners told,” *The Vancouver Sun* 7 July 1966.

Vancouver that the routes divided communities and hurt cities. He cited Boston's "Black Monday" on 30 December 1963 "when motorists were unable to move because of the jam of vehicles pouring into the city." The solution, he said, was to "subordinat[e] the motor vehicle to other community needs," preserving open spaces of natural beauty around cities.²³⁸

The first wave of sustained and focused opposition revolved around the Chinatown link -- also known as the Carrall Street link -- component of Vancouver's proposed freeway network. The Carrall Street freeway link that was planned to run through Chinatown was part of the city's original expressway plans, but it was not until officials presented a \$145,000 study that described the link as a thirty foot high elevated waterfront freeway running along Carrall Street through Chinatown and linked to the Georgia Viaduct that city residents really began to take notice.²³⁹ The impact of the Carrall Street link on Chinatown was described by councillors as "act[ing] as a roof," or "a building that happens to have a roadway on top."²⁴⁰ Surprisingly, the Chinatown Property Owners' Association of Vancouver initially endorsed the elevated freeway, saying it would alleviate congestion on Pender Street. Association spokesman Harry Fan commented, "I don't see how it can be anything but good for Chinatown," while John MacD. Lecky, president of the Downtown Business Association also supported the plan.²⁴¹

The initial positive response did not last, as less than a week after the full details were released, concerned community members began raising questions about the scheme. Chinatown

²³⁸ Al Donald, "U.S. planning expert warns of 'brutality of freeway'," *The Vancouver Sun* 27 October 1966.

²³⁹ George Peloquin, "Transportation study: Downtown freeway web unveiled to city council," *The Vancouver Sun* 1 June 1967. The study also included a redesigned Chinatown with shops and "walking areas," as well as details on the other components of the city's freeway network, including the east-west and north-south freeways.

²⁴⁰ George Peloquin, "Freeway study linked to tunnel," *The Vancouver Sun* 2 June 1967.

²⁴¹ "Businessmen back freeway proposal," *The Vancouver Sun* 2 June 1967. The one critical response at the time came from Mike Wallach, the president of the Central Council of Ratepayers, who argued the waterfront route was preferable to a cross town freeway.

property owners Lawrence Killam along with architects Bud Wood and Rudy Kovak urged the city to hold a public hearing, arguing the freeway would destroy Chinatown. In Wood's words, "Chinatown, the neck of the city, will be throttled by a wasteland of concrete." The men warned officials that if the project was left looming over the area, it would prevent fellow land holders from making improvements to their properties.²⁴² Shortly thereafter, a special council meeting was scheduled to discuss the Chinatown link, but concerned residents pushed for a full public hearing.²⁴³ Just two weeks after the interim oral report on the Chinatown freeway was issued, city council halted the study and ordered a full public hearing. The move was supported by anti-expressway allies such as Alderman Harry Rankin (1966-86; 1988-93), who argued the study's terms of reference were too narrow and urged his colleagues to consider alternatives.²⁴⁴

As local officials discussed financing for the Chinatown route, Montréal loomed large in the conversation. Vancouver aldermen called for the same ten to one funding ratio for senior and municipal governments that Montréal officials enjoyed.²⁴⁵ Others also compared Vancouver's transportation challenges to Montréal, but instead of calling for more freeways they urged local officials to emulate the Québec city's emphasis on transit. Vancouver resident Murray Blair, whose letter to the editor appeared in *The Province*, argued, officials should adopt an extensive

²⁴² Ed Clark, "Businessmen start drive to preserve Chinatown," *The Vancouver Sun* 10 June 1967.

²⁴³ "Chinese protest freeway," *The Vancouver Sun* 13 June 1967. Bud Wood said of the freeway: "It's insane."

²⁴⁴ "City halts freeway study, orders full public hearing," *The Vancouver Sun* 15 June 1967. Since 1954 an estimated \$1,000,000 was spent on transportation studies but no official action had been taken. Council discussed the possibility of widening the terms of reference on previous transportation studies to allow consultants to consider alternative routes for the north-south and east-west freeways as well as the approaches to the Georgia Viaduct but ultimately decided against the move. "City freeway studies began in 1954," *The Vancouver Sun* 17 June 1967. Vancouver City Council Minutes, Special Council Meeting, 5 July 1967; City Council and Office of the City Clerk Fonds, Office of the City clerk, Subject Files (Including Council Supporting Documents) 1959-1970, 20-G-5, File 6, CVA.

²⁴⁵ "10-to-1 share urged for city freeway," *The Vancouver Sun* 26 July 1967. "The Montréal eye-opener," (editorial) *The Vancouver Sun* 31 July 1967.

mass transit system like the one created in Montréal for Expo '67 instead of more freeways. He explained:

A recent visit to Expo 67 brings home the sanity of mass transportation. No cars are permitted to enter the Exposition. If they were allowed you can imagine what hopeless confusion would prevail. Instead, they have electric trains; the largest, the Expo Express, big and roomy; runs continually. People get on and off whenever and wherever they like, and the cost is nil. You see Expo, like the downtown area of any large city is for people, not cars.²⁴⁶

In October 1967 city council approved the \$200,000,000 Chinatown freeway link but had yet to secure funding for the project. At the time, funding had only been finalized with federal authorities for the first narrows crossing and waterfront freeway.²⁴⁷ Recognizing financing was essential to the success of the project, prominent freeway opponent Walter Hardwick led demonstrations when Minister of Federal Transport Paul Hellyer (1967-69) visited Vancouver. The councillor and professor led sixty geography, architecture and community planning students from the University of British Columbia (UBC) and Simon Fraser University in picketing Hellyer's hotel in opposition of the route.²⁴⁸ Hellyer's response to the controversy was not what local officials hoped to hear. He said federal authorities would not relocate the Trans-Canada,

²⁴⁶ Murray Blair, "City could learn lesson from Expo transit," Letter to the Editor, *The Province*, 20 June 1967.

²⁴⁷ Bud Elsie, "Chinatown freeway route," *The Province* 18 October 1967. In January 1967 officials had recommended a six lane tunnel structure for the Burrard Inlet crossing, aligned with Brockton Point. The final decision as to whether the crossing should be a tunnel or bridge, officials they, should be left until a preliminary design was available. *Report of the Joint Technical Committee on Burrard Inlet Crossings* (January 1967), 8-10. Government Publications, VPL. *The Province's* editorial board followed the announcement with a column applauding the Chinatown route, noting the plan in turn settled the north-south and east-west routes. Although they called the freeway "a handsome conception and a practical proposition," the board also criticized the lack of consultation with the community over the plans. "Freeway planning isn't all concrete . . ." (editorial) *The Province* 19 October 1967.

²⁴⁸ "Mayor blasts professor for 'freeway falsehoods'," *The Vancouver Sun* 20 October 1967. "Cry against freeway link gets louder," *The Province* 20 October 1967.

which already ran along the 401 freeway, the second narrows crossing, and the Upper Levels route, and accordingly, no federal funds would be available for the city's planned expressways.²⁴⁹

Mayor Tom Campbell (1967-72) insisted the Carrall link was not a gateway project to the east-west and north-south routes, but his attempt to downplay the expressway plans did not placate protestors.²⁵⁰ On the contrary, opposition groups mobilized for joint action. In October the Chinese Benevolent Association formed a fifteen member committee to fight the freeway.²⁵¹ Members including the Community Arts Council reported they were "shocked and horrified" that transportation plans had been finalized for the city without widespread public consultation, and accused officials of planning according to "out-dated concepts of the city."²⁵²

In the face of this growing controversy and repeated calls for public hearings, some council members called for a revaluation of the expressway plans. Alderman Ernie Broome (1962-72) requested a public meeting to discuss the routes,²⁵³ while fellow Alderman Harry Rankin called his vote in favour of the Carrall link a mistake and asked that a broader study be commissioned that would consider all possible routes.²⁵⁴ At the same time New Democratic Party (NDP) Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) and former Alderman Robert A. Williams reiterated others' criticism that bureaucrats were to blame for producing poor

²⁴⁹ "Hellyer refuses freeway cash," *The Province* 21 October 1967.

²⁵⁰ "Mayor blasts professor for 'freeway falsehoods'," *The Vancouver Sun* 20 October 1967. "Cry against freeway link gets louder," *The Province* 20 October 1967. John Arnett, "Expert says freeways report dated," *The Vancouver Sun* 6 November 1964.

²⁵¹ "Chinese to fight freeway," *The Province* 23 October 1967.

²⁵² Moira Sweeny, Chair of the Civic Arts Committee, Community Arts Council to Council, 19 October 1967; Mayor's Office Fonds, General Correspondence Files 1967, 45-B-6, File 16, CVA.

²⁵³ "Forum for freeway link?" *The Province* 25 October 1967.

²⁵⁴ "City delays 'great debate' on freeways," *The Province* 6 November 1967. Broome later insulted Rankin, who was pushing for more consultation, saying Rankin was seeing "capitalists under every bed."

information by rushing studies with limited mandates.²⁵⁵ Others were frustrated with their colleagues for questioning the already approved project. Alderman Ed Sweeney (1966-72; 1974-76), for example, accused his fellow aldermen of backpedalling, comparing them to “cows in a field regurgitating their food.” Alderman Halford Wilson (1934-42; 1947-53; 1955-72) also supported freeways for the city, citing Tokyo as a city where freeways were “beautiful in design” and calling for roads that were “equally modern in design” for Vancouver.²⁵⁶ At the end of the discussions, council yielded to protestors’ demands and set dates for public hearings, but even then Mayor Campbell showed no signs of bending to expressway critics, telling reporters the sessions would be “futile” since the Carrall route had already been finalized.²⁵⁷

At the same time, Erickson Massey Architects came forward with reservations about the plans. Chinatown, they noted, was a unique and irreplaceable part of the city: “The spaces, the streets, the lanes, and the facades are of a quality and scale which offer no compromise to the scale and mass of a major freeway structure.” Maple Tree Square, considered the historical heart of the city, would also be threatened and was one of a few historical sites in the city. The consultants observed that Chinatown was home to “low and minimal income” residents, who depended on “the existing marginal facilities and services of the Old City and Chinatown,” concluding, “An important sociological issue rises out of this insofar as any changes to the area

²⁵⁵ “Rankin apologizes for freeway vote,” *The Province* 31 October 1967.

²⁵⁶ “City to hold meeting on freeway planning,” *The Province* 1 November 1967.

²⁵⁷ “Campbell discounts freeway changes,” *The Province* 9 November 1967.

will directly affect these residents and their dwellings.”²⁵⁸ The freeway, which would be eight to ten lanes wide and thirty to fifty feet high, would create a barrier across “a well integrated commercial area.” The architects argued the scale of the project would also be completely incompatible with the existing commercial and residential area and, as a result, would require a comprehensive redevelopment plan for the area to avoid the destructive impact of “insensitive planning” evident in cities like Seattle and San Francisco.²⁵⁹ The freeway would only be viable with such a redevelopment plan, they added, insisting its net effect must be to improve the area and help integrate the old and new areas of the city.²⁶⁰

The Chinatown link hearings marked the climax of the debates on the route. The 23 November 1967 session drew 500 attendees and was described as a “near-riot” by Mayor Campbell, as attendees shouted at councillors, heckled them and called for resignations. *Vancouver Sun* journalist George Peloquin recalled: “Minutes after the meeting started Campbell announced there was a sell-out crowd. ‘It was a sell-out before it started,’ someone shouted back.”²⁶¹ So many citizens submitted briefs that there was not enough time to hear them all and another session had to be scheduled to continue the hearings.

²⁵⁸ Erickson Massey Architects, “Urban Design and Architectural Aspects of the Carrall Street Freeway Alignment,” 22 November 1967 in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Information for Public Meeting, November 23rd, 1967* (City of Vancouver), 23; City Publications Collection, Public Records Series 591, PD 192, CVA. Activists recognized this threat to the city’s historic heart and vowed to continue their preservation efforts even after the Chinatown link was defeated. Joseph Lawrence, the president of the Vancouver Historical Society and a history professor at UBC, voiced his group’s opposition to freeways through two historic parts of the city -- Chinatown and Gastown. “Hands off,” Lawrence told officials, adding, “This is our heritage.” Historical society vows battle,” *The Vancouver Sun* 25 March 1968.

²⁵⁹ Erickson Massey Architects, “Urban Design and Architectural Aspects of the Carrall Street Freeway Alignment,” 22 November 1967 in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Information for Public Meeting, November 23rd, 1967* (City of Vancouver), 24-26; City Publications Collection, Public Records Series 591, PD 192, CVA.

²⁶⁰ Ibid, 26.

²⁶¹ George Peloquin, “Freeway foes heap scorn on Campbell,” *The Vancouver Sun* 24 November 1967.

After the first session Mayor Campbell blamed the unruly atmosphere on UBC students and staff who he accused of flooding the gathering, telling reporters, “This wasn’t public reaction. It was a university reaction.” Leading activist and UBC Geography Professor Walter Hardwick rejected Campbell’s accusation, as did *Sun* writer Peloquin, who reported only thirty students and twenty staff were among the 500 attendees. Others on city council nevertheless shared the mayor’s frustration, like Alderman Asbury who also suspected undue influence from the academic community. Asbury remarked, “I am speaking not as an alderman but as a taxpayer and I came here to hear again what consultants have to say. I’m surprised at some of the impatient academicians from the university. Let’s get the facts and then refute.”²⁶² Alderman Earle Adams (1952-72) also questioned the opposition, telling reporters: “Many were there just to oppose the authority and some were just out for a night of fun.”²⁶³ Another Alderman, Halford Wilson, agreed with his colleague’s assessment, deeming the hearing a “circus,” and saying, “We had a number of rah rah boys supporting Hawthorn [sic: Hardwick]. They were just a bunch of punks out to disrupt the meeting if possible.”²⁶⁴ Other officials such as Alderman Rankin attempted to defuse the situation by reminding council members that they could cancel or change plans. Rankin noted simply, “There’s nothing wrong with admitting you’re wrong.”²⁶⁵

²⁶² Ibid. Bud Elsie, “Storm erupts at City Hall: Freeway meeting raises rumpus,” *The Province* 24 November 1967.

²⁶³ Bud Elsie, “Freeway meeting a ‘gang up’,” *The Province* 25 November 1967.

²⁶⁴ “Freeway critics rapped -- ‘Punks bent on disruption’,” *The Vancouver Sun* 28 November 1967. Hardwick defended himself and other freeway opponents, insisting Wilson’s characterization of the hearing was unfair and inaccurate. “No punks, no riot, claims Hardwick,” *The Vancouver Sun* 29 November 1967.

²⁶⁵ George Peloquin, “Freeway foes heap scorn on Campbell,” *The Vancouver Sun* 24 November 1967. Bud Elsie, “Storm erupts at City Hall: Freeway meeting raises rumpus,” *The Province* 24 November 1967.

On 7 December 1967, the second session of the Chinatown freeway hearings was held.²⁶⁶ By that time, Mayor Campbell had softened his attitude towards expressway critics, assuring attendees complaints against the Chinatown link would be considered.²⁶⁷ The “orderly” December session attracted 800 attendees who overwhelmingly opposed the plans, and was marked by the dramatic public resignation of Planning Commission Chairman and head of UBC’s school of regional and community planning Dr. Peter Oberlander. He told the crowd that he could not support the commission’s approval of the freeway, even with their stipulation that it was “socially and esthetically” compatible with the affected community.²⁶⁸ He argued the city needed a comprehensive plan instead of a series of separate projects. “Planning,” he said, “is too serious a matter to leave solely to the professional civic officials.”²⁶⁹

The presentation of briefs from concerned community groups and residents served as the centrepiece of the hearings. Freeway opponents employed a number of different tactics, often using statistics, forecasts, and budget projections to demonstrate the folly of freeways. They lamented the irreversible impact freeways would have on the city and urged officials to shift their attention to public transit instead. They also chastised officials for the lack of community consultation over the plans, for handing consultants’ limited terms of reference that asked consultants where, not whether, freeways should be built, and for using piecemeal planning to move forward with the freeways without being forthcoming about their commitment to the network as a whole. Critics maintained Vancouver needed a comprehensive master plan to guide

²⁶⁶ “Second Public Meeting Re: Vancouver Transportation Studies,” c. December 1967; City Council and Office of the City Clerk Fonds, Office of the City Clerk, Subject Files (Including Council Supporting Documents) 1967, 20-G-6, File 3, CVA.

²⁶⁷ “Freeway changes in offing?” *The Province* 7 December 1967.

²⁶⁸ “Freeway backed -- at last,” *The Province* 6 December 1967.

²⁶⁹ Bud Elsie, “Oberlander resigns over freeway plan,” *The Province* 8 December 1967.

its development, one that was supported by current studies and widespread community consultation.

The Community Arts Council, for example, argued officials were relying on outdated statistics from the first volume of the freeways plan published in 1956 and said the emphasis on freeways over public transit reflected “the pre-occupation with moving cars rather than with moving people.”²⁷⁰ Sharing the Arts Council’s position, the Greater Vancouver Branch of the Community Planning Association of Canada also criticized city officials’ approach, noting, “The basis for council’s decisions are being based on outdated planning reports, and not on official planning policies.”²⁷¹ The Greater Vancouver Chapter of the Architectural Institute of British Columbia echoed those sentiments, noting that some routes were never publicly acknowledged until the official studies were released.²⁷² The Vancouver and District Council of Churches and the Central Council of Ratepayers similarly accused council of thwarting the “democratic process.”²⁷³

The hearings also hosted a number of community groups who were worried about the impact of freeways on their inner city neighbourhoods. These presenters voiced common

²⁷⁰ Community Arts Council, Brief, 16 November 1967 in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL. The British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects also highlighted the need for current data analysis to support the plans: The British Columbia Society of Landscape Architects, Brief, 22 November 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

²⁷¹ Greater Vancouver Branch of the Community Planning Association of Canada, Brief, 20 November 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

²⁷² Greater Vancouver Chapter of the Architectural Institute of British Columbia, Brief, c. November-December 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

²⁷³ The Vancouver and District Council of Churches, Brief, 23 November 1967 and the Central Council of Ratepayers, Brief, c. November-December 1967 in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

concerns that freeways would displace numerous residents, leaving their neighbourhoods divided and, eventually, promoting blight.²⁷⁴ The Grandview Ratepayers' Association, for example, suggested growing congestion and pollution could be addressed with the creation of a "waterfront perimeter system," or preferably, a monorail network. The group also rebuffed charges theirs was simply a NIMBY perspective, insisting their position was "neither narrow or short-sighted" and pointing out that freeways in the United States had only exacerbated congestion and pollution.²⁷⁵

In the fight over the Chinatown link, some of the most impassioned opposition came, not surprisingly, from the Chinese community. The Chinese Benevolent Association observed: "This Community was not built by the Chinese people as a tourist attraction with the view of making a fortune . . . The business activities in Chinatown are there not by choice but by necessity because of the discriminatory attitudes of the population in years gone by and because of the language barrier." The Association warned council, "The Chinese is [sic] not so naive [sic] as to believe that a Carrall link will improve Chinatown or that the area beneath the freeway can be made into attractive shops and malls."²⁷⁶ Activists also recalled the threat earlier renewal schemes had posed to Chinatown. Community spokesman Foon Sien recalled previous urban renewal measures, noting, "City officials smiled at our protests and said all this would 'make a better Chinatown.' But I look at it differently. A place without Chinese people is not Chinatown to

²⁷⁴ The Hastings Chamber of Commerce, Brief, 7 December 1967 and the Cassiar Ratepayers Association, Brief, 21 November 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

²⁷⁵ Grandview Ratepayers' Association, Brief, c. November-December 1967, and Grandview Ratepayers' Association and Woodland Park Area Council, Joint Brief, c. November-December 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

²⁷⁶ Chinese Benevolent Association, Brief, 23 November 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

me.” Lawyer Jack L. Lee agreed, remarking, “Somebody has assumed that Chinatown is expendable.” Ultimately, Sien said, the community favoured a waterfront freeway instead of the Chinatown route. Local businessman Dean Leung was frustrated by city council’s failure to learn from other cities’ experiences. Leung explained, “They tried to rebuild the Chinatowns of Los Angeles and Toronto after chopping them up in the name of progress, but it didn’t work.”²⁷⁷

A number of presenters delivered detailed arguments as to why expressways were wrong for Vancouver. These presentations challenged the routes and the administration that produced them, with special attention to the working relationship between politicians and civil servants. Provincial MLA Robert A. Williams, for example, argued problems arose because civil servants, not elected officials, were making key decisions. He explained: “I’m not saying that we do not need the involvement of the civic staff and the consultants, however, it seems that the experts have been asked to answer political questions and make value judgements which the community and the politicians alone should make.”²⁷⁸

The academic community from the UBC was also well represented at the hearings, and like MLA Williams and others, they were most concerned with what they regarded as systemic problems in the city’s administration. Architecture Professor Henry Elder stressed to council the fundamental necessity of defining what kind of city Vancouver should be as a starting point in formulating planning policy. He also defended his colleagues, saying: “I noted with some

²⁷⁷ “Concrete knife in the heart of Chinatown?” *The Province* 2 December 1967. While community members were pleased with council’s later decision to cancel the link, some Chinatown property owners were furious when they later learned their properties would be expropriated for the Viaduct replacement. Kathy Tait, “Chinese bitter over city taking property for viaduct,” *The Province* 6 March 1969.

²⁷⁸ Robert A. Williams, MLA, Brief, 7 December 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL. Williams did not oppose freeways entirely; he agreed with architect consultants that they should be situated on the outskirts of communities, listing the waterfront as one example of an acceptable location. Bud Elsie, “Oberlander resigns over freeway plan,” *The Province* 8 December 1967.

misgivings that the unruly nature of the last meeting [the first hearing session] was blamed upon the UBC. This was of course quite untrue. If however what was meant was that the questions asked contained some intellectual merit that is another matter. Certainly no answers were given.”²⁷⁹ A large group of professors from UBC also submitted a joint brief. Like many petitioners, the group criticized the lack of strong leadership from council, arguing civic officials’ decisions had resulted in “some kind of shifting commitment” to freeways and asking, “Does anyone know if council has accepted this freeway system or is it only the private plan of civic officials?”²⁸⁰ UBC Professor and future City Councillor Walter Hardwick (1969-74) picked up on his colleagues’ concerns, telling attendees:

There has been a crisis brewing in city government for a decade . . . council has failed to seek advice from the body politic but become the puppets of the experts . . . Our ‘experts’ by their professional training (mostly in civil engineering), age, background, do not appear to be able to comprehend the range of social, economic, and political forces that must be included in formulating major public policies today.²⁸¹

On the other side of the debates were freeway supporters, some who supported the routes by default as they believed freeways were undesirable but necessary, and others who agreed with the schemes wholeheartedly, maintaining expressways were essential to the future health and success of their city. Petitioners who offered moderate support typically criticized the proposed

²⁷⁹ University of British Columbia Architecture Professor Henry Elder, Brief, 7 December 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

²⁸⁰ Geographer Walter Hardwick, Architect Gruft, Architect Gerson, City Planner Collier, Architect W. Wood, Artist Gilbert, Political Scientist Tennant, Setty Pendakur, Architect Henry Elder, Social Worker Anthony L. Lloyd, Geographer E. Gibson and Geographer Peter G. Goheen, Brief, 22 November 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL. A smaller group of professors from Simon Fraser University also submitted a brief, voicing similar concerns: P.G. Goheen, S.T. Wong, S.B. Wong and L.I. Deitch, Brief, 27 November 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

²⁸¹ Walter G. Hardwick, Brief, 23 November 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

routes or the lack of public consultation, but conceded that freeways were a necessary part of the solution to Vancouver's transportation problems.²⁸² Those who offered stronger support for the freeways stressed that traffic problems were hindering the growth and economic development of the downtown core, and advocated the creation of a regional transportation authority to coordinate planning across the Vancouver region. The Vancouver Board of Trade and the Downtown Business Association were both prominent freeway proponents that espoused these views.²⁸³ The Town Planning Commission also issued its full fledged support for the scheme, as did the BC Section of the Institute of Traffic Engineers.²⁸⁴ The Project 200 developers who were creating a complex downtown also fully supported the freeway network and asked council to ensure their site had access to freeways on both the east and west sides.²⁸⁵ The Building Owners and Managers Association of Vancouver (BOMA) took a different approach, stressing the importance of clear municipal leadership and defined planning principles to guide development. BOMA President E.T. Morrison warned hearing attendees of the impact of weak governance, explaining, "If an investor contemplates development in a community administered by a local government yielding to day-to-day pressure, he must anticipate that his investment will be

²⁸² Petitioners who advocated modified freeways -- different paths or fewer routes -- included the Vancouver City Committee of the Communist Party of Canada, Brief, 28 June 1967 and 20 November 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

²⁸³ Vancouver Board of Trade, Brief, 23 November 1967, and John MacD. Lecky, President of the Downtown Business Association, Brief, 20 November 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

²⁸⁴ Town Planning Commission, Brief, 22 November 1967 and 6 December 1967, and BC Section of Institute of Traffic Engineers, Brief, 6 December 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

²⁸⁵ Gilbert J. Hardman, President of Project 200 Properties Limited, Brief, 21 November 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

subject to similar expedient decisions based on future pressures on future governments.”²⁸⁶

Less than a month after the second hearing on the Chinatown section, city councillors rescinded their earlier approval of the route, cancelling the link.²⁸⁷ Mayor Campbell as well as Aldermen Rankin, Broome, Adams, Wilson, Bird, Linnell, and Alsbury voted to rescind the approval while Aldermen Graham and Sweeney voted against the motion, and Alderman Atherton was absent.²⁸⁸ Alderman Ernie Broome, who had previously criticized expressway opponents, said council was indebted to Hardwick and Oberlander for sparking widespread opposition to the scheme. Telling his colleagues, “I must reject freeways completely,” he explained he was not convinced of the suitability of the location or even the need for a freeway.²⁸⁹ Both Hardwick and Chinatown spokesman Jack Lee were happy with the cancellation, but remained cautious noting the decision could be reversed again. Hardwick explained council’s new, broader support for his anti-expressway position by again blaming

²⁸⁶ Building Owners and Managers Association of Vancouver, Brief, 20 November 1967, in *Vancouver Transportation Study: Submissions to City Council, December 7, 1967* (Vancouver, BC: City Council, 1967). Government Publications, VPL.

²⁸⁷ City council debated the link throughout December but delayed making a final decision until January to avoid influencing the outcome of a federal study on the Burrard Inlet crossing. Bud Elsie, “Big debate on freeways likely today,” *The Province* 12 December 1967. Vancouver City Council Minutes, 12 December 1967, 14 December 1967; Downtown Business Association Fonds, General Files 1959, 1961-1963, 1966-1968, 553-B-6, File 5, CVA. Second hearing more orderly, “showed that a large percentage of the population is concerned about freeway planning”; “Freeway debates shelved,” *The Province* 15 December 1967. Council also approved the drafting of detailed engineering plans for the \$10,000,000 Georgia Viaduct replacement, noting the viaduct work could move ahead without a firm freeway plan. Bud Elsie, “New Georgia Viaduct closer than freeways,” *The Province* 13 December 1967. Vancouver City Council Minutes, Excerpt, 9 January 1968; City council and Office of the City Clerk Fonds, Office of the City Clerk, Subject Files (Including Council Supporting Documents) 1959-1970, 20-G-5, File 8, CVA. Motion: “That whereas Council has endorsed the Carrall Street section of a proposed freeway without having fully discussed or clearly committed itself to any overall freeway plan, Therefore be it resolved that council rescind this decision.”

²⁸⁸ “Chinatown link plan rescinded,” *The Vancouver Sun* 10 January 1968.

²⁸⁹ Bud Elsie, “Council to scrap freeway plans?” *The Province* 10 January 1968.

bureaucrats, saying, “Previously, [aldermen] had not been fully informed of all the ramifications of their decision by city officials.”²⁹⁰

While protestors and those in the threatened neighbourhoods welcomed the decision, others were frustrated by the change in policy and expressways supporters pushed back against anti-freeway forces in the wake of the Chinatown link cancellation.²⁹¹ Both developers and planners pressured city officials to move forward with the roads. The developers behind Project 200 took the opportunity to release the most detailed plans for their site yet, underscoring what might be lost if the freeway plans were not realized by telling officials construction on the project could not begin without a guarantee on the waterfront freeway. The \$300,000,000 site was positioned according to the freeway plans, bordering the planned waterfront route and within easy distance of the proposed third crossing link and the Georgia Viaduct connection to the East-West freeway. The development included fourteen office towers, three apartment towers, a hotel, restaurants, theatres, a department store, retail shops and parking for 5,000 cars. Situated on the city’s north shore, the development was designed as “the vital link between the waterfront and the prime downtown business, commercial and shopping centre.”²⁹²

Developers were not the only freeway supporters remaining after the Chinatown cancellation, as local pro-expressway officials received encouragement from a colleague in Toronto. Metro Toronto Planning Board Chairman W. Grant Messer argued Vancouver needed freeways, adding that subways could not fill the same role because they could not carry freight.

²⁹⁰ “Chinatown link plan rescinded,” *The Vancouver Sun* 10 January 1968.

²⁹¹ “Chinese welcome decision,” *The Province* 11 January 1968.

²⁹² “Waterfront scheme ready to start,” *The Vancouver Sun* 29 March 1968. Partners listed. Project 200 Properties Limited, *Project 200: Vancouver Waterfront Development* (Vancouver, BC: c. 1967-1969); City Council and Office of the City Clerk Fonds, Office of the City Clerk, Report Files 1967-1969, 120-E-2, File 295, CVA.

Freeway critics, he maintained, were not being practical; it was Vancouver planners who best understood the community's needs. As Messer said, "The easy way is to ban cars, but it's not practical. Our philosophy is give Joe Blow the maximum choice to get from here to there," adding, "Expressways, in the long run, have to come."²⁹³

While expressway supporters were alarmed by the cancellation, the apparent victory encouraged anti-freeway activists to build on the momentum with the goal of increasing their influence over city planning. These efforts resulted in the formation of the Citizens' Council for Civic Development in January 1968. Envisioned as an independent, inclusive group dedicated to guiding Vancouver's growth, the council was formed "in answer to Vancouver city council's challenge for the groups who presented briefs at the public meeting on freeways to constitute themselves into a Citizens' Committee."²⁹⁴ The group organized public talks to foster debate over the city's planning challenges, including open gatherings focusing on the future of the city and staged events where city officials were invited to speak to attendees. At one meeting attendees greeted the Chair of City Council's Rapid Transit Committee Alderman Halford Wilson with laughter when he tried to persuade the audience of the benefits of freeways by explaining that Tokyo's elevated freeways were ideal because "The people (of Tokyo) don't even notice the traffic above them -- they can't even see it."²⁹⁵

²⁹³ George Peloquin, "Vancouver needs freeways, says Metro Toronto Adviser," *The Vancouver Sun* 11 October 1968. Al Arnason, "Freeway system backed," *The Province* 15 October 1968.

²⁹⁴ Citizens' Council for Civic Development, press release, 26 January 1968; Community Arts Council of Vancouver Fonds, Program Files, Civic Arts Committee 1967-1969, 529-E-2, File 6, CVA.

²⁹⁵ The Citizens Council on Civic Development held a conference titled "Vancouver Tomorrow" in May 1968 designed to discuss "what kind of city would [citizens] like Vancouver to be?" Citizens Council on Civic Development, "An Invitation to All Citizens: Vancouver Tomorrow Conference," c. April-May 1968; Community Arts Council of Vancouver Fonds, Program Files, Civic Arts Committee 1967-1969, 529-E-2, File 6, CVA. Stephen Brown, "Freeway planning debated," *The Province* 4 October 1968.

At the same time, a new municipal political party that would become a major force in city politics emerged called The Elector's Action Movement (TEAM). TEAM members positioned themselves as an alternative to current power holders the Vancouver Non-Partisan Association (NPA), arguing that since the NPA dominated city council, council policy was NPA policy. TEAM members also claimed they would offer better transportation and housing policy, promising, "TEAM won't be a council that is pulled screaming into the future . . . like the Mayor and NPA council majority."²⁹⁶ Internally, TEAM members were focused on building a coalition to defeat the NPA in the December 1968 election. On all counts, the new party accused NPA counterparts of "bumbling," while also branding them as irresponsible, inept, and even dishonest. TEAM members also blamed officials for problems in the city's government, explaining, "Supporting the political weakness is the professional staff that is either unwilling or incapable of clearly analyzing the issues and alternatives that are open to political decision."²⁹⁷

"A combination of freeways and rapid transit is the answer"

As pro and anti-expressway forces planned their next moves, the official city response to the Chinatown link cancellation came with the October 1968 release of the Vancouver Transportation Study (VTS). In the landmark VTS, consultants reaffirmed the necessity of

²⁹⁶ "TEAM News," (Press Release), 16 September 1968; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Essays, Reports and Reprints Series 1959-1986, Box 12, File 30, University of British Columbia Archives (UBCA).

²⁹⁷ TEAM, "New Directions for Vancouver 1968"; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Essays, Reports and Reprints Series 1959-1986, Box 12, File 31, UBCA. Also, "TEAM: Report of the Developmental Issues Committee," c. 1968-1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Essays, Reports and Reprints Series 1959-1986, Box 12, File 31, UBCA. In the document TEAM blamed the 30 year reign of the NPA for current municipal governance problems. "TEAM - Persons Suggested for Election," c. 1968-1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Essays, Reports and Reprints Series 1959-1986, Box 12, File 31, UBCA.

expressways in the city while also emphasizing the need for a rapid transit solution.²⁹⁸ The new emphasis on the importance of public transit suggested anti-expressway protests were having some impact on officials' decision making, but planners' continued insistence on the importance of expressways in the city even after the Chinatown link controversy set the stage for another round of debates. While consultants viewed Vancouver's situation as unique because of the city's geography, their solution to the region's traffic problems in the VTS was consistent with trends across the country.²⁹⁹ Vancouver was experiencing rapid population growth, and with it, dramatic increases in automobile ownership rates. Public transportation ridership had declined during the post-WWII period but had leveled off in the early 1960s; the proportion of transit users to motorists was expected to further decline by 1985.³⁰⁰

The consultants' solution to the city's transportation challenges was shaped primarily by the terms of reference handed down by city officials, which dictated that the final plan would involve a network of freeways including the previously proposed elevated waterfront highway as well as the east-west and north-south freeways.³⁰¹ The final VTS plan contained a detailed description of the revised freeway network. As consultants explained:

The freeway system of the recommended plan commences on the west side of downtown Vancouver with the Brockton Interchange which connects to a proposed subaqueous motor vehicle tunnel alignment across Burrard Inlet provided by the city for Study

²⁹⁸ George Peloquin, "Mass transit called vital," *The Vancouver Sun* 28 October 1968. The study from San Francisco firm Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade and Douglas cost \$250,000.

²⁹⁹ Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas, Inc. Engineers, *Vancouver Transportation Study 1968*, 3. Government Publications, VPL. The consultants remarked, "Few major metropolitan downtown centres of the world are as confined by topography and surrounding development. Few have as difficult problems of access and internal circulation in the face of continuing rapid growth."

³⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 1-4.

³⁰¹ *Ibid*, 7-8. Planning consultant Hans Blumenfeld subsequently wrote a letter to City Engineer R.M. Martin with additional remarks on the plan and also urging a scale model of the plans as well as a regional transit study. Hans Blumenfeld to R.M. Martin, City Engineer, 25 September 1968; City Council and Office of the City Clerk Fonds, Office of the City clerk, Report Files 1968, 120-D-7, File 272, CVA.

purposes. From the Brockton Interchange at Coal Harbour, the Waterfront Highway proceeds along the downtown waterfront to the vicinity of Abbott Street where it becomes the North-South Freeway. This freeway turns south along Carrall Street and continues along the east edge of False Creek and west of Main Street to the Study area boundary at 12th Avenue. In the vicinity of Georgia Street, the Georgia Interchange provides connections between the North-South Freeway, the East-West Freeway, the Taylor Expressway, and ramps to and from downtown streets. The Taylor Expressway, not part of the study, extends westward from this interchange along the north side of False Creek to the vicinity of the Granville Bridge. The east-west element within the Interchange consists of the replacement planned for the existing deteriorated Georgia Viaduct. This element connects directly to the East-West Freeway which continues east in the Prior-Venables Streets corridor to the Study area boundary at Woodland Drive. Ramps are provided between the freeway and street systems at strategic points, including proposed direct access for a large parking garage planned as part of Project 200 along the downtown waterfront.³⁰²

The estimated cost of the freeways, not including expropriation, was \$97,600,000.³⁰³

The impact of the Chinatown link opposition was evident in a new emphasis on the need for public transit as well as the downgrade of the contentious route from a freeway to an arterial link. Consultants explained the Pender-Keefer Diversion and Keefer Street could be used as an alternative to the Chinatown link, meaning the contentious section would “no longer [be] required for major volumes of vehicle movement.” In the future, they added, a section of Pender

³⁰² Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas, Inc. Engineers, *Vancouver Transportation Study 1968*, i-iii. Government Publications, VPL. Details of the Project 200 parking garage, 24-25, 32-33; the north-south expressway and Brockton Interchange, 44-47; the Georgia Viaduct replacement and east-west freeway 56-58. The viaduct reconstruction was expected to precede the freeways, and consequently was planned as a connector between existing grade level streets that could subsequently converted into a connector between the east-west expressway and the central downtown routes. The Waterfront Highway was designed in conjunction with a massive downtown development called Project 200. The development, the consultants explained, involved, “a complex of private and government office buildings, transportation terminal facilities including up to 5,000 parking stalls, hotel and entertainment facilities, department stores, a pedestrian promenade, and other functions (13).” The report also included a description of the Project 200 site: “It extends from Howe Street on the west to Abbott Street on the east, with most of its major new development to be located north of Cordova and Water Streets along the waterfront side of the downtown area.” In addition, a limited access service road was planned for the waterfront, to be controlled by the National Harbours Board and ensure access to the Project 100 development opposite Cambie Street. The route would not be open “for general use by the public” or as a downtown bypass (33-34).

³⁰³ Ibid, iv. Consultants included a note on expropriation costs, commenting, “The right-of-way cost of those elements of the plan for which the City is able to provide such estimates totals \$27,400,000.”



Image 9: “Recommended Plan (Image 1 of 2),” Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas, Inc. Engineers, Vancouver Transportation Study 1968.

Street could be used as “purely a local street” or converted into a pedestrian mall.³⁰⁴ The study authors expressed some concerns over the potential impact and limitations of the freeway, warning that the waterfront route in particular would change “the unique scenic beauty and

³⁰⁴ Ibid, 75.

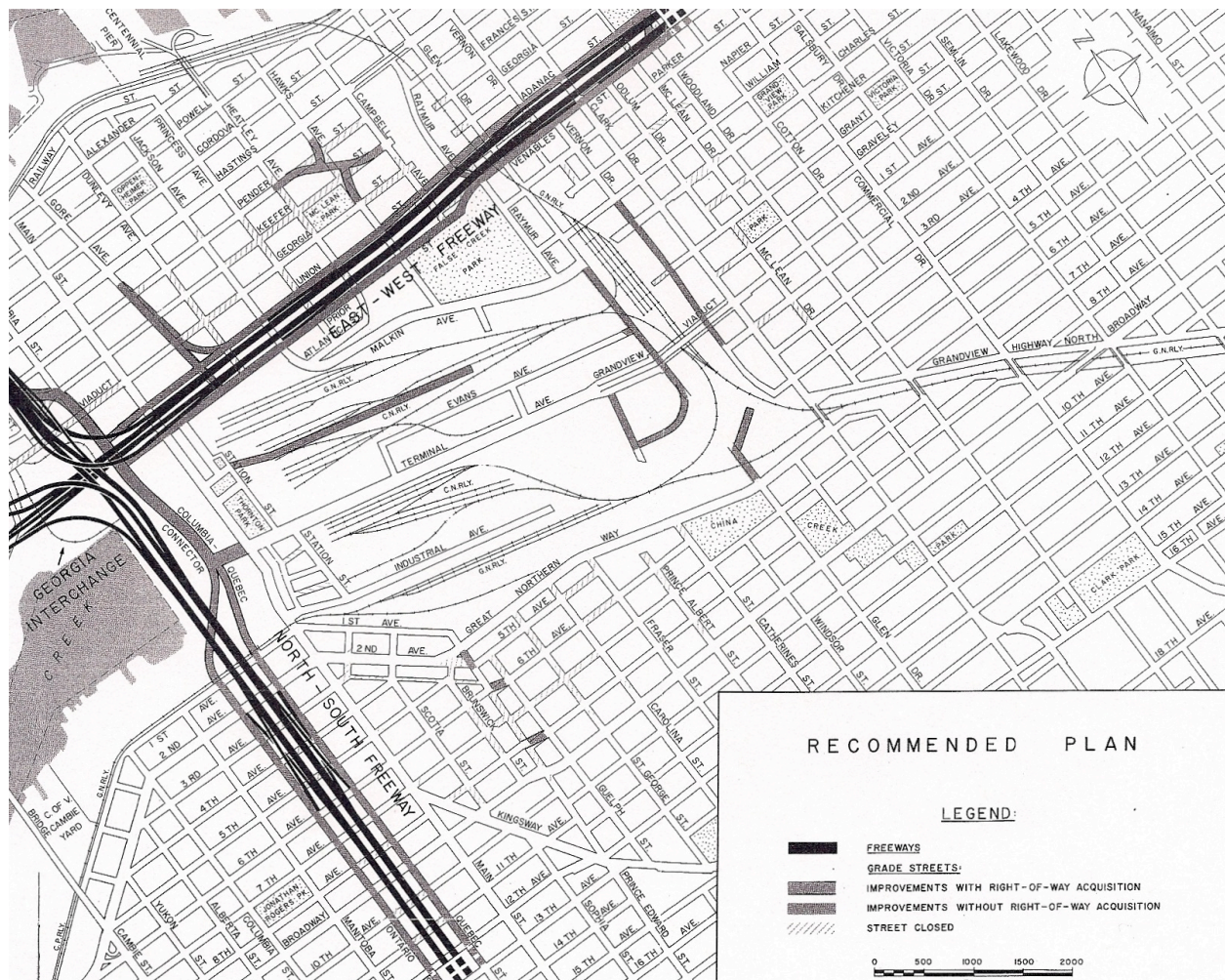


Image 9: "Recommended Plan {Image 2 of 2}," Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas, Inc. Engineers, Vancouver Transportation Study 1968.

character" of the city.³⁰⁵ Despite their reservations, engineers acknowledged that the Brockton

Interchange and Burrard Inlet crossing must be supported by the Waterfront Highway to prevent

³⁰⁵ Ibid, 35. The examination of alternatives did not result in any significant changes to the obstructive waterfront route: Consultants Swan Wooster-CBA and Sub-Consultants Warnett Kennedy (Architectural Planning) and N.D. Lea & Associates (Traffic), *Notes on the Burrard Inlet Crossing Project, Approaches -- City of Vancouver: Examination of Alternative Concepts* (Vancouver, BC: Swan-Wooster-CBA, 2 October 1968); Consultants Swan Wooster-CBA and Sub-Consultants Warnett Kennedy (Architectural Planning) and N.D. Lea & Associates (Traffic), *Notes on the Burrard Inlet Crossing Project, North Shore Approaches: Final Examination of Alternative Alignments* (Vancouver, BC: Swan-Wooster-CBA, 2 February 1969); Consultants Swan Wooster-CBA and Sub-Consultants Warnett Kennedy (Architectural Planning) and N.D. Lea & Associates (Traffic), *Burrard Inlet Crossing Project: City of Vancouver Approaches: Summary of the Final Examination of Alternative Alignments Presented to City Council* (Vancouver, BC: Swan-Wooster-CBA, 9 April 1969). Government Publications, VPL.

downtown streets from being completely overloaded.³⁰⁶ Together the Interchange and Waterfront Highway were estimated at \$30,500,000, not including expropriation costs.³⁰⁷

While consultants maintained freeways were necessary for Vancouver, they harboured reservations about the limited capacity of the city's transportation infrastructure, even if all the proposed freeways and road improvements were completed. The fully realized system would reach capacity by 1985, they noted, and would in many places be congested "beyond generally acceptable or tolerable levels," a problem that would extend beyond the freeways and arterials to the city's streets. These issues would also "severely affect" downtown bus routes.³⁰⁸ The way to address this seemingly unavoidable problem, they argued, was with public transportation.³⁰⁹ Consultants suggested that inner city transit plans should be designed with an awareness of regional challenges, and could include bus system improvements, incentives for transit users, rights-of-way for transit vehicles and rapid transit provisions.³¹⁰

Some consultants' concerns over the impact and limitations of freeways in Vancouver went far beyond the reservations referenced in the official report. Months before the public release of the study, dissenting consultants contacted city council directly to detail their concerns. Geoffrey Massey on behalf of Erickson Massey Architects and Planning Consultant Hans Blumenfeld argued the planned freeways would soon be filled to capacity and even congested because the proposal did not include a transit component, only repeated statements stressing the

³⁰⁶ Parsons, Brinckerhoff, Quade & Douglas, Inc. Engineers, *Vancouver Transportation Study 1968*, 35. Government Publications, VPL.

³⁰⁷ Ibid, 36-38.

³⁰⁸ Ibid, v.

³⁰⁹ Ibid, 102-109.

³¹⁰ Ibid, vi. The consultants did not specify the form of rapid transit.

importance of transit. They added that the planned tunnel from the north shore under the Burrard Inlet effectively dictated the best route for the proposed east-west and north-south freeways and argued, “The proposed solution would seriously impair the unique scenic beauty and character of Vancouver in three respects . . . the waterfront itself, Carrall Street, [and] the elevated structures at the entrance to Coal Harbour.” They added that the planned tunnel across the Burrard Inlet posed yet another problem, as it required a three part connection at Coal Harbour consisting of the freeway as well as two access ramps. “Of necessity,” Massey and Blumenfeld explained, “these three structures have different alignments, both horizontally and vertically. The resultant maze of concrete would entirely ruin the visual aspect of Coal Harbour -- the views from the city centre to Stanley Park, from Stanley Park to the centre, and to Burrard Inlet from the West End.” They concluded by urging another, new study be conducted with an eye towards a balanced transportation system.³¹¹

Local politicians’ response to the VTS was consistent with their established positions on freeways. While Mayor Campbell had voted to rescind the Carrall link, he maintained his support for freeways in the city. He argued the problem with the Carrall route was that it was an elevated route which “would be like a knife cutting through the area.” Instead, he called for a depressed connector route east of Main. “If [the Crosstown link] is depressed (below ground level),” the mayor explained, “then it doesn’t have the same impact as spaghetti (i.e., an elevated freeway system). So the plan we’ve got is pro-Chinese, but perhaps anti-Italian. No spaghetti.”³¹² Campbell concluded: “A combination of freeways and rapid transit is the answer.

³¹¹ Geoffrey Massey and Hans Blumenfeld, “Report on Vancouver Transportation Study,” 3 May 1968; City Council and Office of the City Clerk Fonds, Office of the City Clerk, Subject Files (Including Council Supporting Documents) 1959-1970, 20-G-5, File 8, CVA.

³¹² “Mayor Campbell opposes Chinatown freeway link,” *The Vancouver Sun* 22 November 1968. Four of five Swan Wooster schemes employed the Carrall alignment.

Let's not make the same mistake as Los Angeles with spaghetti freeways strung all over the city."³¹³ He was also careful to note that while the VTS included extensive freeways, the only part of the network city council had committed to was the viaduct replacement.³¹⁴ Other council members responded differently, opposing freeways outright. Newly elected Councillor Walter Hardwick argued consultants and federal officials exerted too much control over the freeway debates.³¹⁵ His colleague Marianne Linnell's (1960-64; 1966-74) anti-expressway stance was informed by the advice of a "youthful braintrust" she formed, explaining, "My council told me that the young people have changed their living habits and that a communal transportation system is not foreign to them anymore."³¹⁶

"The mood of today's generation"

The release of the VTS concerned expressway opponents, encouraged expressway supporters, and set the stage for the next round of debates. The second wave of controversy focused on the proposed third crossing but also addressed the ongoing replacement of the Georgia Viaduct. Both were regarded as gateway projects by opponents who feared the construction of the entire proposed network would follow. Debates over the crossing and viaduct also drew attention to the growing disagreement in officials ranks over the wisdom of expressway-centric transportation planning. Divisions that had emerged during the Chinatown

³¹³ "Mayors issue call for transit authority," *The Vancouver Sun* 29 October 1968. Campbell and West Vancouver Mayor Alex Forst also called for a regional transit planning authority.

³¹⁴ George Peloquin, "City freeway plus subway routes set," *The Vancouver Sun* 18 December 1968.

³¹⁵ "'City out of driver's seat'," *The Vancouver Sun* 19 December 1968. Hardwick was elected December 11 under TEAM.

³¹⁶ "Youth council favours rapid transit system," *The Vancouver Sun* 21 November 1968. One year before the group had granted "cautious approval" of the freeway. "Linnell's braintrust back freeway plan," *The Province* 26 November 1967.

fracas once again came to the fore as concerns about the crossing and viaduct quickly grew into larger questions about the merits of expressways and their suitability for Vancouver.

A new, more detailed plan for the crossing released in March 1969 acknowledged anti-expressway sentiment and attempted to address the concerns behind it. The crossing plans included a series of new “basic design principles” which showed that in the wake of protests planners were adjusting to reflect “the mood of today’s generation.” According to the new design principles, the consultants explained:

Emphasis should be on the movement of people rather than vehicles. To this end the balanced transportation system recommended to the city by their consultant, N.D. Lea & Associates, which would include both rapid transit as well as highways, has been assumed in the current examination. There should be no freeways within the Downtown Peninsula, unless in Tunnel. There should be no separation of people from the use and enjoyment of the Burrard Inlet Waterfront, but rather additional opportunity should be provided for public access to the harbour frontage.³¹⁷

Consultants also addressed changing public opinion directly, admitting, “If we ask ourselves if Vancouver’s planning is oriented towards its people, the obvious answer is that during its growth and development up until today other factors have taken precedence. It is the mood of today’s generation to reverse the situation.”³¹⁸

After a public presentation of the new crossing plans, concerned citizens petitioned city councillors as they debated which of the potential crossing designs would be approved.³¹⁹ Letter writers overwhelmingly opposed the project as they urged councillors to carefully consider

³¹⁷ Swan Wooster-CBA (Crossing Consultants to the National Harbours Board) and Sub-Consultants Warnett Kennedy (Architectural Planning) and N.D. Lea & Associates (Traffic), *Notes on the Burrard Inlet Crossing Project: City of Vancouver Approaches: Final Examination of Alternative Alignments* (Vancouver, B.C: 21 March 1969), 5-6. Government Publications, VPL.

³¹⁸ Ibid, 7.

³¹⁹ On 21 April 1969 approximately 300 concerned citizens attended a public presentation by crossing consultants Swan Wooster-CBA at the Frederick Wood Theatre.

alternatives and pay attention to citizens' concerns before making a final decision.³²⁰ Some also raised concerns about the plans not being widely publicized, calling for another public hearing or vote.³²¹ Groups from the threatened communities also voiced concerns. The Strathcona Property Owners & Tenants Association, for example, were particularly concerned about the Georgia Viaduct, which seemed to make the east-west freeway a necessity, and as a result, would destroy six blocks of homes in their neighbourhood.³²² The Chinese Benevolent Association, whose members would have been similarly affected by the scheme, also opposed it.³²³ The Greater Vancouver Real Estate Board also opposed freeways and criticized local development authorities, remarking, "It is to be hoped that the Greater Vancouver Regional District will quickly become a fully operative regional agency and thus put an end to the present condition of political paralysis."³²⁴

Opponents were not alone in appealing to council. Freeway supporters also lobbied councillors. There was some diversity in their positions: some supported freeways anywhere in the city while others agreed such roads were necessary but objected to the standing routes that threatened the historical Gastown and Chinatown neighbourhoods.³²⁵ Among the more ardent

³²⁰ Sunrise Ratepayers Association to Council, 16 May 1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Urban Planning Publications Series 1946-1998, Box 1, File 21, UBCA.

³²¹ Patricia Lee to Mayor Campbell, 15 May 1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Urban Planning Publications Series 1946-1998, Box 1, File 21, UBCA.

³²² Shirely Chan for the Strathcona Property Owners & Tenants Association to Council, 29 April 1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Urban Planning Publications Series 1946-1998, Box 1, File 21, UBCA.

³²³ Chinese Benevolent Association, Resolution, c. April 1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Urban Planning Publications Series 1946-1998, Box 1, File 21, UBCA.

³²⁴ Greater Vancouver Real Estate Board, Report on the Swan Wooster-CBA Report (Submission to Council), 23 April 1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Urban Planning Publications Series 1946-1998, Box 1, File 21, UBCA.

³²⁵ Judith M. Blackman to Mayor T.J. Campbell, 15 May 1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Urban Planning Publications Series 1946-1998, Box 1, File 21, UBCA. Blackman urged councillors, "Let us hear from our consultants; then let us decide!"

supporters was the Marathon Reality Company, whose General Manager wrote in support of the waterfront freeway,³²⁶ as well as the Composite Committee on Regional Transportation who wrote specifically in favour of the crossing.³²⁷ The Vancouver Board of Trade endorsed freeways but also called for “equal priority” for rapid transit.³²⁸ Additionally, the Project 200 developers reiterated their support for the plans as did the Downtown Business Association, which objected to the branding of the scheme as a metropolitan project when it was actually a regional system.³²⁹

After hearing these appeals councillors narrowed their preferred options to two schemes. Both included the redevelopment of Chinatown and Gastown and a freeway along False Creek for the first narrows crossing alignment.³³⁰ They subsequently approved the first narrows approach as the best solution for west end traffic congestion.³³¹ Shortly thereafter, local officials began petitioning their provincial counterparts for funding for the crossing project. North Vancouver Mayor R.C. Andrews asked BC Premier W.A.C. Bennett to help the municipality acquire land in the vicinity of the crossing on the north shore.³³² Vancouver Deputy Mayor E.J.

³²⁶ J.D. Mooney, General Manager of Marathon Reality Company Limited to Council, 28 April 1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Urban Planning Publications Series 1946-1998, Box 1, File 21, UBCA.

³²⁷ D.D. Mears, Chairman of the Composite Committee on Regional Transportation to Council, 29 April 1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Urban Planning Publications Series 1946-1998, Box 1, File 21, UBCA. The Composite Committee was comprised of the Boards of Trade and Chambers of Commerce in the Greater Vancouver Urban Area including the Lower Mainland, Burnaby, Cloverdale, Coquitlam, Delta, Langley, Maple Ridge, New Westminister, Fraser Mills, Hastings, Kitsilano, North Vancouver, Port Moody, Surrey, Richmond, Vancouver and West Vancouver. The committee also urged the creation a comprehensive transportation planning scheme coordinated between the federal, provincial and municipal governments.

³²⁸ Vancouver Board of Trade to Council, 25 April 1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Urban Planning Publications Series 1946-1998, Box 1, File 21, UBCA.

³²⁹ Paul B. Coombs, President of the Downtown Business Association to Council, 30 April 1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Urban Planning Publications Series 1946-1998, Box 1, File 21, UBCA.

³³⁰ Al Sheehan, “Council to decide Thursday on route to inlet crossing,” *The Vancouver Sun* 16 May 1969.

³³¹ “Route to unplug west end,” *The Vancouver Sun* 27 June 1969.

³³² R.C. Andrews, Mayor of North Vancouver to W.A.C. Bennett, Premier of British Columbia, 12 August 1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Subject Files Series 1967-1976, Box 11, File 36, UBCA.

Broome and West Vancouver Mayor A. Forst both supported Andrews's appeal.³³³ At the same time, the Board of Parks & Public Recreation were calling for the Burrard Inlet crossing to be a twin for the existing Lions Gate Bridge and an access road to be tunnelled under the park. The board argued the location was ideal because it was the most narrow point of the crossing and accordingly, would be the least expensive. The route would be six lanes with separate but attached facilities for two transit lanes running directly underneath.³³⁴

As debates grew over the crossing plans, the replacement of the Georgia Viaduct -- detailed plans for which were released in 1963 -- was also under discussion at city hall. The aging structure served as a distributor, connecting highways outside the city with inner city routes. The official handling of the viaduct reconstruction debates bore the impact of the Chinatown debates, as council appointed a special liaison committee to report community opinion on the plans.

The liaison committee and city councillors met several times between September 1970 and May 1971 to discuss the proposed freeway connection between the Georgia Viaduct and Highway 401, which threatened approximately 1,200 homes.³³⁵ In July 1971, some members of

³³³ E.J. Broome, Deputy Mayor of Vancouver to W.A.C. Bennett, 5 August 1969, and A. Forst, Mayor of West Vancouver, to W.A.C. Bennett, 13 August 1969; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Subject Files Series 1967-1976, Box 11, File 36, UBCA.

³³⁴ B.A. Sandy Robertson, Vice Chairman of the Board of Parks & Public Recreation, "A Second Crossing of Burrard Inlet at the First Narrows, Vancouver, BC: A Case for a Twin Span Bridge at Lions Gate" (11 August 1969), 1-5; Walter Hardwick Fonds, Subject Files Series 1967-1976, Box 11, File 36, UBCA. Vice Chairman of the Board E.A. Sandy Robertson wrote, "Vancouver's major tourist attraction, Stanley Park, is bleeding to death on the roadside and no one will stop to help it. Its problem is a wound that literally cuts it in half. A concrete hardened wound that is as noisy and dangerous as a snarling chain saw." (1).

³³⁵ Special Committee Re: Freeway Connection: Georgia Viaduct to Highway 401, Meeting Minutes, 26 October 1970; Mayor's Office Fonds, General Correspondence Files 1972, 45-F-3, File 21, CVA. Special Committee Re: Freeway Connection: Georgia Viaduct to Highway 401, Meeting Minutes, 18 January 1971, 19 April 1971, 26 May 1971; Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association Fonds, Subject Files 1971, 583-C-5, File 3, CVA. Special Committee, "Report Re: Meetings of the Liaison Group, Freeway Connection: Georgia Viaduct to Highway 401," 17 August 1971; Strathcona Property Owners and Tenants Association Fonds, Subject Files 1971, 583-C-5, File 3, CVA.

the liaison group issued a minority report that detailed their misgivings about the scheme and stressing their complete opposition to any freeway link between the viaduct and highway.

Alderman Harry Rankin joined with several community councils in blasting officials: “Freeways and rapid transit serve mutually exclusive contradictory and opposing interests and aims,” adding that the policy helped obscure official’s real intention of pursuing freeways without rapid transit.³³⁶ They further argued freeways would only exacerbate growing congestion in the core, perpetuating the current problems and fostering ongoing demand for accommodations for motorists including parking, service stations and even more freeways. The group was also suspicious of freeway advocates, accusing developers of downtown projects, construction interests and “the car supply and oil industries” of being the real forces behind the roads.³³⁷ The liaison group was particularly critical of city officials, saying that: “The city’s plans for a freeway are already much more advanced than many people realize. They are being foisted on the people piecemeal in such a way that the total effect is not being seen or felt all at once and in such a way that each completed section logically demands another.”³³⁸

During this time the city’s freeway plans seemed to flounder but in reality, the city was on the brink of a second chapter in the freeway debates as plans for the crossing would soon arouse widespread renewed public opposition and culminate in a second round of public hearings. Activists followed the emerging details closely and remained on high alert, concerned that either the viaduct or crossing projects would make inner city freeways a reality.

³³⁶ Special Committee Re: Freeway Connection: Georgia Viaduct to Highway 401, “Minority Report Re: Meeting of the Liaison Group: Freeway Connection - Georgia Viaduct to Highway 401,” 12 July 1971, 2; Office of the City Manager Fonds, Board of Administration, Commissioners’ Subject Files 1970-1971, 114-A-4, File 23, CVA.

³³⁷ Ibid, 2.

³³⁸ Ibid, 3-4.

The most significant group to form at the time was the Citizens Coordinating Committee for Public Transit (CCCPT), a coalition of labour and community groups including the Central Council of Ratepayers in Vancouver, the Vancouver Tenants' Council and the Vancouver Labour Council. The CCCPT represented twenty-seven citizens' groups with a mandate to publicize planning threats to the city and brainstorm alternative solutions to traffic problems, focussing on the East End freeway and Third Crossing of Burrard Inlet.³³⁹ CCCPT Chairman Bruce York branded freeways "authoritarian and undemocratic."³⁴⁰ Toronto anti-expressway activist and architect Colin Vaughn encouraged the group, telling them freeways "destroy the city," citing Detroit and Los Angeles as examples. He argued the key to successful activism was to focus on the issue, not the politics, noting Toronto organizations underscored the exorbitant costs of expressways to win their argument. "Freeways don't solve traffic problems, they create problems," Vaughn said, continuing, "They destroy housing, destroy the air, and destroy the city as a place to live in."³⁴¹

As public opposition to crossing plans grew, there were some signs that officials were listening to freeway opponents and furthermore, that the ongoing opposition was influencing their plans. A.C. Kelly, the Chairman of the Transportation Function Study Committee of the Greater Vancouver Regional District, called officials' failure to act on the numerous existing transportation reports and move forward with comprehensive transportation planning "a gross

³³⁹ Citizens Committee for Public Transit to Ron Thompson, City Clerk, 6 July 1971; Office of the City Manager Fonds, Board of Administration, Commissioners' Subject Files 1970-1971, 114-A-4, File 23, CVA.

³⁴⁰ Bruce York, "Transportation Future," at the Vancouver's Transportation Future Speaker Series, hosted by the Information Committee of Concerned Students of the Geography Student's Union at Simon Fraser University, March 1972, 21, 23-24. VPL.

³⁴¹ "Freeway fighter to speak," *The Vancouver Sun* 1 October 1971. "'Freeways destroy cities,' claims noted opponent," *The Vancouver Sun* 2 October 1971.

dereliction of responsibility.” He urged cooperation and compromise between the involved municipal authorities as well as other higher level governments and agencies, warning that without action “we will probably be still talking about our problem in another ten years, having in the meantime followed the lead of some other cities and destroyed our environment with freeways and parking lots.”³⁴² His committee’s policy statement stressed the value of public transit not as an independently profitable enterprise, but as one that brought so many benefits to the urban transportation system at large that the subsidies it received were equivalent to the financial benefit it generated.³⁴³

Others were also distancing themselves from the city’s freeway plans. At a Roads and Transportation Association of Canada seminar Alderman Harry Rankin told attendees Vancouver was “fortunate” that the city could not afford to build freeways because it saved them from the fate of Los Angeles and Seattle. Shortly thereafter Dick Hayward, the assistant director of the city planning department spoke out against a smaller highway project, telling aldermen “that the general mood of the public today is away from cars, and more pedestrian oriented.”³⁴⁴ Finally, the Board of Administration articulated city council’s changing priorities and the potential impact on transportation planning, noting, “Council has resolved that transit is the number one priority in regional transportation. While this does not necessarily eliminate the need for this [east freeway approach to Georgia Viaduct] highway connector, it may have a bearing on the timing of

³⁴² A.C. Kelly to Chairman and Board of Directors, Greater Vancouver Regional District, 20 October 1971, Greater Vancouver Transportation Function Study Committee, *The Transportation Function: A Policy Statement by the Regional Board with Recommendations for Further Action on the Adoption of the Function* (Vancouver: 20 October 1971). Government Publications, VPL.

³⁴³ Greater Vancouver Transportation Function Study Committee, *The Transportation Function: A Policy Statement by the Regional Board with Recommendations for Further Action on the Adoption of the Function* (Vancouver: 20 October 1971). Government Publications, VPL.

³⁴⁴ Gary Bannerman, “City planning department shows tougher approach,” *The Province* 9 October 1971.

its implementation.”³⁴⁵ Frustrated by the growing opposition to the crossing route, new Vancouver Port Authority Chairman and former Mayor Bill Rathie urged the “silent majority” -- “the people who aren’t always shouting” -- to save the crossing project from “the knockers who run around protesting everything.”³⁴⁶

Tensions were further heightened when the Georgia Viaduct officially opened in January 1972. Most opponents regarded the viaduct as a gateway installation that anticipated and increased the pressure for freeways in the city. Protestors who attended the opening with signs reading “Save our city for the people,” jeered Mayor Campbell and formed a human chain to block his motorcade, forcing some cars to turn back. Campbell responded to the protests by remarking, “if we were to listen to the knockers we’d never get anything done. As long as I am in office we’ll pay no attention to these vocal minorities.”³⁴⁷

Despite this resistance from some officials, activists continued to work against the crossing project. The Citizens Coordinating Committee for Public Transit held a public meeting in January 1972 that was attended by an estimated 700 concerned citizens, the majority of whom opposed the project. The only two aldermen who accepted invitations to the meeting were freeway critics Walter Hardwick and Art Phillips (Alderman 1968-72; Mayor 1972-76). Phillips agreed with opponents’ concerns that the crossing was a gateway project, warning, “This is the

³⁴⁵ Board of Administration, Meeting Minutes, 26 November 1971; City Corporate Services Fonds, Director of Finance, Subject Files 1971, 94-C-4, File 10, CVA.

³⁴⁶ “Silent majority urged: ‘Save inlet crossing’,” *The Vancouver Sun* 2 December 1971. Local administrations were already largely on board, as three north shore municipalities had approved the plan although city council had yet to make a final decision. Crossing supporters also attracted criticism when it was announced federal funding via the National Harbours Board was only be available for the crossing, not any transit infrastructure that was to accompany the route. “Federal policy ‘prevented transit system deal’,” *The Vancouver Sun* 24 December 1971.

³⁴⁷ “Protestors disrupt viaduct opening,” *The Province* 10 January 1972. John Gibbs, “Police get mayor through demonstrators,” *The Vancouver Sun* 10 January 1972. The quoted placard was toted by UBC engineering professor Thomas Alden’s child.

watershed. It must be stopped now.”³⁴⁸ After the meeting, the group demanded a plebiscite on the crossing.³⁴⁹ Reaction from council was predictably mixed, as crossing supporters generally opposed the move, while opponents favoured a vote. Alderman Hardwick backed the move, while his colleague Alderman Earle Adams opposed it. “What a plebiscite would accomplish I can’t see,” Adams said, adding, “It’s going along with the usual mob that’s against everything.”³⁵⁰ Vancouver Mayor Campbell also rejected the calls for a plebiscite, noting the government represented the people and adding, “As far as we [the government] are concerned, there will be no plebiscite. Those who want to oppose it (the crossing), ignore them.”³⁵¹ Undeterred by the mayor’s refusal to call a vote, the CCCPT initiated a petition against the crossing, collecting 14,000 signatures. The activists argued the mayor’s defiance actually stimulated opposition to the project.³⁵²

While some councillors maintained their support for the crossing, anti-expressway activists had enough supporters on council to secure the public hearing they wanted. Mayor Campbell insisted only experts would be speakers at the event, adding that CCCPT Chairman Bruce York was not an expert. The mayor charged the crossing was being sabotaged by “Maoists, Communists, pinkos, left-wingers and hamburgers.”³⁵³ Campbell also tried to

³⁴⁸ Leslie Plommer, “Mayor, alderman stay away from third crossing critics,” *The Vancouver Sun* 17 January 1972. Another anti-expressway alderman, Harry Rankin, agreed with his colleagues, maintaining the crossing was a gateway to the city’s \$400,000,000 freeway scheme. “Rankin sees third crossing creating costly freeways,” *The Province* 19 February 1972.

³⁴⁹ Bruce York, “Transportation Future,” at the Vancouver’s Transportation Future Speaker Series, hosted by the Information Committee of Concerned Students of the Geography Student’s Union at Simon Fraser University, March 1972, 21. VPL.

³⁵⁰ “Reaction mixed to plebiscite call,” *The Vancouver Sun* 29 January 1972.

³⁵¹ Hall Leiren, “Mayor rules out crossing plebiscite,” *The Vancouver Sun* 4 February 1972. Federal authorities maintained their hands off approach, saying the final decision on the route would be made by local authorities.

³⁵² “Petition for crossing vote ‘totals 14,000 signatures’,” *The Vancouver Sun* 7 February 1972.

³⁵³ When asked to clarify, Campbell later explained that “hamburgers” were people “without university degrees.”

discredit the anti-expressway municipal party TEAM by arguing that Alderman Harry Rankin was with the Communist Party and TEAM was with Rankin, so the defeat of the crossing would be “a victory for the Community Party of Canada.”³⁵⁴ Bill Rathie agreed with Campbell that communists were behind the crossing opposition, and insisted they were not exaggerating the connection. He explained, “No one is better organized in working on such things than the Communist Party. I’m concerned about the leadership given to this by a Communist.” Rathie also pointed to York’s involvement in the Vancouver Tenants Council, a group Rathie said deterred developers from working in the city, and asked, “Is this progress?”³⁵⁵

As opposition to the third crossing gained momentum, provincial officials’ position on the project changed. CCCPT Chairman Bruce York called on Premier W.A.C. Bennett to follow Ontario Premier Bill Davis’s example in cancelling the Spadina Expressway in Toronto and cancel the crossing project, but Bennett argued protestors should direct their frustration towards the federal government because federal funding made the crossing possible.³⁵⁶ Only a few weeks later, however, provincial officials began to distance themselves from their previously staunch support for the project. New Minister of Highways Wesley Black (1968-72) called for rapid transit, arguing an expressway would destroy the city. His colleagues Minister of Municipal Affairs Dan Campbell (1964-72) and Attorney General Leslie Peterson both expressed doubts over the wisdom of expressways in cities, although they declined to address the situation in Vancouver specifically. Instead of his usual spirited rebuttals to expressway opponents, the

³⁵⁴ Hall Leiren, “‘Critics sinking’ third crossing,” *The Vancouver Sun* 9 February 1972.

³⁵⁵ “Says Rathie with relish: ‘I’m a hamburger, too’,” *The Vancouver Sun* 10 February 1972. York had a professional background in economics and identified himself as a communist.

³⁵⁶ “Bennett tells third-crossing pickets: ‘Send petition to Ottawa, not us’,” *The Vancouver Sun* 21 February 1972.

premier simply maintained that there would be no provincial involvement despite provincial funding, and insisted that he had no personal opinion on the scheme.³⁵⁷

In March and April 1972, the debates over the crossing peaked in a series of public hearings similar to those held at the height of the Chinatown link controversy four and a half years earlier.³⁵⁸ Hundreds attended sessions in Vancouver and North Vancouver. Anti-expressway protestors dominated the meetings, but some supported the project and only questioned the chosen alignment or the bridge design, arguing the route should be tunneled instead.³⁵⁹

Many critics voiced concerns that the third crossing project was a gateway to the resurrection of the VTS freeway network as well as the defeated Chinatown link, and accused city councillors of not being honest about that connection or their future plans for the city.³⁶⁰ The UBC Alma Mater Society, for example, urged council to abandon freeways in favour of public transit, remarking, “We should certainly not be expected to tolerate piecemeal implementation of a secret plan with consequences we cannot be aware of.”³⁶¹ Opponents like

³⁵⁷ John Mika, “Socreds, NDP hit third crossing,” *The Vancouver Sun* 8 March 1972.

³⁵⁸ The hearings were held on 15 March in Vancouver, 22 March in North Vancouver, and 12 April in Burnaby. The different locations reflected the wide scope of the project.

³⁵⁹ Bill Bachop, “Little feuding marks 5-hour hearing on third crossing,” *The Vancouver Sun* 23 March 1972. Others boycotted the hearings, most notably, Warnett Kennedy, the executive director of Architectural Institute of BC and a consultant on the Crossing reports. Kennedy argued the meetings were “political,” complaining, “The pretense that they were needed by seekers after the technical truth is hilarious nonsense. The crossing may be delayed and it may be modified but it cannot be cancelled.” Warnett Kennedy, “Third crossing rhetoric rejected,” [letter to editor] *The Vancouver Sun* 11 April 1972.

³⁶⁰ For example, Gary Vernon Lauk (Vancouver Resident), Brief, c. March-April 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL. Lauk told council, “The decision to be made is not whether or not we should have a Third Crossing but whether we want a Freeway System in the first place.” The Burnaby Transportation Committee, “an ad hoc committee composed of representatives of various community organizations in Burnaby who are concerned with transportation and the Third Crossing,” also warned the crossing was a “cornerstone” of a freeway system. Burnaby Transportation Committee, Brief, 12 April 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL.

³⁶¹ Alma Mater Society, University of British Columbia, Brief, 10 March 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL.

the Vancouver Chapter of the Architectural Institute of British Columbia also argued the crossing would have an irreversible impact on the beauty and accessibility of the waterfront and renewed calls for a comprehensive development plan for the region.³⁶² The Planning Institute of British Columbia supported this view, arguing the crossing would be a gateway to freeways as well as a temporary solution to a problem which would be more effectively addressed with the development of a large-scale public transit system.³⁶³ The Citizens Council on Civic Development also noted the evolution of the city and public opinion, observing, “The last eight years have seen a complete change in attitude of a great many people to the values of urban living. Environmental quality, pollution control, and humanizing city life have become priorities ahead of the demand of growth for growth’s sake.”³⁶⁴

The cost of the scheme was another target for critics. The Burnaby Tenants Association, for example, proposed the \$194,300,000 cost of the crossing combined with the estimated \$600,000,000 interest on the federal loans could be used to fund an expanded, free transit system.³⁶⁵ UBC Planning Professor Robert Collier and Architect William H. McCreery argued that the central problem throughout the freeway debates was that planners, not politicians, were

³⁶² H.T.D. Tanner, Chairman of the Vancouver Chapter of the Architectural Institute of British Columbia, Brief, 10 March 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL. The United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America issued their support for the Institute, telling Council, “We do not want to be involved in a project which, in our opinion, results in socially useless work. We do not want to a party in any way to something which would have long range adverse affects on this City.” J. Takach, President of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America, Brief, 10 March 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL. Also, Henry Edler, Professor of Architecture, University of British Columbia, Brief, 22 March 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL.

³⁶³ The Planning Institute of British Columbia, Brief, 6 February 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL.

³⁶⁴ Harald Weinreich, President of the Citizens Council on Civic Development, Brief, 9 March 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL.

³⁶⁵ Burnaby Tenants Association, Brief, c. March-April 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL.

making key decisions, and that neither group was effectively communicating with Vancouver area residents. They told council: “Our role as professionals is simply to be advisors and administrators. I do not trust experts to make political decisions -- they are too often wrong. These [decisions] must be made by the people and their elected representatives.”³⁶⁶

Supporters of the crossing adopted a different position, arguing the feature was badly needed to accommodate the ever increasing numbers of commuters traveling from north Vancouver to the city daily. North Vancouver-Capilano MLA David M. Brousson (1969-73) was a long time supporter of the crossing. He told attendees he welcomed the hearings because it would address the largely “emotional and ill-informed opinions” that were fueling “the endless and useless debate on rapid transit versus freeway and so on.”³⁶⁷ Another crossing supporter, resident Norman Erikson, argued opponents including the 21,000 who signed a petition against the route were ill-informed about the plan. Erikson stressed that it was council’s job to represent the majority, noting the “ease and versatility” cars provided could never be rivaled by public transit.³⁶⁸ North Vancouver resident Anne Macdonald, former Arts Council President and member of the Advisory Planning Commission for the District of North Vancouver, framed her support for the crossing in similar terms. She argued: “What has made this third crossing issue so controversial is that people’s emotions have often dominated practical common sense.”³⁶⁹

³⁶⁶ William H. McCreery, Architect, and Robert Collier, UBC Planning Professor, Brief, 12 April 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL. Citing growing support for public transit proposals, McCreery and Collier added, “Those opposing the Swan, Wooster proposal can no longer be categorized as left-wing kooks and technocrats, it’s three-quarters of the voters!”

³⁶⁷ David M. Brousson, North Vancouver-Capilano MLA, Brief, 22 March 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL.

³⁶⁸ Norman Erikson, Brief, c. March-April 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL.

³⁶⁹ Anne Macdonald, Brief, c. March-April 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL.

The Downtown Business Association also supported the project, arguing a regional transportation strategy was necessary “if Vancouver is to achieve its destiny as the Executive City of the West and not forfeit [sic] it to Edmonton or Calgary.”³⁷⁰

“The time has come to make a choice between the automobile and transit”

The fate of the crossing played out much in the same way as the Chinatown freeway link. In both cases, shortly after the hearings politicians moved to distance themselves from the contentious plans. When the federal government shelved the crossing project in April 1972, officials indicated the scheme was on hold until the next election and noted funding had not been withdrawn.³⁷¹ Some were skeptical, as Alderman Ed Sweeney insisted federal authorities had really cancelled funding for the crossing but would not admit it.³⁷² The move also prompted an acknowledgment from the Chairman of City Council’s Transportation Committee Alderman Halford Wilson that although he was not personally opposed to the plan he recognized the “considerable public opposition.”³⁷³

In September 1972 Minister of Municipal Affairs James Lorimer (1972-75) announced the cancellation of provincial funding for the crossing as well as the redirection of those funds to rapid transit and bus service improvements for the city. Lorimer said the decision was based on

³⁷⁰ L.H. Thorlaksson, Executive Secretary and Manager of the Downtown Business Association, Brief, 10 March 1972, *Third Crossing Briefs* (Vancouver: 1972). Government Publications, VPL.

³⁷¹ The move did not save Minister of the Environment and Coast-Capilano MP Jack Davis from Greenpeace spokesman Jim Bohlen’s criticism for supporting the crossing during a meeting of the federal environmental committee. Bohlen charged, “How could Davis support a tunnel crossing without an environmental impact study? If it hadn’t been for citizen groups opposing the crossing, it would have gone ahead. We demand the minister of the environment clean up his portfolio at home by opposing economic growth that will harm the environment.” Phil Needham, “Davis under attack at environment session,” *The Vancouver Sun* 6 April 1972.

³⁷² “‘Gov’t has rejected third crossing’,” *The Vancouver Sun* 28 June 1972.

³⁷³ Hall Leiren, “Third crossing shelved by Ottawa,” *The Vancouver Sun* 4 April 1972.

the fear that the tunnel would produce so much downtown traffic it would necessitate freeways.

“The time has come,” he explained, “to make a choice between the automobile and transit.”

Premier Dave Barrett (1972-75) added that the decision was a product of his determination not to see the freeway mistakes of American cities repeated in Vancouver. Local officials and leaders generally welcomed the announcement, which they had expected after federal authorities shelved the plans. North shore mayors were happy to have a definitive policy statement to guide their planning, though North Vancouver Mayor Tom Reid (1969-77) maintained the crossing would still be necessary eventually. Some local politicians urged federal authorities to follow the province’s example by reallocating their former crossing funds to transit. Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD) Transportation Committee Chairman Allan Kelly welcomed the transit funding but was not surprised by the announcement, saying he considered the crossing project long dead. This sentiment was widespread among local officials, and likely originated from federal authorities’ move to shelve the project in April.³⁷⁴ Lorimer rejected the criticism the third crossing was ultimately inevitable, maintaining such a route would only exacerbate traffic problems, and explaining, “You build one bridge and pretty soon you find you need another bridge. Bridges are only a short-term solution . . . transit is the real solution.”³⁷⁵

The following year, GVRD members took their cue from the crossing defeat in declaring their outright opposition to freeways, announcing: “Further construction of freeways and

³⁷⁴ Peter McNelly and Pat Hrushowy, “Transit gets the nod,” *The Province* 6 September 1972. Majorie Nichols, “Barrett cabinet drops third crossing support,” *The Vancouver Sun* c. 28-30 September 1972. “Mass transit plan hailed,” *The Vancouver Sun* 30 September 1972.

³⁷⁵ Marjorie Nichols, “Lorimer rejects suggestion third crossing is inevitable,” *The Vancouver Sun* 4 October 1972.

expressways in any of their forms in the GVRD must be banned at all cost.”³⁷⁶ The group also stressed the importance of transit; it was the group’s boldest stance against freeways to date. The composition of the Transportation and Transmission Policy Committee which issued the statement represented another element of the changing trends in transportation planning. The committee was comprised of citizens who responded to a public call issued with the explicit purpose of incorporating citizen participation in the planning process. Committee Chair Francis P.D. Navin emphasized the importance of the group and the willingness of citizens to get involved in the planning process, noting, “The policies and programs contained in this report indicate that citizens can address their problems in a public forum and produce meaningful policy statements and viable programs to achieve those goals.”³⁷⁷ The group also reissued GVRD officials’ longstanding call for a regional planning authority that would be granted authority and funding from federal, provincial and municipal governments, and have control over all transportation within the GVRD.³⁷⁸ Minister of Municipal Affairs Lorimer praised the committee’s emphasis on transit but stressed that funding was the pivotal, unresolved issue. Provincial funding without provincial control or influence over the proposed planning authority was unlikely, he noted.³⁷⁹

³⁷⁶ Transportation and Transmission Policy Committee, Greater Vancouver Regional District, *Transportation for a Livable Region: Report of the Transportation and Transmission Policy Committee to the Greater Vancouver Regional District* (Vancouver, BC: Greater Vancouver Regional District, October 1973). Government Publications, VPL.

³⁷⁷ Francis P.D. Navin, as quoted in cover letter of Transportation and Transmission Policy Committee, Greater Vancouver Regional District, *Transportation for a Livable Region: Report of the Transportation and Transmission Policy Committee to the Greater Vancouver Regional District* (Vancouver, BC: Greater Vancouver Regional District, October 1973). Government Publications, VPL.

³⁷⁸ G.M. Morris, General Manager of Vancouver Board of Trade, to Premier David Barrett, 4 October 1973 and “Vancouver Board of Trade: Statement of Policy on Regional Transportation,” 1 October 1973; City Councillors’ Office Fonds, Records of Alderman Vankatachala Pendakur, Subject files 1973-1974, 84-C-7, File 59, CVA.

³⁷⁹ “Ban on more freeways urged in district report,” *The Vancouver Sun* 20 November 1973. “Freeway report praised,” *The Vancouver Sun* 21 November 1973.

The turn towards community consultation and public participation in local government and city planning was the legacy, in part, of the expressway protests across Canada. Freeway opponents helped make the transportation and city planning processes more open and accessible to area residents. These activists drew attention to seemingly mundane city planning processes and fostered the notion that everyone was entitled to voice opinions on how to shape the city. This broader shift shaped subsequent approaches to city planning by awakening many officials to the emerging reality that planning was no longer the exclusive purview of the city hall experts and consultants. Anti-expressway protestors' insistence on attending to the social and environmental impact of freeways on the city made the projects increasingly divisive among residents and politically risky for supporters in local government. Importantly, the lack of provincial funding from the outset also gave protestors an advantage before they had even embraced the cause.

Chapter 3: Edmonton, Alberta: “The city exists for the people, not solely for automobiles”

Edmonton’s expressway debates were shaped by the projected route for a road to run through one of the city’s undeveloped river valleys. The route triggered the opposition, and unlike in other cities, the leading opposition group during the debates did not actually oppose expressways altogether, just expressways in parks. Even before Edmonton’s expressway plans were formally released in 1963, parks advocates within the city administration voiced opposition to the schemes. Activists quickly built on this initial sentiment when the plans were released, launching a sustained protest campaign designed to raise public awareness of what was at stake. The opposition to expressways in Edmonton was unique because parks protection advocacy predated anti-expressway ideology but was later absorbed into the burgeoning movement, becoming one tenet of a broader vision for urban reform.

The immediate public opposition that greeted the expressways of the Metropolitan Edmonton Transportation Study (METS) was followed by a long period of indecision on the part of city councillors. While provincial officials were willing to bear the majority of the expressway construction costs, they remained steadfast in their refusal to meet the city’s demand for an even larger contribution. The stalemate over funding made many councillors reluctant to move ahead with the entire network, giving opponents ample time to arouse public interest in and concern over the potential loss of parkland as well as the broader impact of inner city expressways. In this atmosphere, the MacKinnon Freeway -- which earned early approval from city councillors -- became a lightning rod for anti-expressway activists. Facing a provincial administration unwilling to increase their funding offer and under sustained public opposition,

councillors ultimately cancelled the MacKinnon route and subsequently shelved the METS freeways altogether.

Edmonton

The defining geographical feature of Edmonton is the North Saskatchewan River which bisects the city. The waterway and its valleys provide an unusually expansive green space in the heart of the city, creating both challenges and opportunities for transportation planners.

Traditionally known as the “gateway to the north,”³⁸⁰ Edmonton’s historical boom-bust pattern of growth ended during WWII when the city became a key military centre and subsequently established itself as a processing hub for the oil industry.³⁸¹ These developments resulted in growth that saw Edmonton outpacing and quickly overtaking the prairie region’s previously dominant city, Winnipeg. Historians have often attributed Edmonton’s growth and rise in status to boosters who promoted the city’s strengths and worked to attract new residents, businesses and industry.³⁸² Urban planners’ schemes were shaped by boosters’ ambitions, as they sought to design a transportation network fitting of an upwardly mobile regional centre.

At the same time expressways were under consideration, Edmonton underwent large scale redevelopment in the post-World War II era. As a result, very few heritage buildings

³⁸⁰ Some historians have questioned the city’s gateway status, arguing Edmonton is no more a gateway to the north than other northern Canadian cities, and attributing its growth to strong agriculture and petroleum sectors. Paul Voisey, “Unsolved Mysteries of Edmonton’s Growth,” in Bob Hesketh and Frances Swyripa, eds, *Edmonton: The Life of a City* (Edmonton: NeWest Pub., 1995), 316-335.

³⁸¹ James Grierson MacGregor, *Edmonton: A History* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1975); especially chapter 19, “Oil Under Every Stook,” 273-292, chapter 20, “Gas Under Every Grain Field,” 293-308, and chapter 21, “Continuing Prosperity,” 309-323.

³⁸² Alexander Bruce Kilpatrick, “A Lesson in Boosterism: The Contest for the Alberta Provincial Capital,” *Urban History Review* 8, 3 (1980), 47-109. Boosterism was not limited to Alberta’s major cities and was in fact employed by smaller centres to highlight their sense of community and social values in contrast to urban centres: Donald G. Wetherwell, “Making New Identities: Alberta Small Towns Confront the City, 1900-1950,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 39, 1 (Winter 2005), 175-197.

remained, with the exception of the Old Strathcona neighbourhood. The revitalization of that area, initiated in the 1970s, has been animated by tensions between the dual priorities of preservation and commercialism.³⁸³

Edmonton has long been considered an anomalous liberal city in an overwhelmingly conservative province. Historian Gilbert Stelter has portrayed Edmonton as a city where the principle concerns are enterprise, quality of life, diversity and respect for differences, while its southern neighbour Calgary is characterized by its “strong American connection” and “conservative, free-enterprise ideology.”³⁸⁴ During the expressway debates, the city was governed by an elected council of twelve and a mayor, as well as a commission board with administrative functions. In 1950 the city distinguished itself by creating the first regional planning commission in the country, but there remained no regional government. At the same time, postwar annexations of neighbouring suburbs fostered tensions between urban and suburban communities.³⁸⁵ This growth was reflected in the city’s rapidly growing population, from 93,817 in 1941, to 159,631 in 1951, to 281,027 in 1961 and 436,264 in 1971. Metropolitan Edmonton’s rate of growth matched the city, from 176,782 in 1951, to 337,568 in 1961, to 495,915 in 1971.³⁸⁶

³⁸³ Karen L. Wall, “Old Strathcona: Building Character and Commerce in a Preservation District,” *Urban History Review* 30, 2 (March 2002), 28-40.

³⁸⁴ Gilbert A. Stelter, “What Kind of City is Edmonton?” in Bob Hesketh and Frances Swyripa, eds, *Edmonton: The Life of a City* (Edmonton: NeWest Pub., 1995), 1-11.

³⁸⁵ Scholars have argued electoral coalitions in this period had little impact on council’s voting patterns post-election: Jack K. Masson, “Decision-Making Patterns and Floating Coalitions in an Urban City Council,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 8, 1 (March 1975), 128-137. Other work has examined mayoral campaigns in subsequent years: James Lightbody, “The First Hurrah: Edmonton Elects A Mayor, 1983,” *Urban History Review* 13, 1 (June 1984), 35-41 and James Lightbody, “City Campaigns on the Cusp and the Edmonton Mayoralty Election of 1992,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32, 1 (Spring 1997), 112-135.

³⁸⁶ Grierson MacGregor, *Edmonton*, “Appendix IV: Population,” 327. Metropolitan Edmonton population figure for 1941 is not available. The Metropolitan Edmonton figures account for the city including South Edmonton and Strathcona, as well as Beverly and Jasper Place.

“A viable urban area”

The transportation network proposed in the Metropolitan Edmonton Transportation Study was consistent with the schemes put forth by planners charged with solving the same kind of transportation problems seen in other cities across the country. Designed to alleviate congestion in the city's core, the centerpiece of Edmonton's new transportation infrastructure was an expressway network consisting of two rings around the city joined by several connectors. The majority of the expressways were routed through the city's river valleys wherever possible, a placement that soon became a major point of contention. Running expressways through parkland was favoured by planners as a cost effective alternative to clearing paths through established residential, commercial and industrial areas. Parkland was already publicly owned, which freed officials from pursuing expensive and often contentious expropriations. In addition, because the targeted land was widely regarded as undeveloped, plans typically encountered less public opposition than those that threatened established areas. Even the use of developed parkland that boasted community amenities was often less controversial than the loss of residential, commercial or industrial properties. Where public transit was concerned, METS included only modest improvements to existing provisions, as plans for a light rail transit system in the city were addressed separately.

Prior to the release of the Metropolitan Edmonton Transportation Study, consultants seemed to be signaling their interest in a balanced transportation network for the city by stressing the importance of transit to city councillors. “Inordinate reliance upon the automobile is giving way to an enlightened appreciation of the necessity for balanced transportation plans

incorporating the best features of all modes,” they told council.³⁸⁷ Rapid transit, they argued, should be regarded as a necessity for every city, as important as essential services like police, fire and water systems. Noting European countries had already prioritized mass transit systems, the planners also pointed to American centres as well as Toronto and Montréal as leaders in this regard. Planning in advance for such a system would minimize the disruption and costs involved in building through “densely developed” areas. The rapid transit system proposed for Edmonton would follow the METS road plan loosely, with six lines radiating from the city centre.³⁸⁸ The METS proposal’s emphasis on transit separated it from similar plans for other cities. While many plans acknowledged the importance of public transit, few included any detailed plans for improving existing systems, and none recommended a transit system like Edmonton’s light rail that would require it’s own dedicated infrastructure.

In December 1963 the Metropolitan Edmonton Transportation Study was released, calling for a \$133,500,000 network of expressways, freeways, arterial roads, overpasses and bridges.³⁸⁹ The highway network was designed to divert unnecessary traffic from the city centre, alleviating congestion caused by crosstown and through trips.³⁹⁰ The basic form of the network

³⁸⁷ Canadian Bechtel Limited, *Rapid Transit for the City of Edmonton* (June 1963). City of Edmonton Archives (CEA), Reports.

³⁸⁸ “Rapid Transit System Route Plan,” in Canadian Bechtel Limited, *Rapid Transit for the City of Edmonton* (June 1963), 3. CEA, Reports. The six lines were: Southwest, Southeast, Northeast, North Central, Northwest and Jasper Place.

³⁸⁹ Ben Tierney, “Traffic plan would cost 133 million,” *Edmonton Journal* 10 February 1964. Reg MacDonald, “Urban renewal problems confronting Canadian cities,” *Edmonton Journal* 19 July 1963. Simultaneously to the release of METS, the Traffic Research Corporation Limited released an analysis of traffic travel and projections for Edmonton. Traffic Research Corporation Limited, *Growth Development and Transportation Choices: Edmonton Metropolitan Area* (29 July 1963). CEA, Reports.

³⁹⁰ Edmonton District Planning Commission and Member Communities in Co-operation with the Government of the Province of Alberta, *Metropolitan Edmonton Transportation Study: Volume 2: Plan and Program* (December 1963), 38. CEA, Reports. The Study was commissioned by the province and the city as well as neighbouring suburban communities, all “under the leadership of the Edmonton District Planning Commission.”

was two rings encircling the city, one within the city limits and one further out, joined by four connectors, comprised of the North-East Freeway, the North-West Freeway, the South Freeway, the Mill Creek Freeway and what would become the most controversial route, the MacKinnon Ravine Freeway.³⁹¹ The METS plans paid little attention to public transit. A chapter on “mass passenger transportation” stressed the importance of quick travel as the primary determinant of whether citizens opted for public or private transportation. Ultimately consultants called for an expanded bus system with some dedicated lanes and park and ride facilities in suburban areas.³⁹²

Planners used statistics on land use, population, employment, and work and leisure travel patterns to inform their design of the extensive transportation infrastructure and attendant land use proposals. The planners argued that neither the existing public nor private transportation infrastructure could carry projected traffic volumes. They urged politicians to be proactive, particularly where land acquisition for potential future projects was concerned. Although the financial burden would be substantial, they added that the costs were essential to ensuring that Edmonton preserved its status as “a viable urban area and also achieve its growth potential.”³⁹³ To fund the massive network, city officials looked to the province for increased funding and contemplated seeking new municipal powers to tax motor vehicles to help bridge the anticipated shortfall. At the time, the province typically covered half of the costs for highways handling by-

³⁹¹ Ibid, 13-25.

³⁹² Ibid, 27-33, 38.

³⁹³ Ibid, 5. Includes detailed description with function, right-of-way width, moving lanes, daily volumes, access conditions, traffic and planning features for freeways, expressways, major arterial and collector roads (9-11). See also: Edmonton District Planning Commission and Member Communities in Co-operation with the Government of the Province of Alberta, *Metropolitan Edmonton Transportation Study: Volume 1: Requirements* (June 1963). CEA, Reports.

pass traffic as well as major bridges carrying highway traffic, contingent on a five year construction program commitment.³⁹⁴

“To judge the prime requisite for the city’s future, council must know specifically what the choice is”

As in other cities, the initial response to the expressway plans for Edmonton was mixed. Not surprisingly, parks department staff insisted on the protection of parks and did not favour the METS plans to run expressways through the city’s river valleys. Others argued the METS plans placed too much emphasis on expressways instead of developing public transit schemes, but expressway advocates maintained Edmonton was not large enough to support a rapid transit system. Some local officials also noted the city’s modest resources meant the ambitious plans would require considerable funding from provincial or federal administrations. The response from city planners demonstrated remarkable foresight, as they warned city councillors they must make a firm decision as to whether parks or roads were the priority, and then let that position shape future development decisions.

Even before expressways were formally proposed for Edmonton the schemes met with resistance from official ranks. Some city planners argued the plans did not go far enough and urged city council to take a clear stand on the priorities that should guide the city’s development. Assistant Chief Planner S.C. Rodgers, for example, branded the plans “inadequate,” noting the

³⁹⁴ Edmonton District Planning Commission and Member Communities in Co-operation with the Government of the Province of Alberta, *Metropolitan Edmonton Transportation Study: Volume 2: Plan and Program* (December 1963), 44-45. CEA, Reports. City Commissioner G.C. Hamilton also raised concerns about the cost of the scheme early, voicing his fears that the city’s transportation plans would increase the asking price of properties slated for expropriation. Hamilton cautioned his colleagues that METS costs would increase and stressed the importance of securing provincial and federal funding. “Land for city roads said future problem,” *Edmonton Journal* 9 July 1963. The question of a road tax to fund METS construction was an early indicator of the importance of the cost of METS particularly in relation to the city’s limited funding.

expressways were only designed to accommodate traffic projections until 1980. Rodgers was also concerned by the lack of specific plans for new and modified routes as well as transit, and the impact of the changes on existing roads. Expressways were necessary for the city, the planner maintained, but the east-west routes would destroy the river valley park system, so city politicians had to be clear about their priorities before any further plans were made. “In essence,” Rodgers explained, “the River Valley is subject to major conflicts of land use; roads may be claimed to be a functional necessary use for the River Valley with parks as an emotional and undefinable need. To judge the prime requisite for the city’s future, council must know specifically what the choice is.”³⁹⁵

A different kind of opposition emerged from the city’s parks department. Instead of urging officials to form more complete plans with a clear commitment to expressways in the river valley, Parks Superintendent Jack Wright argued parkland in the city must be protected. He urged officials to compromise on expressway routes to prevent the loss of parks and argued that the public must be made well aware of the threats expressways posed to parkland before any final decisions were made. Instead of bisecting parkland with expressways, Wright proposed the roads be routed along the borders of parkland with ramps extending into recreational areas to increase access.³⁹⁶

Reactions to the METS scheme continued to be mixed. Regional Planning Commission Director Frank Marlyn defended the plan’s emphasis on expressways over transit, arguing suitable traffic solutions depended on city size and Edmonton was only a medium sized city.

³⁹⁵ S.C. Rodgers to Commissioner G.C. Hamilton, “Re: Comments on the METS 1980 Proposed Major Street System,” 7 May 1963, RG 17, Class 8, File 11 A: Roadway Planning (METS), CEA.

³⁹⁶ “Civic departmental tussle looms over parkland use,” *Edmonton Journal* 17 September 1963.

Freeways and buses together were appropriate for Edmonton in 1964, he asserted. Rapid transit, on the other hand, would not be viable until the city's population grew to 1,000,000 residents. In either case, he maintained that transit did not negate the need for expressways; both expressways and transit were necessary.³⁹⁷ Some were not satisfied with this explanation. Parks and Recreation Superintendant Jack Wright continued to criticize METS, insisting public transit must be prioritized, and pointing out that the study ignored rapid transit.³⁹⁸ Despite Wright's reservations, city commissioners approved METS in concept although city council had yet to examine the plan in detail.³⁹⁹ With their approval, the commissioners were careful to note that the city could not afford the extensive scheme, and urged their colleagues to pursue a new financing arrangement with provincial and federal administrations for road work.⁴⁰⁰

“The city exists for the people, not solely for automobiles”

As with the other elements of the Edmonton story, the public opposition to expressways in the city was shaped primarily by their parkland routes. The first opposition group active in the debates was the Save Our Parks Citizens' Committee (SOPCC), formed in the mid 1960s. As the name suggested, this group was concerned primarily with protecting parkland in the city. Accordingly, members were really only interested in the METS expressways because they threatened the city's ravines. The committee's mandate shaped their activism, and lent them the distinction among activist groups nationally of functioning as an anti-expressway group although

³⁹⁷ “METS solutions said temporary,” *Edmonton Journal* 21 May 1964.

³⁹⁸ “Parkland for freeway?” *Edmonton Journal* 27 May 1964.

³⁹⁹ “Council to consider METS,” *Edmonton Journal* 31 March 1965.

⁴⁰⁰ “METS budget \$30 million short,” *Edmonton Journal* 19 December 1964.

they did not actually oppose expressways. While some groups in other cities opposed expressways in a limited way, usually taking issue with the route whether it threatened residential areas, waterfront vistas or valuable industrial tracts, all ultimately rejected expressways on principle anywhere in their cities. In Edmonton, SOPCC was the most active and ardent anti-expressway group during the bulk of the debates, but it never opposed expressways outright. Repositioning expressways so they did not encroach on parks was not a second choice or compromise position for the group; it was their preference. SOPCC members regarded expressways as an essential component of modern transportation infrastructure and were careful to note that they never desired to stand in the way of progress, and furthermore that they regarded expressways as progressive. There is little indication that SOPCC members would have ever become involved in the METS debates if not for the ravine routing. In fact, while their mandate was to preserve and protect parks broadly, the group was founded in direct response to the METS threat.⁴⁰¹ When faced with a choice between parks and roads, the group advocated wholeheartedly for the protection of parks over the convenient routing of expressways, demonstrating the presence of some progressive ideology. The METS scheme was built on planners' fundamental assumption that roads were more important than parks and SOPCC's response, although different in scope and inspiration from other activist groups, firmly disabused them of that notion.

Setting the differences aside, anti-expressway activism in Edmonton organized, argued and lobbied much like organizations in other cities. SOPCC allied with like-minded officials in the Department of Parks and Recreation to publicize their position and pressure others within the

⁴⁰¹ "Save the parks committee supported by civic board," *Edmonton Journal* 16 February 1965.

city administration to support their cause. Group members employed common protest tactics targeting contentious components of the METS scheme, including picketing a construction site and organizing a city-wide petition to force a plebiscite. Other anti-expressway voices emerged as the debates progressed, most of whom adopted the more typical stance of opposing expressways. Others conceded expressways were needed but challenged the necessity of the extensive networks proposed and stressed the importance of developing better public transit systems. Among the growing chorus of anti-expressway voices, professors and students from the University of Alberta were the loudest.

Organized opposition to the METS scheme emerged early in Edmonton. While expressways in other cities threatened some parkland, the plans in Edmonton were distinguished by the great swathes of river valley land used to run the roads into the city. Parkland was favoured for expressway development because it was often already publicly owned and saved officials from having to pursue the expensive expropriation of developed residential, commercial and industrial areas. SOPCC urged the city to protect Edmonton's parkland, and threatened to petition for public trusteeship or parks commission guardianship if officials did not act. Leading members of the group including J.W. Nicholson, F.T. Basset, Dorothy Barnhouse, and prominent local artist G.F. Chapelle brought their objections to the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board in February 1965. The board welcomed the group's budding activism, though the sentiment was not unanimous. While most board members pledged their support for SOPCC and promised "any assistance" required in their opposition efforts, board member and Alderman J.F. Falconer objected to the group's efforts. Falconer argued METS planners should be given credit for the scheme, adding that industry, not roads, was to blame for eroding parks. Routing the expressway

through the ravine would actually increase public access to the area, not destroy it, he contended, concluding plainly: “I don’t think we should block progress.”⁴⁰²

At the same time, chief roadways engineer W.E. Gillespie pushed back against growing opposition, reminding the Edmonton branch of the Community Planning Association of Canada that people created the demand for roads while insisting that progress required parkland for freeways. Gillespie asked attendees to demonstrate by a show of hands how many had travelled to the meeting by automobile, and when most raised their hand, he told the group, “Well I’m not responsible for invading park land, you are.” The only alternative to sacrificing parks, he cautioned, was the expropriation of costly developed land to accommodate the roads. Alderman Frank Edwards agreed with Gillespie, saying a decision between parks and roads would eventually be necessary, and insisting, “The city exists for the man and not the man for the city.”⁴⁰³

SOPCC was not deterred by officials’ contention that expressways were progressive, insisting instead that “parks are progress.”⁴⁰⁴ The group was encouraged by support from 1,400 citizens who signed a petition the previous year opposing the Mill Creek Ravine Road, west end and Highlands routes.⁴⁰⁵ SOPCC President Paul T. Bassett explained the group’s opposition to expressways by outlining their vision of a future where city residents in 1980 would have more leisure time due to thirty to thirty-five hour work weeks, but would be left with the dual burden of still paying for the expressways constructed a generation earlier, and no park facilities in

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ “Battle of parks against roads waged at planning meeting,” *Edmonton Journal* 24 February 1965.

⁴⁰⁴ “Group plans action,” *Edmonton Journal* 29 March 1965.

⁴⁰⁵ SOPCC President Bassett said the Mill Creek Ravine could be cleared for parkland with \$20,000 from the city. “Mill Creek clearing pressed,” *Edmonton Journal* 22 June 1965.



Image 1 (left): "Women launch picket war . . . they resent freeway intrusion," from article, "Keep out of ravine or else -- women warn," Edmonton Journal, 12 October 1965. Courtesy of the Edmonton Journal.

Image 2 (right): "Machines were pulled back," from article, "They halt work," Edmonton Journal, 18 October 1965. Courtesy of the Edmonton Journal.

which to enjoy their increased leisure time. Bassett argued engineers had assessed the financial cost, but not the human toll of the network, adding that if the city would not take up its responsibility to inform citizens of the METS cost, then the city's largest newspaper the *Edmonton Journal* must. Bassett also noted freeways in other North American cities such as New York City, Los Angeles, and San Francisco had all proven ineffective at remedying what ailed the urban centres.⁴⁰⁶ He also cautioned that plans could be finalized without public

⁴⁰⁶ Paul Bassett, "Citizens' Save Our Parks Committee: What does it stand for?" *Edmonton Journal* 8 April 1965; Bassett later claimed council had violated the public trust by okaying the commercial development of public lands for apartment buildings: "Letter termed unfair," *Edmonton Journal* 10 August 1965.

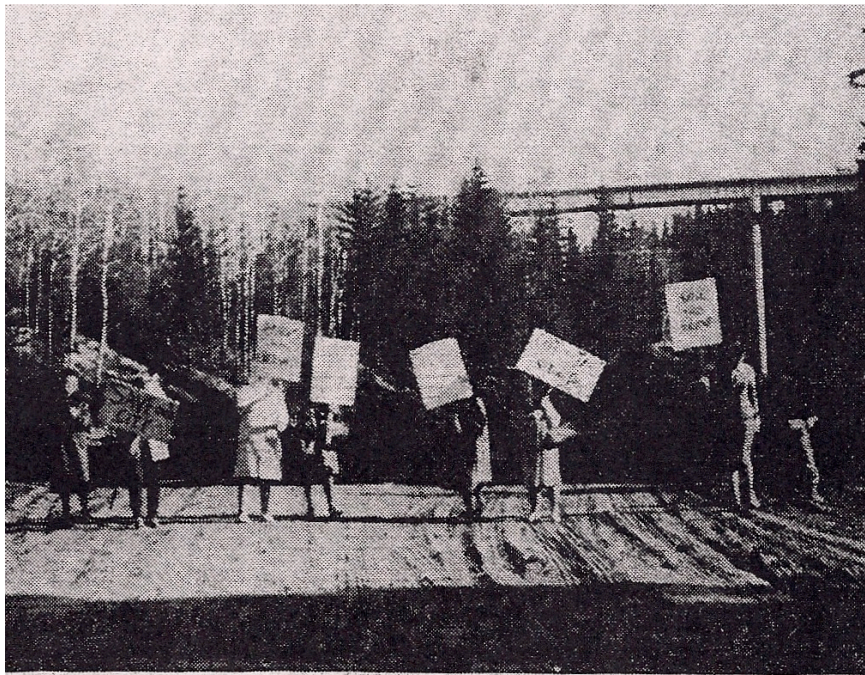


Image 3: "Women picket freeway site in MacKinnon Ravine," from article, "They halt work," Edmonton Journal, 18 October 1965. Courtesy of the Edmonton Journal.

knowledge, warning residents, "It is the price we pay for apathy; for bringing to the battle 'too little and too late'."⁴⁰⁷

SOPCC continued to enjoy support from Parks and Recreation Superintendant Jack Wright during this period. The group rallied against council's endorsement of METS despite the lack of public consultation and almost complete lack of representation for parks' interests on the original METS committee. They noted that Wright was the only one of fourteen METS committee members who represented parks' interests and argued that council had "railroad[ed]" the plan through without consulting constituents or exploring alternatives.⁴⁰⁸ Meanwhile Wright maintained his vocal support for SOPCC, reiterating group President Paul T. Bassett's earlier

⁴⁰⁷ *Edmonton Journal* 16 March 1965. Bassett urged Edmonton area residents to consider other priorities in shaping the city's development, asking rhetorically, "Can it be that in this modern age that time and speed are our only criterion of life?" *Edmonton Journal* 8 April 1965.

⁴⁰⁸ "Parks group to appeal METS decision," *Edmonton Journal* 14 April 1965. *Edmonton Journal* 22 April 1965.



Image 4: Untitled photo, Edmonton Journal, 26 October 1965. Courtesy of the Edmonton Journal.

contention that the public was not fully aware of the negative impact of the METS plan, and accusing council of approving a plan that awarded cars an “inflated social and psychological value” unrelated to their utility. Wright echoed scores of anti-expressway activists with the refrain, “The city exists for the people, not solely for automobiles,” directly challenging Alderman Edwards’ earlier assertion.⁴⁰⁹

While SOPCC members found an ally in Jack Wright, they made little headway in their efforts to persuade city councillors of the ills of the MacKinnon and Mill Creek ravine routes. As a result, they escalated their opposition in May 1965 by hiring lawyers to appeal city council’s endorsement of METS, arguing the river valley land threatened by the scheme was

⁴⁰⁹ “Apathy supreme on park land, Wright charges,” *Edmonton Journal* 22 April 1965.

bequeathed to the city expressly for public parks, and also took their campaign for parks protection to the provincial legislature.⁴¹⁰

Soon after, city officials adopted a more tempered stance towards METS, but whether the change was the product of external pressure or internal misgivings was unclear. The city's general plan, released in July 1965, called for the "indefinite postponement" of rapid transit discussions and instead recommended express buses and greater service to the University of Alberta. The plan also included council's endorsement of the METS network but questioned the expressway components, particularly the Mill Creek Ravine and Fort Road routes.⁴¹¹

As city officials seemed to be reevaluating their approval of the METS expressways, opponents explored new ways to communicate their objections. SOPCC member Margaret Chappelle took the lead in this regard. As a local artist married to a prominent city doctor, Chappelle was well known in Edmonton. Her activism during the METS controversy earned her a feature profile in the city's newspaper, in which she reiterated that it was not her intention to block progress but defended her efforts arguing that city council regarded anyone with an opinion as a "pressure group." Her profiler Ruth Bowen concluded that Chappelle had successfully "rile[d] the burghers of Edmonton" into reevaluating their expressway plans.⁴¹²

Chappelle's central role in organizing ongoing protests at the proposed site of the MacKinnon Freeway helped make her a leader among expressway opponents. In fall 1965, local residents repeatedly picketed the 142nd Street Bridge which crossed the MacKinnon Ravine

⁴¹⁰ "Lawyers study pro-parks case," *Edmonton Journal* 3 May 1965; including Government House property, meeting place of provincial cabinet, former home of Lieutenant Governor, future site of provincial royal museum. "Save Our Parks plea going to legislature," *Edmonton Journal* 5 May 1965. "Parks group may take new action," *Edmonton Journal* 12 May 1965.

⁴¹¹ Mike Lavoie, "City planners question transit, freeway plan," *Edmonton Journal* 9 July 1965.

⁴¹² Ruth Bowen, *Edmonton Journal* 15 February 1966.

where work had begun on clearing a path for the freeway. Chappelle was part of a group reporters deemed a “band of housewives” who lamented the loss of parkland for future generations. She told reporters their demonstration was “a neighbourhood protest,” emphasizing, “This is an established neighbourhood.” To underscore their point, the women carried signs with slogans like “Treeways -- Not Freeways,” “Our Children Need Parks, Down With METS,” “Save Our City,” “Roads in the valley, kids in the alley” and even brought a poodle wearing a placard declaring “I love trees.”⁴¹³ A rotation of forty to fifty women picketed almost daily throughout October. The group also planned daily pickets in other areas threatened by METS expressways but said the scheme was a “pretty hopeless set-up to fight.”⁴¹⁴

Eventually the women forced a brief halt to construction when a foreman called his workers back to avoid a confrontation. Chappelle accused the city of “poor and immature administration,”⁴¹⁵ and said her group had contacted activists in many other North American cities, all of whom advised them “to hold firm.” “Our ravines are a precious heritage,” Chappelle argued, “which should be passed on to future generations and not be fed to hungry bulldozers.” Another protestor, Maria Jablonski, said the ravine route demonstrated a “colonial spirit” of exploitation without regard for the consequences of the destruction. “Edmonton,” Jablonski explained, “is like the barbarian nouveau riche. It grew too fast and didn’t have time to develop an awareness and appreciation for other human values!”⁴¹⁶ The end of the group’s

⁴¹³ “Keep out of ravine or else -- women warn,” *Edmonton Journal* 12 October 1965; Assistant City Engineer George Hodge maintained the department had received no complaints, and said protestors who disrupted work in the ravine would be met with police. “Women protest parkland loss at city hall,” *Edmonton Journal* 26 October 1965.

⁴¹⁴ “Pickets patrol planned for tree-saving drive,” *Edmonton Journal* 13 October 1965. The peculiarities of the opposition in Edmonton was further revealed as Chappelle agreed in the midst of the protests that a scenic drive would be acceptable, but a freeway was not. “Women continue protests,” *Edmonton Journal* 14 October 1965.

⁴¹⁵ *Edmonton Journal* 26 October 1965.

⁴¹⁶ “They halt work,” *Edmonton Journal* 18 October 1965.

month-long protests was marked by the hanging of effigies of City Commissioners G.C.

Hamilton and Dudley Menzies from a bridge overlooking the MacKinnon route, but Chappelle's group denied any involvement in the display.⁴¹⁷

The anti-expressway sentiment met with mixed reaction. The controversy motivated many local residents to become more engaged in their communities, with at least one homeowners association being formed specifically to oppose the MacKinnon route.⁴¹⁸ Others also agreed with the protestors, like *Edmonton Journal* writer Ian C. MacDonald, who urged his city not to sacrifice ravines for expressways, arguing Toronto had lost 800 acres of parkland to construction and expressways, and that it cost \$200,000 an acre to buy back.⁴¹⁹ Others opposed expressways but felt there was little that could be done to defeat the routes given the popularity of automobiles. During an October community panel discussion on the METS scheme, University of Alberta Civil Engineering Professor J.J. Bakker encouraged citizens to push for the development of parkland into recreational facilities to make the land unavailable for transportation arteries. As it was, Bakker concluded, the ravines were needed for freeways since Edmontonians were "wedded to their cars."⁴²⁰

SOPCC activists continued their efforts in late 1965. Possibly looking for a smaller victory to boost the movement's momentum, the group initiated a petition calling for a plebiscite on the 72nd Street bridge, a multi-million dollar link in the METS expressway network. The plebiscite committee consisted of SOPCC, the Alberta Voters Organization, the Local Council of

⁴¹⁷ "'Jeff' and 'Dud' hanged," *Edmonton Journal* 30 October 1965.

⁴¹⁸ *Edmonton Journal* 20 October 1965.

⁴¹⁹ Ian C. MacDonald, "Define policy on parkland," *Edmonton Journal* 21 October 1965.

⁴²⁰ "City residents not fighting, blamed for parkland losses," *Edmonton Journal* 27 October 1965.

Women, the Civic Rights Association, the East End Ratepayers, the United Voters Association and the West End Ratepayers.⁴²¹ The coalition opposed the project because of the destructive impact it would have on the Capilano Ravine.⁴²² The cost of the project also fuelled tensions, as city officials estimated the total would be \$9,850,000 while the plebiscite committee insisted the actual cost would be closer to \$21,000,000.⁴²³

The increasingly contentious nature of the relationship between activists and city officials was exemplified by the plebiscite committee's threat to file an injunction if city council challenged the legality of the petition, long before it was even presented to council. The petition which required 7,500 signatures to trigger a plebiscite had amassed 9,600 supporters in a little over three months.⁴²⁴ City officials were unmoved by protestors' efforts, maintaining opposition to METS did nothing to change the overwhelming popularity of the automobile and the consequent need for autocentric transportation infrastructure. As chief roadways engineer W.E. Gillespie reasoned, the popularity of the automobile and residents' unwillingness to abandon it made expressways and their "unpleasant side effects" of displacing families and destroying parkland unavoidable.⁴²⁵

⁴²¹ "Support mounting for bridge vote," *Edmonton Journal* 11 February 1966.

⁴²² "Petitioners seek vote on bridge," *Edmonton Journal* 2 December 1965. "East bridge site vote to be sought," *Edmonton Journal* 9 December 1965. Margaret Chappelle reported strong early support for the petition noting that six (unnamed) city organizations were also on board, despite the city's "effort to crush all opposition" by pushing bylaws through. *Edmonton Journal* 1 February 1966. "Petitioners rally for bridge vote," *Edmonton Journal* 7 January 1966. Chappelle said SOPCC was not against bridges but favoured other projects first.

⁴²³ "City, groups differ on cost of bridge," *Edmonton Journal* 26 January 1966.

⁴²⁴ "Home owners may seek injunction on bridge vote," *Edmonton Journal* 11 February 1966. "Artist with a cause," *Edmonton Journal* 15 February 1966. SOPCC later presented their petition to force a plebiscite on the 72nd Street Bridge in February 1968, which was held but resulted in overwhelming support for the necessary funding. "Plebiscite on bridge likely," *Edmonton Journal* 5 February 1968.

⁴²⁵ "Freeways needed in city despite unpleasant aspects," *Edmonton Journal* 7 January 1966.

“An auto-oriented city”

Subsequent government debates over METS were punctuated by many of the early concerns officials' first raised after the plan's release. Funding was the primary concern, as always. Local officials appealed to their provincial counterparts for greater support. Local officials stressed the need for freeways in Edmonton and the seriousness of the transportation problems plaguing the city, but provincial authorities were unmoved. Despite the lack of increased funding, councillors approved the MacKinnon Freeway. As local officials continued to stress the need for increased funding from senior levels of government, some began to raise questions about the utility and necessity of the METS network. Immediately after the release of the METS, planners had stressed the need for city aldermen to adopt a clear stand on whether roads or parks would be the priority in planning and development decisions. Such a decision, they argued, would establish some clear guidelines for debates over any METS related issue. Council did not heed the warning and the resultant lack of clarity encouraged debate. The perpetual indecision persisted for years after expressways for the city were first introduced.

As activists took a stand on the 72nd Street Bridge as one of the first major components of METS to be implemented, new higher estimates for the total freeway network tested relations between city and provincial authorities. In December 1965, the network that was estimated to cost \$135,000,000 only a few years earlier was now slated at \$200,000,000. City officials acknowledged the cost of the roads far exceeded the city's resources and appealed to the province for assistance. Mayor V.M. Dantzer (1965-68; 1980-88) promised the city would



Image 5: "Study Area: City of Edmonton, Jasper [MacKinnon] Freeway," Stanley Associates Engineering Ltd. in association with De Leuw, Cather & Company of Canada Limited, Functional Planning: Jasper Freeway, Edmonton, Alberta (22 June 1966). Courtesy of the City of Edmonton Archives.

finance secondary roads but asked the province to cover the cost of the freeways, including expropriation costs.⁴²⁶

In their application to the provincial government, the mayor and city commissioners detailed the transportation challenges facing Edmonton including the substantial cost of acquiring right-of-way for the extensive METS network, estimating the total cost at \$150,000,000 with \$90,000,000 for construction and \$60,000,000 for right-of-way acquisition. Roads and bridges required to support the freeway system would cost the city an additional \$80,000,000 to \$90,000,000. City officials' appeal for provincial funding was based on their conviction that METS addressed problems created by inadequate provincial highways, mainly a lack of bypass routes around the city. They argued that the METS routes "must be identified for what they truly are: an urban extension and completion of the provincial highway system," and accordingly, should be the province's responsibility.⁴²⁷

City officials detailed the depths of the problem at length, explaining to provincial authorities that the historical development of the city was guided primarily by the street railway system, which resulted in major roads and bridges all leading to a central downtown site. The result in the modern day, they continued, was that all traffic traversing the city was led downtown and no routes for bypassing the area existed. The persistence of these historic traffic patterns combined with a lack of alternative routes resulted in insurmountable urban gridlock. As city authorities explained:

⁴²⁶ "Freeway costs soar," *Edmonton Journal* 17 December 1965. *Edmonton Journal* 21 December 1965.

⁴²⁷ V.M. Dantzer, Mayor of the City of Edmonton and Commissioners of Edmonton, "A Submission to the Executive Council and the Legislature of the Government of Alberta," 22 December 1965, 11, RG 17, Class 8, File 13: River Valley and MacKinnon Ravine Roadway Study, CEA.

The peak hours are generally identical both for downtown and for cross-city travel, with the result that today, at rush hour, well over half the traffic clogging the central streets and impeding the heavily-laden mainline bus routes is traffic which has no wish to be downtown but which must add to the downtown congestion because there is no acceptable alternative route. Downtown streets have now become dangerously overloaded at peak hours so that the construction of new high-capacity roadways bypassing the central area is an urgent matter.⁴²⁸

“This condition,” they concluded, “clearly points up [sic] the required solution: build a bypass ring around downtown: connect high speed roadways to radiate outward from this ring, to link eventually with the provincial highway system at the edges of the city. This is the essence of the METS recommendations.”⁴²⁹ Minister of Highways Gordon E. Taylor (1951-71) rejected the city’s request arguing that city officials adopted the scheme that benefited their area and maintaining that they were responsible for a portion of construction costs as well as right-of-way acquisition. Taylor also pointed to new legislation that would have the province cover seventy-five percent of freeway construction costs, an arrangement he deemed “very fair.”⁴³⁰

Despite provincial officials’ refusal to fully fund the METS network, in June 1966 Edmonton’s city council moved ahead with the first major component of the scheme, authorizing construction of the MacKinnon Freeway. At the time crews had already cleared the ravine and were preparing the road bed. Some councillors thought the approval would deter freeway opponents. One unnamed alderman remarked to the *Edmonton Journal*, “once you lose, you go

⁴²⁸ Ibid, 4-5.

⁴²⁹ Ibid, Introduction. The submission stressed the severity of the traffic problem in Edmonton, where cars and trucks in the city had risen from 29,200 in 1950 to 136,087 in 1965.

⁴³⁰ Gordon E. Taylor, Minister of Highways, to V.M. Dantzer, Mayor of City of Edmonton, Letter, 20 January 1966, RG 17, Class 8, File 13: River Valley and MacKinnon Ravine Roadway Study, CEA.

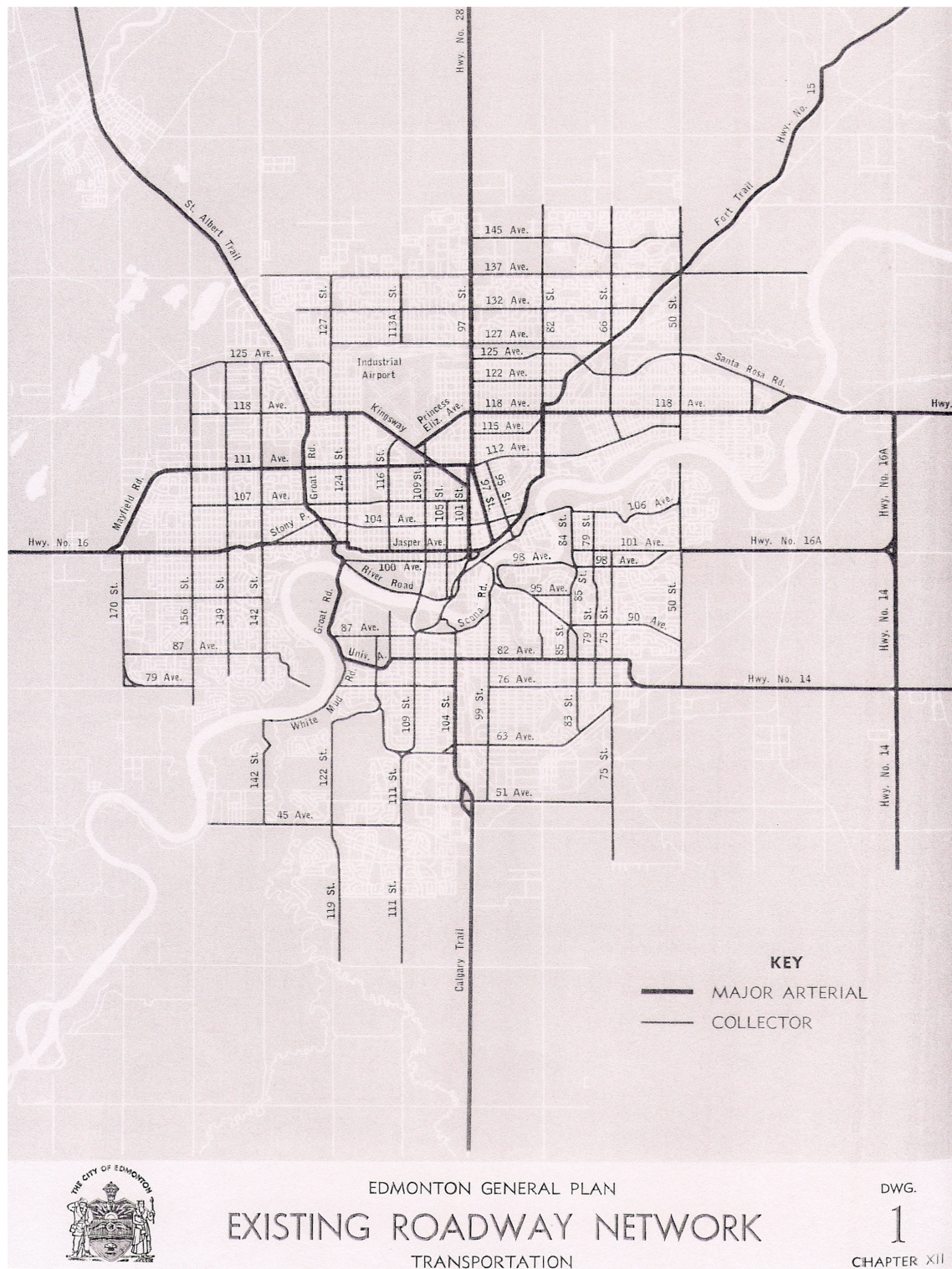


Image 6: "Edmonton General Plan: Existing Roadway Network," page 122, General Plan. 1967. Planning Department, City of Edmonton, Alberta. Courtesy of the City of Edmonton Archives.

along with the majority.”⁴³¹ Yet council’s authorization of the MacKinnon Freeway did not end public opposition to the METS expressways. Instead, the move fired up opponents while exposing growing discord between and among city councillors and civil servants. Even after city council approved the route, aldermen remained divided. The concerns raised made clear that the reservations about expressways were much wider-ranging than the potential impact on parks. Some questioned whether the freeway could function as a stand-alone artery without the attendant network and advocated an expanded public transit system instead. Alderman Edmund Leger, for example, noted freeways failed to solve traffic problems in other cities. Others like Alderman Frank Edwards supported the network, maintaining freeways were “not passe.”⁴³²

The growing discord among politicians and officials was again evident as the release of the general plan was followed shortly thereafter with a report by City Commissioner Stan Hampton calling for the METS freeway scheme to be downgraded to arterial routes and instead emphasizing rapid transit for the city.⁴³³ Further questions were raised about the city’s commitment to METS when the annual planning department report outlining upcoming projects was released and there were no specific references to METS.⁴³⁴ As officials and planners seemed to be distancing themselves from METS, city engineers held firm, insisting Edmonton was “an auto-oriented city” and suggesting a road tax might help fund the necessary freeways.⁴³⁵

⁴³¹ “Freeway delay unlikely,” *Edmonton Journal* 16 June 1966. Officials were encouraged by consultants like D.E. Leuw, Cather and Company Vice President J.E. Leisch, who presented freeways as a current and internationally recognized solution to urban traffic ills. Leisch noted the METS scheme was consistent with plans his firm had produced for other cities including Ottawa, Salt Lake City, Utah, Auckland, New Zealand, and Perth, Australia. “Continuous push needed on freeways -- specialist,” *Edmonton Journal* 28 March 1966.

⁴³² “Jasper Freeway,” (editorial) *Edmonton Journal* 12 July 1966.

⁴³³ “Report to downgrade city’s freeway plans,” *Edmonton Journal* 14 March 1967.

⁴³⁴ *Edmonton Journal* 12 July 1967.

⁴³⁵ “Bridges, freeways,” *Edmonton Journal* 14 September 1967.



The period between 1968 and 1971 was characterized by a lack of progress on METS schemes and, consequently, a lull in protest activity. The stagnation of the scheme in Edmonton was typical of the experience in other cities across the country in an era when large scale city plans faced often widespread public opposition on one hand, and noncommittal officials preoccupied with funding shortfalls on the other. Officials' actions in these years reflected the lack of consensus on transportation planning issues. Planners recommended a rapid transit system for the city as a complement to, not a replacement for, METS, while city councillors curtailed the scheme's freeways in an attempt to control suburban expansion on the outskirts of the city. In July 1968 plans for an electric rail transit system were released that would use the existing rail lines to run passenger trains through the city at ten minute intervals. Some stations would include parking lots which would be serviced by transit buses. Planners were careful to note the system was not intended as a replacement for the proposed METS roads, nor could it function as such.⁴³⁶ In May 1971 city council marked the Mill Creek ravine off limits for the south east freeway, fearing the road and other METS routes would encourage unregulated growth in the Sherwood Park area.⁴³⁷

“Concerned about the future of the city”

Emerging discord among officials was met with new critiques from a variety of expressway critics. Opponents in Edmonton differed significantly from those in other cities.

⁴³⁶ *Rapid Transit Executive Report No. 1; Initial “Rail Transit” Project for the City of Edmonton* (19 July 1968), 2-7 (excerpts), 15 (quote), 14-15. CEA, Reports. Only the section traversing the University of Alberta campus would require rail lines to be constructed. On roads, planners said, “This ‘Rail-Transit’ project is not a substitute for Edmonton’s Major Roadway Plans and Improvements. It neither provides the capacities, services all the directions, nor handles the several functions required of a modern roadway system [emphasis in original].”

⁴³⁷ “Southeast freeway,” (editorial) *Edmonton Journal* 28 May 1971.

The Save Our Parks Citizens' Committee's parks protection mandate guided their activism, shaping their position as a group that opposed expressways in parks, but not expressways in general. Their position evolved during the debates into a broader critique of expressways. Still, their position differed from most other leading anti-expressway activist groups as they maintained they did not oppose freeways even as they objected to those in the METS scheme. SOPCC president Paul T. Bassett clarified the group's stance, stressing that they were not against freeways or bridges but that they objected to the excessive and continually rising costs associated with METS. At the same time, Bassett said his group -- which had been instrumental in organizing the petition calling for a plebiscite on the 72nd Street Bridge -- did not oppose the bridge or its cost but the cost of expropriation and the impact on the community. According to Bassett, the MacKinnon Freeway would be nothing more than "a fabulous effigy of grandeur" that was antithetical to progress. It was his group's responsibility, he added, to ensure citizens were aware of the threats to their city.⁴³⁸

While SOPCC continued their work, the emergence of the Urban Reform Group of Edmonton (URGE) in December 1973 reinvigorated the opposition.⁴³⁹ As a municipal political reform party that later won several seats on city council, URGE boasted a much broader mandate than SOPCC. They challenged officials to demonstrate the need for expressways and pressured councillors who expressed doubts to come out publicly against the roads. Where SOPCC's anti-expressway advocacy was born out of a desire to protect the city's parkland, URGE's mandate of

⁴³⁸ Paul T. Bassett, "Here's why we're petitioning," *Edmonton Journal* 9 March 1966. City officials responded by disputing the accuracy of Bassett's claims about the widespread loss of homes and businesses, insisting he overestimated the cost of the project and maintaining that only 215 houses and 17 commercial buildings would be expropriated for the bridge's right of way. "Bridge rivals clash on cost estimates," *Edmonton Journal* 16 March 1966.

⁴³⁹ URGE Pamphlet, N.D., Clippings Files: URGE (Urban Reform Group of Edmonton), CEA.

urban reform covered all areas of the city's development. Compared to SOPCC, URGE's position on urban expressways was compatible with other anti-expressway movements across the country. URGE completely rejected inner city freeways for Edmonton. This position was shaped by members whose participation in the expressway debates inspired them to become more involved with other aspects of city planning politics and in turn reinforced their conviction that greater citizen participation was essential to municipal reform. URGE members described themselves as citizens "concerned about the future of [the] city," including a diverse group of "businessmen and housewives, clergymen and students, people of many backgrounds who represent all kinds of interests and concerns."⁴⁴⁰

The group's critique of the MacKinnon Freeway resembled that of other activist groups nationally. Members questioned the severity of traffic problems and criticized officials for not being open to alternative schemes, many of which were presented by concerned citizens. Mass transit was the solution to growing congestion, they argued, not roads that catered to the private automobile. Group members also suspected minority interests were pushing the expressway scheme, telling city councillors, "It is really incredible that a handful of influential individuals, who only have their own interest and convenience at heart, without even one thought given to the community at large, can actually manipulate the chosen representatives of the citizens to undertake a project these citizens don't want but will yet be forced to pay for."⁴⁴¹ URGE members also looked for potential allies in officials ranks, encouraging councillors who expressed reservations about the METS freeways to oppose the routes outright. Longtime

⁴⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁴¹ Elly de Jongh to City Councillors and Commissioners of the City of Edmonton, Open Letter, 23 February 1974, MS 127.2, Box 1, File 3, CEA. De Jongh did not identify the "influential individuals" to which she referred.

expressway opponent and URGE member Professor Gerald H. Wright stressed to Councillor Una McLean Evans (1966-74) the lack of public support for the MacKinnon route, and questioned whether the available information really indicated a need for expressways in Edmonton.⁴⁴²

URGE members' activism continued to focus on expressways in the city even in the wake of the MacKinnon defeat. The group lobbied the city's Regional Planning Commission, for example, chastising officials for "promot[ing] the unquestioned proliferation of expenditures on roadways for the automobile and starv[ing] public transportation by comparison." The reformers maintained that traffic could and should be managed in other ways, including staggering work hours to alleviate rush hour congestion, restricting auto access to the downtown, establishing exclusive bus lanes as well as a network of bike paths accessible all year, and expanding the light rail transit (LRT) system.⁴⁴³ This initial emphasis on transportation challenges was evident throughout the 1970s. During this time members proposed dedicated bus lanes for the downtown core, electric trolleys to reduce pollution, reduced bus service in off peak hours for improved efficiency, and regional commuter transit networks.⁴⁴⁴

URGE members underscored their opposition to freeways in the city by questioning the need for such routes anywhere, and by accepting a proposition that had appeared first among academics studying recent urban history. They regarded expressways as creations of a

⁴⁴² Ivor Dent, Ph.D., University of Alberta to Mayor and Aldermen of the City of Edmonton, Letter, 9 February 1973, MS 127.2, Box 1, File 3: MacKinnon Ravine, CEA. Wright apparently targeted Alderwoman Una McLean Evans after she questioned the scheme in a council meeting, writing with information addressing her questions and raising others in criticism of the scheme. Gerald H. Wright, Chairman of the University Practicum II on Rapid Transit, to Una McLean Evans, 27 March 1972, MS 127.2, Box 1, File 3: MacKinnon Ravine, CEA. There is also some evidence Wright was working with provincial politician(s) to publicize problems with and alternatives to the MacKinnon route. Unknown/unnamed member of Legislative Assembly of Alberta to Gerald H. Wright, Letter, 5 February 1973, MS 127.2, Box 1, File 3: MacKinnon Ravine, CEA.

⁴⁴³ Elly de Jongh, "URGE Newsletter," June 1975, MS 127.2, Box 1, File 4: URGE -- Membership Lists, Bulletins and Financial Statements, CEA.

⁴⁴⁴ Leslie Bella, "URGE Newsletter," 24 May 1977, MS 127.2, Box 1: URGE Newsletters 1977, CEA.

conspiracy, worse an American conspiracy. University of Alberta professor and URGE policy Chairman Cliff Young argued planners were predisposed to highways and industry supported the roads. Fellow University of Alberta professor Gerald Wright insisted Edmonton did not even have a traffic problem. Young asked rhetorically, “If you have planners ninety percent committed to building roads and whole industries dependent on road building what other solutions are they going to come up with?” Wright argued that Edmonton was a uniquely Canadian city and that accordingly, officials should not simply import American solutions. He observed: “We Canadians have imported American images and myths of the city that aren’t necessarily true for our cities. What we have to do as Canadians is look at our cities as our cities.” The city, they argued, was a “collective of people,” not a corporation, that should be designed for residents, not travellers who were simply passing through.⁴⁴⁵

“Burn the functional plans we have now for freeways”

In Edmonton, growing reservations among city councillors about the MacKinnon Freeway in particular led council to halt the project pending a full review. Chronic indecision subsequently plagued council and the project stagnated for several years. As a final decision on the scheme was perpetually postponed, planners and other officials gradually moved away from the expressway network model. The availability of financing, and particularly the provincial government’s refusal to contribute more to the schemes, forced local officials to reevaluate their planning priorities. In all cities, public opposition fuelled an evolving appreciation of the social and environmental costs of the scheme. This shifting perspective helped change the way

⁴⁴⁵ Jim Bentein, “Reform group slashes at ‘concrete jungle’,” *Edmonton Journal* 10 July 1975.

officials evaluated expressway projects, bringing them to the conclusion in city after city that the real cost of each plan far exceeded the financial toll, and that the broader cost was simply too high.

The renewed opposition exacerbated persistent divisions between officials and reignited the METS debate among city councillors. In April Alderwoman Una Evans made a motion to halt construction of the MacKinnon and Jasper Freeways, arguing that to allow construction to continue would effectively mean committing to the whole METS network. In this view, the Jasper Freeway was a gateway to the remaining freeways. Evans and her allies wanted the Jasper route to be subject to the new aesthetic, sociological and environmental impact studies instituted by city council in the years since METS was originally released in 1963 and 1964. Supporters contended that the freeway was necessary to provide improved access to the central business district and argued the parkland had already been eroded by other thoroughfares. The need for rapid transit had not been proven, they maintained, adding that the escalating costs of the freeways should be blamed on the “token public opposition” that had delayed construction.⁴⁴⁶

A divided city council approved the Evans’ motion.⁴⁴⁷ Despite planning superintendent Clive Rodgers’ warning there would be backlash from motorists if the freeway was cancelled,⁴⁴⁸ council suspended the project until a comprehensive transportation plan could be drafted.⁴⁴⁹ The

⁴⁴⁶ Larry Elliott, “Jasper Freeway: How a city destroys itself,” *Edmonton Journal* 7 April 1972.

⁴⁴⁷ “Controversy continues,” (editorial) *Edmonton Journal* 21 April 1972.

⁴⁴⁸ *Edmonton Journal* 20 April 1972.

⁴⁴⁹ Marc Horton, “City must return \$863,776 if freeway abandoned,” *Edmonton Journal* 7 July 1972. If the city cancelled the Jasper Freeway, \$800,000 of provincial money used for land acquisition would have to be repaid. In June 1972 Edmonton’s transportation plans still included the centerpieces of the METS scheme with the two expressway loops encircling the city, but the routes were referred to as “outer ring road” and “inner ring route.” The changing terminology hinted at the way in which the city’s expressway plans would evolve over the next several years. City of Edmonton Transportation Plan (1972) MS 127.1 URGE Box 2, CEA; summary, 65, 68-73. City of Edmonton, *General Transportation Plan: Position Paper* (June 1972), 4-6, 16-19. Edmonton Public Library (EPL), Heritage Collection.

Edmonton Journal approved of council's decision. The editors insisted councillors should go even further, arguing that the Jasper Freeway should be abandoned altogether. The controversy, they noted, offered two lessons for "the car-worshipping, freeway obsessed engineering clique in the civic administration that has for too long dominated this city's planning" -- first, that freeways were no longer the favoured solution for urban traffic problems, and second, that the river valley must be preserved. Noting citizens had protested against the "madness of freeways" effectively in Toronto and San Francisco, the editors asked rhetorically, "who wants to picnic in a traffic circle?"⁴⁵⁰

As councillors reviewed the METS scheme in the wake of their decision to halt the MacKinnon Freeway, the cost of the plans quickly dominated the debates. When revised figures pegged the METS price tag at \$750,000,000, city officials immediately recognized that the municipality would never be able to fund the work under the existing cost sharing agreement with the province. As a result, in June city officials appealed to the province to consider a cost sharing agreement that would extend beyond the standard five year term to make modified transportation improvements possible.⁴⁵¹

Even with the prospect of more generous provincial funding provisions, the ballooning METS costs put the plans out of reach. While councillors hoped to strike a new financing arrangement with the province, city officials also sought ways to make the METS improvements more affordable. At a public forum, City Engineer George Hodge admitted the revised cost estimates were prohibitive and would effectively end the METS plan as it was originally

⁴⁵⁰ "Costly lesson," (editorial) *Edmonton Journal* 10 July 1972.

⁴⁵¹ City of Edmonton, "Submission to the Minister of Highways and Transportation," 23 February 1972 in City of Edmonton, *General Transportation Plan: Position Paper* (June 1972), Appendix II, 45-49. EPL, Heritage Collection. Alderwoman Una Evans also called for a more detailed expense report as councillors tried to determine the true cost of the METS plans. "Freeway figures disputed," *Edmonton Journal* 11 July 1972.

conceived. Hodge and Director of Transportation Planning Don MacDonald drafted a position paper which suggested the METS freeway routes be converted to roads and that a rapid bus service be developed. “Burn the functional plans we have now for freeways,” transportation engineer and METS study director Louis Grimble said, adding, “they’re completely out of scale for Edmonton.” But Ross Walker of DeLeuw, Cather and Company, a firm that authored many feasibility studies on the city’s transportation infrastructure, warned that freeways constructed on the outskirts of the city would promote decentralization, in turn threatening the vitality of the urban core.⁴⁵²

By fall 1972 city council still had yet to make a final decision about freeways for Edmonton. The prolonged period of official indecision allowed anti-expressway activists to grow in strength. A public meeting that month attracted over 300 attendees, the majority of whom opposed freeways for Edmonton and were frustrated by city officials’ perpetual indecision. They criticized METS as a plan that was almost a full decade out of date. One attendee urged the others to “fight this thing and not let it ruin our lives or the lives of our children.” Alderwoman Una Evans, who had introduced the motion to halt the MacKinnon Freeway months earlier, chastised engineers for saying the road was likely fifteen years from being fully constructed, arguing that kind of prediction would result in the development of slums in the areas slated for expropriation. City Transportation Planner Donald MacDonald stressed to angry attendees that METS was up for discussion. He acknowledged the plan was the product of an earlier era when freeways were frequently proposed for North American cities, public opinion was supportive of such schemes, and funding from senior governments seemed readily available.

⁴⁵² “Forum hears costly transportation plan,” *Edmonton Journal* 28 September 1972. DeLeuw, Cather and Co argued arterial roads and rapid transit were not enough for Edmonton, and renewed their calls for a northeast freeway. Olive Elliott, “Freeway urged for northeast area of city,” *Edmonton Journal* 6 October 1972.



Image 8: Untitled photo of prepared roadbed in ravine, by Mike Vann, from article, "Jasper Freeway: How a city destroys itself," Edmonton Journal, 7 April 1972. Courtesy of the Edmonton Journal.

MacDonald pinpointed the current cost estimates combined with the lack of available funding as the most significant hindrance to METS.⁴⁵³

As public sentiment against METS freeways grew, signs of the impact of the opposition emerged. For example, in early 1973, the city planning department solicited public feedback on

⁴⁵³ Marc Horton, "Montrose vows to stop NE freeway," *Edmonton Journal* 26 October 1972.

the city's transportation plans. Some officials maintained expressway opponents simply lacked a full understanding of the plans, but they also acknowledged respondents' calls for greater emphasis on public transit in transportation planning and clear guidelines for public participation in the planning process, as well as demands to incorporate broader concerns including social, economic and environmental factors in planning.⁴⁵⁴ This greater awareness of, if not concern for, public opinion was reflected in council debates. As city councillors continued to debate the merits of the halted MacKinnon Freeway, deciding between requesting further studies of the route or scrapping the plans altogether, some councillors argued council should change its planning priorities to meet the apparent shift in public opinion.⁴⁵⁵ Public opinion had now become a factor in shaping planning trends.

Shortly after soliciting public opinion on the city's transportation plans, the planning department took a significant step towards formally incorporating citizen participation in its operations. Department officials put forth a plan for public input in which they carefully outlined the scope and limits of citizen participation, explaining:

The basic purpose of citizen participation is to establish a two-way communication system so that citizens and technical staff can work together in developing plans and proposals. Although the ideas, suggestions and concerns of citizens would hopefully

⁴⁵⁴ Planning Branch, Research and Long Range, City Planning Department, "A Summary of Public Submissions Received by the Municipal Planning Commission on the Proposed Transportation Chapter of the General Plan," March 1973, RG 17, Class 9, File 6, A83-26: Public participation in transportation planning, CEA. Unofficial companion report: Gordon Grant, Planner, "A review of the public hearings held before the Utilities and Engineering Committee, on November 20, 21, and 22, 1972, concerning the Position Paper on the proposed Transportation Plan for the City of Edmonton," 22 December 1972, RG 17, Class 9, File 6, A83-26: Public participation in transportation planning, CEA. Includes results of community surveys by chart, argues negative public response due to misinformation. Growing public opposition was also reflected in, and likely encouraged by, the city's newspaper. In addition to the editorial board's features on the topics, Edmonton Journal columnist Larry Elliott also authored a five part series on the future of transportation in Edmonton, arguing METS was too expensive and would result in extensive environmental devastation. Larry Elliott, "Getting to work in 2012 -- by road or rails?" *Edmonton Journal* 4 November 1972; "Freeways and West Edmonton," *Edmonton Journal* 6 November 1972, "Southwest's special transport problems," *Edmonton Journal* 11 November 1972, "The options for access to Mill Woods," *Edmonton Journal* 15 November 1972, "Access options for the northeast," *Edmonton Journal* 18 November 1972.

⁴⁵⁵ "Council will consider park in MacKinnon Ravine," *Edmonton Journal* 13 February 1973.

influence final decisions, the purpose of citizen participation is not to change the legal decision-making powers and responsibilities of elected officials. Rather, the focus is on communication and exchange of information among all groups.⁴⁵⁶

Provincial officials watched local developments with interest, concerned that opposition to the inner city METS expressways would make it harder to implement the scheme's outer ring road. For provincial authorities, the ring road was an essential component of the region's transportation infrastructure, one that would link existing provincial routes with the urban expressways that would venture into the heart of Edmonton.⁴⁵⁷ The impact of the METS controversy was clear as consultants reevaluated the original ring road component almost ten years after METS was originally released. They were careful to note the road was not designed to alleviate downtown traffic congestion, but would help reduce traffic volumes on arterial routes while also serving as an important connector between provincial and local roads. The planners were cautious when presenting their justification for the project, noting, "It is extremely difficult to prove or disprove, in absolute terms, the need for a transportation facility which would directly or indirectly serve a large population."⁴⁵⁸

The other feature of the consultants' reevaluation that demonstrated the impact of the ongoing freeway debates was the inclusion of impact analyses, which assessed the environmental impact of the route on soil, vegetation, and wildlife, agricultural and recreational areas, and air

⁴⁵⁶ Planning Branch, Research and Long Range, City Planning Department, "Citizen Participation and Transportation Planning in Edmonton," March 1973, 1, RG 17, Class 9, File 6, A83-26: Public participation in transportation planning, CEA. The Planning Department later recommended the Municipal Planning Commission adopted their guidelines for citizen participation. W. Walchuk, Manager of Planning Co-ordination, to Municipal Planning Commission, 2 August 1973; RG 17, Class 9, File 6, A83-26: Public participation in transportation planning, CEA.

⁴⁵⁷ Planning Branch, Alberta Department of Highways and Transport, *Edmonton Area Study: Outline Plan for Roads and Highways* (June 1973). EPL, Government Publications Collection.

⁴⁵⁸ DeLeuw Cather in association with L.W. Downey Research Associates Ltd., *A Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation of the Edmonton Parkway Ring* (September 1973), 13. EPL, Government Publications Collection. The origins of the outer ring road in Edmonton were traced to 1951, from which time the route had been moved increasingly further from the city centre as the urban region grew.

and noise pollution. Consultants also included a “visual analysis” that explored ways in which the “visual intrusion” of the road could be minimized⁴⁵⁹ as well as a statement on the socio-economic impact of the route.⁴⁶⁰ They argued that the parkway ring would ultimately benefit the city, but was not an inherently positive or negative project. They explained:

We conclude that a Ring Road cannot be judged, in and of itself, to be good or bad, desirable or undesirable, worth the investment or not worth the investment. To the extent that such a facility is developed in the context of a host of desirable related policies, it could and should prove to be a contributor to the well-being of the city’s citizens. However, to the extent that such a facility is developed as a good in its own right, it is as likely to be a disaster as it is a success.⁴⁶¹

Provincial officials’ concerns over the impact of the METS controversy on the outer ring road did little to hurry city council’s decision on the contentious MacKinnon Freeway. From April 1972 when councillor Evans first introduced the motion to halt work on the route, councillors remained undecided for two and a half years.⁴⁶² While provincial authorities waited to see what impact the council’s decision would have on regional transportation plans, those on both sides of the debate grew increasingly impatient. Alderman Dudley Menzie (1971-74), for example, maintained the road should be completed especially since the roadbed had already been

⁴⁵⁹ Ibid, 44 (quote), 36-57. On the visual impact: “In order to create a visually attractive road, it is recommended that a curvilinear alignment be adopted and that consideration be given to landscaping the right-of-way so as to produce an interesting visual sequence.”

⁴⁶⁰ Ibid, 58-60.

⁴⁶¹ Ibid, 60.

⁴⁶² City planning documents generated during this time revealed the impact of the indecision. The city’s 1974 transportation plan, for example, revealed a move towards a more balanced transportation system yet it still included arterial routes that followed the METS freeways. This included a pedestrian friendly downtown, cycling routes, accessible suburban communities, improvement and expansion of public transit networks, new arterial roads that would be planned as part of new community developments, and city core thoroughfares as well as parking and transit would be designed with an eye to “decreasing the percentage of the daily work trips by private auto to the area.” Transportation Planning Branch, Engineering and Transportation Department, City of Edmonton, *The City of Edmonton Transportation Plan Part 1* (June 1974), 6-11, MS 127.1, Box 2: URGE, ECA. Edmonton’s City council also asked the province to revise the municipal boundaries in an effort to improve local representation in government and administration of utilities and services including transportation infrastructure. Council, City of Edmonton, “The Future of this City: or has this city a future?: A Submission to the Minister of Municipal Affairs of the Government of Alberta,” (1 October 1973). EPL, Heritage Collection.

prepared. The construction of the freeway would allow “breathing time,” he reasoned, for coordinating a transit system for the city.⁴⁶³ Editors at the *Edmonton Journal*, meanwhile, stood firm in their opposition to the route, criticizing “the freeway lobby” for pressuring council to approve the east-west road. The road, they argued, was a “futile and costly” “highway to chaos” that would destroy the MacKinnon Ravine, and open the floodgates to the construction of the entire METS network of expressways.⁴⁶⁴

“Ravines and roadways are an undesirable mix”

When the time came to make a final decision on the MacKinnon route, drama erupted at city hall. Aldermen Cec Purves and Dudley Menzies walked out in the middle of a special meeting in August 1974 to make a final decision on the route, breaking quorum and consequently making the vote impossible. The freeway was so controversial by this point that only eight of thirteen councillors attended the special meeting, making the loss of just two councillors fatal.⁴⁶⁵ A second meeting was scheduled for a few weeks later in a second attempt to come to a final conclusion on the route. During that second session, the MacKinnon route was defeated in a contentious six to five vote.⁴⁶⁶

In the aftermath of city council’s cancellation of the MacKinnon Freeway, planners issued a report exploring the impact of and possible alternatives to the MacKinnon route. Citing the many delays since the route was originally proposed in 1963, officials admitted that previous

⁴⁶³ [Alderman] Dudley Menzies, “MacKinnon roadway -- the case for finishing it now,” *Edmonton Journal* 15 October 1973.

⁴⁶⁴ “Road to chaos,” (editorial) *Edmonton Journal* 7 February 1974.

⁴⁶⁵ “Ravine impasse,” *Edmonton Journal* 11 August 1974. The absent councillors claimed they were on holidays or had previous commitments.

⁴⁶⁶ Dan Powers, “City council kills plan for MacKinnon route,” *Edmonton Journal* 23 August 1974.

evaluations had been incomplete as they did not adhere to the department's own guiding principles requiring planners to consider the social, economic, physical and environmental impact of proposals. The latest assessment, therefore, was meant to redress those oversights as well as consider possible alternative plans.

Upon reevaluating the route, planners acknowledged it would increase traffic flow into the city centre which would in turn translate into increased need for parking lots as well as “increas[ing] the disruption of pedestrian movements, dispers[ing] the downtown functions over a wider area, and result[ing] in visual disamenities” which could hurt downtown businesses.⁴⁶⁷ Contrary to expressway supporters continual assertions, they conceded that an expressway and a park could not co-exist in the valley, explaining: “Construction of the Roadway down the bottom of MacKinnon Ravine would nullify any existing potential for recreational use. The steep sides of the ravine, and the volume of traffic on the Roadway, would preclude any possible uses of a recreational nature.”⁴⁶⁸ The road would also disrupt and potentially destroy the function of the ravine as a wildlife habitat, though the planners noted that impact was difficult to quantify as there was no information on the animal population of the area.⁴⁶⁹

The planners' evaluation of the route became increasingly critical as the report progressed, as the group condemned the project on every possible count. Noting transportation planning had the potential to be the primary determinant of urban growth patterns, they argued the freeway was in conflict with primary principles of Edmonton's general plan, noting that the

⁴⁶⁷ Research Branch, Planning Department, City of Edmonton, *MacKinnon Ravine Roadway: Implications and Possible Alternatives* (September 1974), 1-5, RG 17, Class 8, File 13: River valley - MacKinnon Ravine Roadway Study, CEA.

⁴⁶⁸ Ibid, 24.

⁴⁶⁹ Ibid, 24-25.

document specified “much greater consideration must be given in transportation planning to community objectives related to the kind of city and urban patterns that are developed as a result, rather than concentrating on meeting only narrow transportation-user objectives.”⁴⁷⁰ The MacKinnon route, the planners concluded, followed neither principle. Nor was the route compatible with the city’s policy of transportation planning “in a manner resulting in the minimum consumption of energy and nonrenewable resources.”⁴⁷¹ In addition, the road also violated the resolution against new freeways in the city’s river valleys or ravines. On that count the planners noted, “It has been argued that the MacKinnon Ravine Roadway was planned before this principle was established. Nevertheless, the principle indicates acceptance by the city of the fact that ravines and roadways are an undesirable mix. Moreover, the opportunity still exists in this instance to enact the principle.”⁴⁷² The planners further noted the road would violate the city’s planning guidelines as they pertained to public transit and parking, by promoting automobiles and in turn increasing demands for parking facilities.⁴⁷³ The planners did not propose any alternative routes but suggested the completion of the outer ring road that provincial authorities had advocated might alleviate stress on the city’s roads, adding that the improvement of the public transit system, with light rapid transit and expanded bus routes, would be preferable alternatives to the freeway.⁴⁷⁴

City planners’ revaluation of the MacKinnon route was later followed by a similarly critical reassessment from the Edmonton Regional Planning Commission. While the

⁴⁷⁰ As quoted in Ibid, 27. [Original General Plan p 12.1].

⁴⁷¹ As quoted in Ibid, 27. [Original General Plan p 12.1].

⁴⁷² Ibid, 27-28. [Original General Plan p 12.7].

⁴⁷³ Ibid, 28. [Original General Plan p 12.2; Transportation Plan, Part I, p. 10].

⁴⁷⁴ Ibid, 29-33.

commission acknowledged that METS was outdated, the group still upheld the least controversial components of the scheme. Provincial authorities' favoured outer ring road, for example, was still under consideration. In addition, many major roads and river crossings outside the city were under construction. The impact of the MacKinnon controversy was clear in the commission's assessment of the METS expressways, as it explained:

In the intervening years [since METS was released] the major components of this freeway system have become economically, environmentally and politically unattractive . . . the METS study, as was in vogue during the sixties, proposed a freeway dominated transportation system for Metropolitan Edmonton; public transit facilities received scant coverage.⁴⁷⁵

By 1974, the inner city expressways had been removed from the city's agenda. The elimination of that threat allowed reformers to focus more on other aspects of the city's development. URGE's concerns for the city at large were wide ranging yet also consistent with burgeoning urban reform parties in other cities. Policy subcommittees within the group helped define and articulate the group's stance on housing and land, social community services, inner city neighbourhoods, transportation, parks, environment, business and industrial development, and labour.⁴⁷⁶ Among their foremost concerns were the "deterioration of the inner city; too much stress on physical growth; too much dependence on cars; encroachment on park land; [and]

⁴⁷⁵ Regional Plan and Research Division, Edmonton Regional Planning Commission, "Regional Roadways Policy Review [Draft]," July 1975, ix-x, RG 17, Class 11, File 9 (c): ERPC Agenda and Minutes Transportation Committee 1975-1976, CEA. Includes more details on status of other regional road plans. Still, METS continued to influence regional planning, as the Regional Planning Commission Transportation Committee acknowledged that METS "although not adopted as an official plan, had strongly influenced location of new major roadway." Transportation Committee, Edmonton Regional Planning Commission, Meeting Minutes, 30 July 1975, RG 17, Class 11, File 9 (c): ERPC: Agenda and Minutes: Transportation Committee 1975-1976, CEA.

⁴⁷⁶ Iain Taylor, URGE Newsletter, March 1977, MS 127.2, Box 1: URGE Newsletters 1977, CEA. The formation of the subcommittees was spurred by the forthcoming municipal election. Newsletter includes policy points on commercial and industrial areas, parks and recreation planning in residential areas, the river valley park system, and parks, recreation and the downtown area.

alienation of citizens from their city's government."⁴⁷⁷ URGE's city development guidelines held that the downtown core should be the focus of the city, that older areas be preserved and restored, that small parks be established throughout the city and the large river valley and ravine be protected, that public transit be improved and finally that the city's ward system be reformed to improve communication between city government and residents as well as fostering greater public participation in planning. Members also suggested a rapid transit line be built in the ravine to ensure the freeway scheme was never resurrected.⁴⁷⁸

In August 1977, any lingering thought about resurrecting the MacKinnon Freeway was laid to rest as city council approved a comprehensive park plan for the ravine. Councillors who still championed the freeway were unhappy with the decision, especially with councillor Bettie Hewes's (1974-84) suggestion to install a bikepath. Alderman Bob Matheson (1974-77) voiced his frustration: "I have been fervently trying to find a bike rider in the west end for months. Why don't we face it that nobody in the west end wants a bike path in that blinking ravine."⁴⁷⁹ Despite Matheson and others' reservations, the park plan went through and the MacKinnon Ravine park later officially opened on 10 June 1984.⁴⁸⁰

In the years following the cancellation of the MacKinnon Freeway, city officials struggled to find solutions to many of the transportation challenges that gave rise to the original METS proposal. Key problems included growing traffic volumes and rush hour congestion, increasingly onerous commutes for those who worked in the city but lived in the still growing

⁴⁷⁷ URGE Pamphlet, N.D., Clippings Files: URGE (Urban Reform Group of Edmonton), CEA.

⁴⁷⁸ "Ravine backers propose rapid transit line," *Edmonton Journal* 23 March 1977.

⁴⁷⁹ "MacKinnon Ravine park plan ordered," *Edmonton Journal* 11 August 1977.

⁴⁸⁰ "Battle Ends," *Edmonton Examiner* 28 May 1984.

suburbs, the challenges of meeting heavy peak demands and servicing dispersed suburban populations with transit buses and LRT, meeting parking demands in commercial and residential areas, and reducing truck traffic in residential areas.⁴⁸¹

Fledgling efforts to incorporate greater public participation in the transportation planning process revealed the impact of the recent expressway controversies. By the end of the decade, the principles of public participation outlined in the 1973 planners' report had been enshrined in the city's general plan⁴⁸² and more tangible evidence of the importance of these new values came in the form of the Citizens' Transportation Planning Conference, held September 4-7 1974.⁴⁸³ Other efforts to accommodate greater public participation included February 1978 hearings held by Mayor C.J. (Cec) Purves's (1977-83) council on the deliberately vaguely labelled "West End traffic situation." Officials were careful not to focus on the abandoned MacKinnon link in an attempt to not provoke "the emotional response we are trying so hard to avoid."⁴⁸⁴ After the sessions, the city's planning department recommended a four lane "compromise road" for the ravine.⁴⁸⁵ The hearings were regarded as a "noble experiment" by some, but one that was in need of a more defined focus that would question the perceived dominance of the west end in making decisions that affected the whole city.⁴⁸⁶

⁴⁸¹ Planning Department, City of Edmonton. *Edmonton General Plan: Transportation, Issue Paper No. 5*. (Edmonton, January 1979), 1-8. EPL, Heritage Collection.

⁴⁸² Planning Department, City of Edmonton. *Edmonton General Plan: Citizen Participation, Issue Paper No. 8*. (Edmonton, February 1979), 1-8. MS 127.2, Box 1, CEA.

⁴⁸³ "Resolutions Passed at the Citizens' Transportation Planning Conference, September 4, 5, 6 and 7, 1974," Memorandum, Agenda, c. September 1974, RG 17, Class 9, File 6, A83-26: Public participation in transportation planning, CEA.

⁴⁸⁴ C.J. (Cec) Purves, "West End traffic: to measure the whole problem," *Edmonton Journal* 22 February 1978.

⁴⁸⁵ Reg Silvester, "Four-lane MacKinnon route urged," *Edmonton Journal* 28 February 1978.

⁴⁸⁶ "Can transportation hearings work," (editorial) *Edmonton Examiner* 5 April 1978.

The new “compromise road” proposal dismayed critics who saw similarities between the emerging transportation plans and the original METS plans. *Edmonton Journal* editors who had been among the most vocal critics of the city’s previous transportation plan quickly dubbed the new proposal the “son of METS” and called it an unacceptable “new flirtation with the freeway.” The editorial board argued planners wrongly assumed that residents would shun a rapid transit system. They recommended car pools, staggered work hours, controlled parking and restrictions on automobiles in the inner city. It appeared that the entire expressway debate in all its details had been stirred up. If the plan was to go through, the editors sighed, “we might as well make the automobile our official city emblem.” “METS was abandoned years ago,” they reminded readers, “because it was unaffordable and because city council perceived a better future for this city than turning it into Los Angeles North.”⁴⁸⁷

Despite some efforts to resurrect the METS freeways over the years, the only components of the scheme that were eventually constructed were a modified Capilano route and bridge, the Quesnell Bridge⁴⁸⁸ and Whitemud Drive. Years after the MacKinnon debates had died down, one local journalist attributed the defeat of the route to “a combination of rising costs and mounting opposition,” while another identified the protracted debates between city councillors and the lack of available funding as the primary reasons for the plans’ demise.⁴⁸⁹ *Examiner*

⁴⁸⁷ “Son of METS,” (editorial) *Edmonton Journal* 1 March 1978.

⁴⁸⁸ The proposed development of the Quesnell freeway mirrored the planned Harbour Drive approach in Halifax, where the road would be “constructed initially to arterial street standards and be converted later to freeway operation,” in order to qualify for provincial funding. De Leuw, Cather & Company of Canada Limited, *Quesnell Freeway: Functional Planning Report, Volume 1* (February 1968), 2 (quote), 10-12. CEA, Reports. The consultants explained: “This procedure [arterial to freeway conversion] enables the city to take advantage of the 75% Provincial contribution towards freeway construction where the initial roadways form part of an ultimate freeway. This staging process was a major criteria in the development of the plan.” Report includes very detailed route description; planned park system in river valley between freeways (10-12).

⁴⁸⁹ “Down this road before,” *Edmonton Examiner* 29 May 1998. Neil Waugh, “MacKinnon -- 12 years of bitter indecision,” *Edmonton Examiner* 9 November 1977.

writer Neil Waugh noted the project was divisive, exposing east-west tensions in the city as east enders were blamed for defeating a road the west end needed, while west enders were accused of offloading their problems to another community.⁴⁹⁰

In most ways, Edmonton's expressway debates looked much like those in other cities across the country. Like in other cities, funding challenges and indecisive councillors inadvertently allowed critics to move in and mobilize opposition. The main activist group's unique mandate, and the resulting limitations in their anti-expressway activism distinguished them from protestors in other cities. Their limited mandate accounts for the way in which those opponents mobilized in full force almost immediately after the expressway plans were released, and relatedly, why their work predated protests by activists in other cities by several years. Ironically, the river valley routing that was chosen in part to ensure the planned freeways were minimally disruptive ultimately precipitated the controversy, triggering protests that contributed to the repeated delays between the introduction of the plans and city council's arrival at a final decision on the scheme.

Importantly, officials' decision making process was complicated by city official's conviction that the city deserved greater funding, and the province's refusal to respond to those demands. City officials' appeals for increased provincial funding in the mid-1960s evoked some of the tensions that would also be evident in the Winnipeg debates by suggesting the city's needs had been neglected by the province. In Edmonton expressway supporters went a step further by arguing the province's failure to provide adequate provincial highways had created the traffic problems in the city that now required an expressway solution. In the face of a more generous

⁴⁹⁰ Neil Waugh, "MacKinnon -- 12 years of bitter indecision," *Edmonton Examiner* 9 November 1977.

provincial funding offer, however, city officials still chose to wait for the full funding to which they felt they were entitled. As a result, the plans were left until the early 1970s when new cost estimates had ballooned to over six times the original figures, making the network unaffordable for the city even with substantial provincial support. Ultimately, the dual considerations of escalating public opposition and what city officials regarded as inadequate funding slowed the decision making process to a near standstill. The result was a mounting financial toll and increased awareness of the social and environment impacts that made it increasingly unlikely that expressways would be built in Edmonton until they were abandoned completely.

Chapter 4: Winnipeg, Manitoba: “At war with each other”

Winnipeg’s expressway controversy was characterized by intergovernmental conflict. Even before the official release of the expressway network proposal, government dissension had marred the proceedings. Once the plans were formally released, conflict between the metro and provincial administrations really ignited, as provincial authorities refused to commit to funding the project and challenged their municipal counterparts to demonstrate the need for expressways in the city. In addition to challenges from their provincial counterparts, municipal officials also had to contend with dissension from their civil servants who disagreed over how to guide the city’s development and what kind of transportation infrastructure was best.

Add to these early tensions public opposition, which came from academics and social activists who regarded the expressway plans as symptomatic of systemic problems in the city’s administration, particularly the power struggles between councillors and planners. In Winnipeg, where intergovernmental discord over expressway plans overpowered the planning process, public opposition never grew to the same level as in other cities. Protestors capitalized on the persistent government conflict when articulating their objections and seemed to understand that the more pronounced disagreements between governments grew, the less likely it was that the expressways would ever be constructed. This awareness in turn meant that highly active public campaigns to defeat the scheme were unnecessary. Ultimately, the provincial government’s reluctance to fund expressways for Winnipeg doomed the plans from the beginning and, after protracted conflict at all levels, that same administration’s final decisive stand against the plans effectively closed the debates. In the end, questions about the appropriateness of expressways

for Winnipeg made politicians, planners and residents less likely to accept the financial, social and environmental costs of the roads.

Winnipeg

Traditionally known as the “gateway to the west” among Canadian cities, Winnipeg earned the nickname in part because of its location at the meeting of the Red River and the Assiniboine River. Its regional significance was later reinforced by the routing of national railway lines. These natural and built features established lasting patterns for major arteries that influenced all future transportation plans. Winnipeg’s rapid early expansion stalled by World War I and although it rebounded by World War II, the city would never again match pre-World War I growth and was eventually unseated as the most populous and influential city west of Toronto. While many historians have attributed the city’s early growth to self-made boosters, more recent works have challenged this interpretation, arguing western city-builders were often wealthy transplants from elsewhere in Canada who helped cultivate the social hierarchies they were previously thought to eschew.⁴⁹¹

During the first half of the twentieth century, historians argue Winnipeg politics were characterized primarily by class and ethnic tensions. The Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 exemplified the city’s status as a centre for labour activism as ethnic tensions escalated between

⁴⁹¹ P.H. Wichern, “Historical Influences on Contemporary Local Politics: The Case of Winnipeg,” *Urban History Review* 12, 1 (June 1983), 39-43. George F. Reynolds, “The Man Who Created the Corner of Portage and Main,” *Transactions of the Historical & Scientific Society of Manitoba* 3, 26 (1969), 5-40. Alan F.J. Artibise, *Winnipeg: A Social History of Urban Growth, 1874-1914* (Montréal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 1975). For a detailed economic history of this period: Ruben C. Bellan, *Winnipeg: A First Century: An Economic History* (Winnipeg: Queenston House Pub. Co., 1978). Don Nebras, “Wealth and Privilege: An Analysis of Winnipeg’s Early Business Elite,” *Manitoba History* 47 (Spring/Summer 2004), 42-64.

established Anglo communities and Slavic and Jewish immigrants.⁴⁹² As part of this interpretation, noted historian Alan F. J. Artibise pointed to the election of left-leaning Ukrainian Mayor Steve Juba in 1957 and his subsequent twenty year tenure as marking a new era of improved relations between the city's diverse communities, marked by working class and minority concentrations in northern neighbourhoods and more affluent residents to the west and south.⁴⁹³ During these postwar years Winnipeg's population growth was modest, from 221,960 in 1941, to 235,710 in 1951, to 265,429 in 1961, to 246,270 in 1971. Meanwhile, the total population of the city's suburbs had risen dramatically from 75,779 in 1941 to 289,210 in 1971.⁴⁹⁴

Like in other cities, Winnipeg's expressway plans were part of a larger redevelopment trend during the 1960s and 1970s. Despite these renewal schemes, the city is still distinguished by the large number of heritage buildings that remain, most notably the cluster constituting the Exchange District. Those examining urban renewal in Winnipeg have celebrated this

⁴⁹² Daniel Hiebert, "Class, Ethnicity and Residential Structure: The Social Geography of Winnipeg, 1901-1921," *Journal of Historical Geography* 17, 1 (January 1991), 56-86. Nelson Wiseman and K. Wayne Taylor, "Voting in Winnipeg During the Depression," *Canadian Review of Sociology & Anthropology* 19, 2 (May 1982), 215-236. Nelson Wiseman and K. Wayne Taylor, "Ethnic vs. Class Voting: The Case of Winnipeg," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 7, 2 (1974), 314-328. Wiseman and Taylor also examined the relationship between class, ethnicity and voting patterns in provincial elections in the city: Nelson Wiseman and K. Wayne Taylor, "Class and Ethnic Voting in Winnipeg During the Cold War," *Canadian Review of Sociology & Anthropology* 16, 1 (February 1979), 60-77.

⁴⁹³ Alan F. J. Artibise, "Patterns of Population Growth and Ethnic Relationships in Winnipeg, 1874-1974," *Histoire Sociale: Social History* 9, 18 (November 1976), 297-335. Alan Artibise, "The Urban Development of Winnipeg, 1874-1914," *Urban History Review* 1 (1972), 5-6. Alan Artibise, "An Urban Environment: The Process of Growth in Winnipeg, 1874-1914," *Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers* (1972), 109-133.

⁴⁹⁴ Alan F.J. Artibise, "Table V: Population Growth in Winnipeg, 1871-1971" and "Table XI: Population Growth in Winnipeg and Suburbs, 1901-1971," in *Winnipeg: An Illustrated History* (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1977), 202, 205. The suburbs included in the population count are Assiniboia, Charleswood, East Kildonan, Old Kildonan, St. Boniface, St. James, St. Vital, Trascona, Tuxedo and West Kildonan.

comparatively widespread preservation of historic buildings, documenting the history of noteworthy properties without much critical evaluation of those that were demolished.⁴⁹⁵

City government was reformed a number of times in the era of urban renewal in an effort to move towards regional administration. Historians have contextualized the move towards regional government by pointing to tensions between Winnipeg and the rest of the province. Alan F.J. Artibise observed that the centre's urban character was unique in Manitoba, and as such, provincial policies typically ignored urban concerns despite the fact that Winnipeg's success was integral to the province's vitality. This resulted in a sometimes combative dynamic between city and provincial officials, which permeated the expressway debates. Artibise argued that the creation of a metropolitan government was intended to address the disconnect.⁴⁹⁶ The 1960 Metropolitan Winnipeg Act brought together seven cities, five suburban municipalities and one town under a two-tier government. The resulting dissatisfaction with that arrangement led to the 1972 creation of the Unicity, governed by a single tier structure comprised of a fifty-one member council with representatives from across greater Winnipeg including Transcona, St. Boniface, St. Vital, West Kildonan, East Kildonan, Old Kildonan, Tuxedo, Fort Garry, Charleswood and St. James.

The Unicity organization was further revised in the years after expressways were shelved, scaled back to a much smaller governing council. Scholars agree that the remarkable size of the Unicity administration made it largely dysfunctional and led to its abolition. They argue that

⁴⁹⁵ Norman C.H. Russell, "Manitoba Historical Architecture: The Architectural-Historical Survey," *Transactions of the Historical & Scientific Society of Manitoba* 3, 26 (1969), 89-91. Pierre Berton, "Heritage Preservation," *Transactions of the Historical & Scientific Society of Manitoba* Issue 32 (1975), 67-73. Randy R. Rostecki, "Some Old Winnipeg Buildings," *Transactions of the Historical & Scientific Society of Manitoba* 3, 29 (1972), 5-22. Parks Canada, "Commemorating Winnipeg's Newest National Historic Sites: The Exchange District and Union Bank Building," *Manitoba History* 38 (Autumn 1999/Winter 2000), 26-30.

⁴⁹⁶ Artibise, *Winnipeg: An Illustrated History*, 173.

while the smaller administrations that followed were more practical, their ability to govern effectively was curtailed by the long standing problem of limited municipal funding.⁴⁹⁷

Observers including noted urban specialist Christopher Leo argue the severity of Winnipeg's struggle with suburban competition and inner city decline in this era was most like the dire circumstances in many American cities.⁴⁹⁸ Indeed, this sense of urban crisis was particularly strong in Winnipeg and was a prominent concern raised during the expressway debates.

“An expressway system will handle major volumes of long-trip through traffic thus relieving major arterial streets and helping overcome handicaps of existing street patterns”

Planners' initial vision for Winnipeg was consistent with urban planning trends at the time but modified for the size of the city. Instead of two full expressway loops, one nestled inside the other, one loop was planned to run through the suburban areas on the outskirts of the city with offshoot routes emanating from it into the heart of the city. The routes were designed to alleviate congestion by removing through traffic from city streets, but the construction of an extensive new roads system was also regarded by officials as an opportunity to define land use boundaries in the city, in turn guiding future development. The new highways were designed to improve efficiency as well as increase mobility and accessibility.

⁴⁹⁷ D. Hum, F. Strain and M. Strain, “Fiscal Imbalance and Winnipeg: A Century of Response,” *Urban History Review* 15, 2 (October 1986), 137-150. Olga Fuga, “New Winnipeg Government is Unique Urban Experiment,” *National Civic Review* 62, 4 (April 1973), 189-192. Fisher Murray takes a longer view prior to the municipal restructuring of this era: Fisher Murray, “Local Government Reorganization,” *Historical & Scientific Society of Manitoba Papers* 17 (1960), 15-23. Others have argued changes in the ward system did little to empower the city's working class: James Lightbody, “Electoral Reform in Local Government: The Case of Winnipeg,” *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 11, 2 (June 1978), 307-333.

⁴⁹⁸ Richard Lennon and Christopher Leo, “Metropolitan Growth and Municipal Boundaries: Problems and Proposed Solutions,” *International Journal of Canadian Studies* (2001), 77-104. Jino Distasio, “Urban Revitalization in Winnipeg,” *Canadian Issues/Thèmes Canadiens* (February 2003), 30-32.

Expressways first became part of the transportation planning conversation in Winnipeg in the 1950s as consultants considered the combined impact of burgeoning suburbs and growing automobile ownership rates on the city's road network. Analyzing projected traffic volumes for 1981, the consultants anticipated that downtown congestion would be created in large part by "traffic which has no desire to be in the central business district."⁴⁹⁹ Expressways were considered an ideal solution to the problem as they would prevent traffic that literally had no business downtown from clogging inner city arteries by allowing through traffic to bypass the city centre.⁵⁰⁰ The proposed expressway structure for Winnipeg was typical of the networks favoured at the time. An expressway loop would encircle the downtown core to remove all traffic not destined for the heart of the city from major arteries with two of its four sections situated "wholly within Winnipeg." The main expressway loop would have radial routes extending into outlying suburban areas.⁵⁰¹ The consultants described in detail how expressways should function:

With the outward expansion of cities, distances between trip origins and destinations become greater and volumes on existing arterial streets increase. To satisfactorily serve longer trips and relieve existing facilities of excessively high volumes, higher vehicle speeds and greater capacity are necessary than are obtainable on most major arterial streets with frequent at-grade intersections. Control of access is thus normally required. An expressway system will handle major volumes of long-trip through traffic thus relieving major arterial streets and helping overcome handicaps of existing street patterns.⁵⁰²

⁴⁹⁹ Wilbur Smith and Associates, *Part VI: Major Street and Highway Planning for Metropolitan Winnipeg* (New Haven, Connecticut: c. 1950s), 5-6. Winnipeg Public Library (WPL), Reference Collection.

⁵⁰⁰ Ibid, 13. In the report, the function of an expressway was described as to "provide for expeditious movement of heavy volumes of through traffic between areas and across the city, and not intended to provide land-access service."

⁵⁰¹ Ibid, 15-16, 19-20. Winnipeg's mass transit system -- which came under public ownership in May 1953 -- was completely absent from this discussion. *Tracks to Tires* (Winnipeg: Greater Winnipeg Transit Commission, 1955). WPL, Local History Collection.

⁵⁰² Wilbur Smith and Associates, *Part VI: Major Street and Highway Planning for Metropolitan Winnipeg* (New Haven, Connecticut: c. 1950s), 14. WPL, Reference Collection.

As useful as expressways could be, the consultants noted such routes must be carefully situated so that they did not carve up the city's landscape, but rather helped define pre-existing land use boundaries. As they explained:

Present as well as future land use play an important role in the determination of the expressway system. While express facilities should connect areas of major traffic generation, providing the fastest and most convenient means of travel between them, they should not disrupt sound land use developments. Expressway conformance should logically form the boundaries of different land use areas.⁵⁰³

These early plans for expressways in Winnipeg came to life when consultants released three volumes of the landmark Winnipeg Area Transportation Study (WATS), commissioned by metro council. The first two volumes were released in 1966, one covering covered base conditions and one including traffic analysis and several preliminary network options. The final volume released in 1968 detailed the favoured network. The first volume called for \$100,000,000 of public investment in transportation. Metro Executive Director Donald I. MacDonald (1969-71) applauded the undertaking, saying it marked the end of a "by gosh and by golly" approach to the city's transportation challenges.⁵⁰⁴ In April 1966, an initial study confirmed that downtown intersections were clogged during rush hour and declared low inner city travel speeds unacceptable, adding that bus travel typically took double the time of auto travel through the inner city. The old street system, consultants contended, would have to be overhauled.⁵⁰⁵ By July planners identified bus transit as an important part of the city's overall transportation scheme. Rapid transit was a possibility for the future if the city's population grew

⁵⁰³ Ibid, 14.

⁵⁰⁴ Barry Came, "Metro makes it to full-blown maturity," *Winnipeg Free Press* 3 January 1967.

⁵⁰⁵ "Metro gets Winnipeg Area Transportation Report," *Winnipeg Free Press* 6 April 1966. "Planned traffic pegged for greater Winnipeg," *Winnipeg Free Press* 19 April 1966.

to support it.⁵⁰⁶ In December the second volume of WATS offered the first glimpse of the possibilities for the city's future expressway network. The volume presented four versions of the plan, each with a freeway system running through the city, an inner perimeter highway, existing streets that would be converted to arterial routes, and a monorail or subway system.⁵⁰⁷

In February 1969 Volume III of the Winnipeg Area Transportation Study was released, six years in the making at a cost of \$400,000. WATS III called for \$767,000,000 to be spent over twenty-two years on projects including nineteen miles of freeways, 5.4 miles of subway, thirty-seven miles of suburban beltway, and seventeen bridges. \$429,000,000 of the total amount was slated for the freeways. Officials argued the network was essential for the city and urged the immediate adoption of the scheme, insisting they must plan ahead if the city was to reach its "growth potential" in "the most economical and orderly way."⁵⁰⁸ The plan's centrepiece was a suburban beltway from which five freeways emanated, running into the downtown core.⁵⁰⁹ The public transit component called for a rapid transit line downtown as well as expanded bus routes that would utilize the proposed freeways.⁵¹⁰

⁵⁰⁶ "Metro's master plan recommends vast changes," *Winnipeg Free Press* 15 July 1966.

⁵⁰⁷ Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, Manitoba Streets and Transit Division, *Winnipeg Area Transportation Study: Volume 1: Base Conditions* (Winnipeg: Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, February 1966). Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, Manitoba Streets and Transit Division, *Winnipeg Area Transportation Study: Volume 2: Travel Analysis* (Winnipeg: Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, July 1966). "2nd stage booster for transport plan," *Winnipeg Free Press* 1 December 1966.

⁵⁰⁸ Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, Manitoba Streets and Transit Division, *Winnipeg Area Transportation Study: Volume 3* (Winnipeg: Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, 1966-1968). The foreword included the following note: "While the recommended plan will appear at first glance to provide facilities of a more substantial and costly nature than the Greater Winnipeg area needs or can afford, it is only so when viewed in light of current transportation requirements. The projections of population growth and land use development on which the transportation plan is based are those of a growing and dynamic urban community."

⁵⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 10-11, 172-175, 182-205.

⁵¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 12-13, 176-177, 208-213.

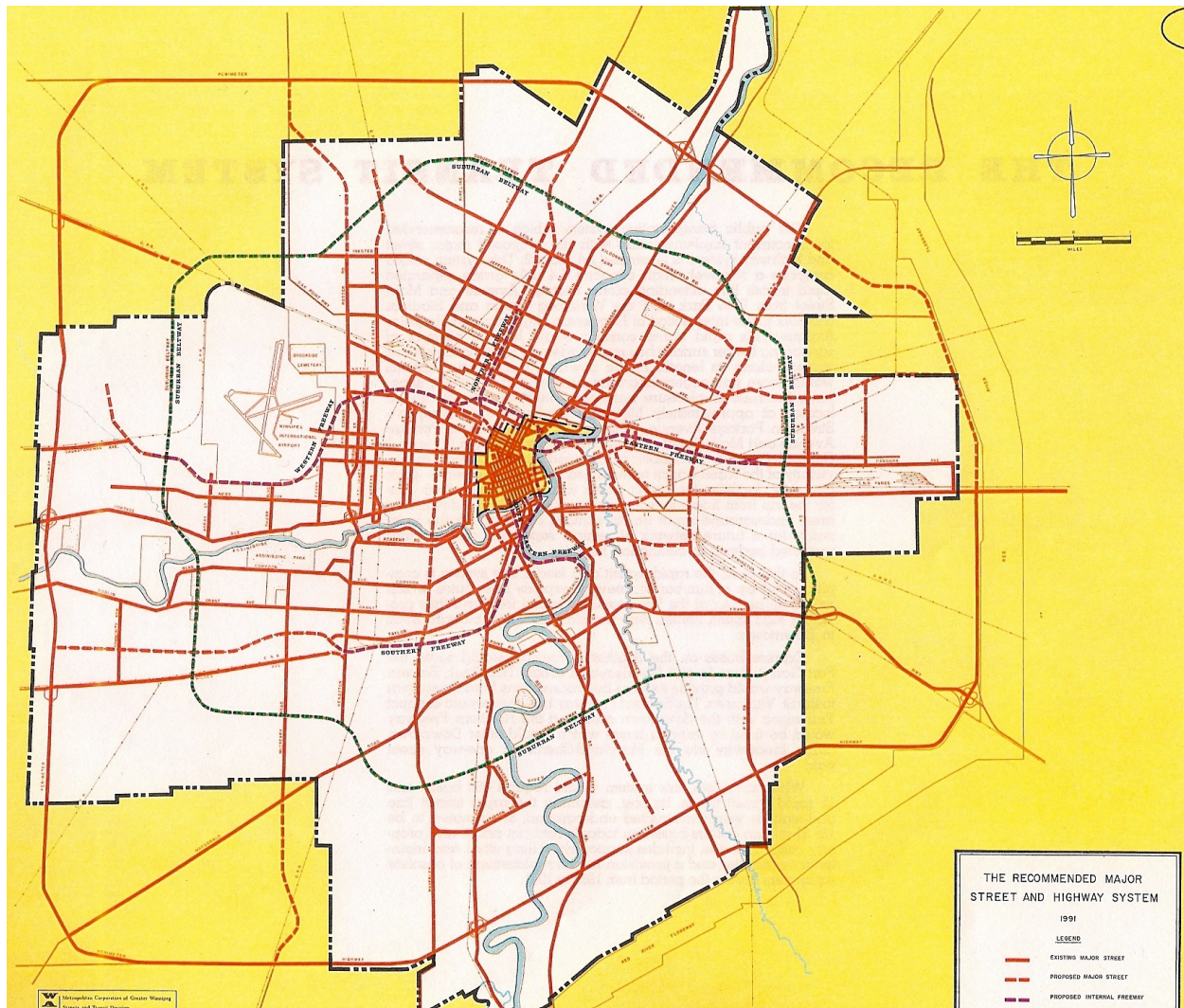


Image 1: “The Recommended Major Street and Highway System 1991,” page 15, Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, Manitoba Streets and Transit Division, Winnipeg Area Transportation Study: Volume 3 (Winnipeg: Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, 1966-1968).

Officials boasted of the many benefits of the network. Its efficiency would save private motorists and the trucking industry time and money, the rapid transit system’s speed and efficiency would increase ridership and strengthen the Portage Avenue - Main Street corridor, downtown investment would increase as a result of a more accessible and populated central business district, the general increase in mobility and accessibility throughout the city and

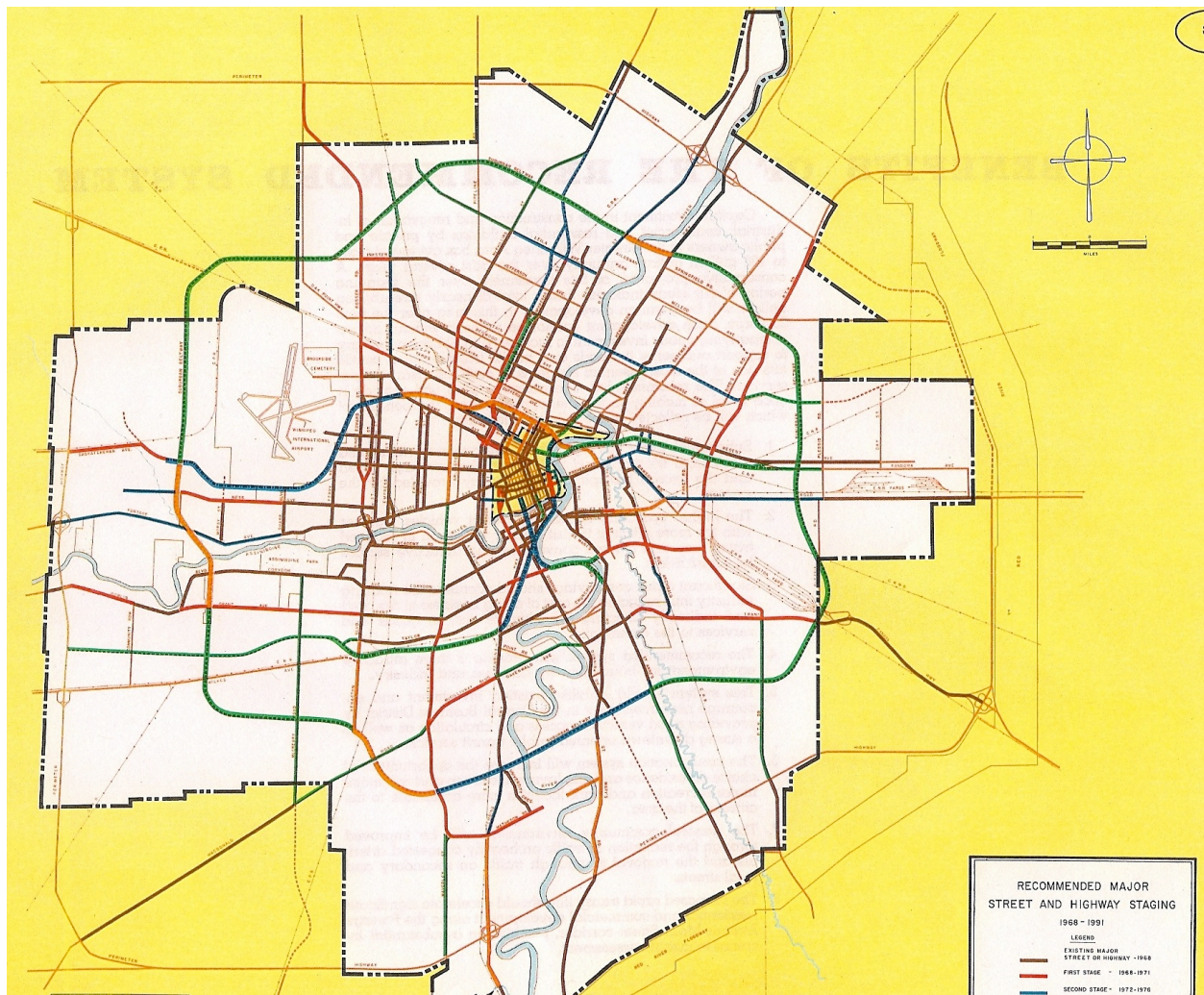


Image 2: "The Recommended Major Street and Highway Staging 1968-1991," page 1, Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, Manitoba Streets and Transit Division, Winnipeg Area Transportation Study: Volume 3 (Winnipeg: Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, 1966-1968).

surrounding regions would give residents more flexibility in choosing home and work sites, and communities would benefit from the reduction of traffic congestion on the main arteries.⁵¹¹

The transportation network also presented an opportunity to guide development and land use in the region. Officials argued that expropriations for the system would propel urban

⁵¹¹ Ibid, 16. Bob Lisoway, "Metro details road needs," *Winnipeg Free Press* 28 February 1969.

renewal measures and might even qualify for federal, provincial and municipal funding. As they explained, “The acquisition of property in built-up areas involved the relocation of residents or businesses, and, as the right of way is to provide for a transportation facility related to the future development of the area, it constitutes, in effect, a form of urban renewal.” Beyond the land required for the proposed freeways, officials advocated the purchase of additional property in the transportation corridor so that metro council could regulate development. They noted:

This concept is being recognized and considered by the United States federal government in their proposed Joint Freeways-Urban Development Program, which, it is anticipated, will eliminate many of the objections to urban freeway construction, will permit sound planning of complementary freeway and urban development and will result in substantial recovery of the initial property costs through land sales and eventual higher property assessment from resulting development.⁵¹²

“The same tired old plan that has been prepared for every urban area”

The initial response to the WATS freeways set the tone for the ensuing debates, as metro and provincial authorities did little to conceal the animosity between them. Previous disagreements over the terms of study for the city’s master plan spilled over to the WATS scheme as provincial officials challenged local officials’ contention expressways were needed in Winnipeg and accused them of bungling early expropriations. At the local level, metro councillors defended their decision making powers against planners who argued their professional expertise was wasted in a system where indecisive politicians had the final say.

The release of the first two WATS volumes coincided with the formulation of new broader city planning policy, a process that exposed growing tensions both between and among city officials and politicians. In an editorial series, *The Winnipeg Tribune* columnist Val Werier

⁵¹² Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, Manitoba Streets and Transit Division, *Winnipeg Area Transportation Study: Volume 3* (Winnipeg: Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, 1966-1968), 230.

expressed cautious optimism about the city's master plan, calling planners "disinterested professionals who viewed impartially the needs of the whole community."⁵¹³ Behind the scenes, however, the process was plagued by intergovernmental conflict. Planners from eastern Canada who were brought in as outside consultants criticized the provincial government for not cooperating with metro and attempting to dictate the terms of the master plan. As one observer noted, the metro and provincial administrations appeared to be "at war with each other."⁵¹⁴ Metro Councillor Lorne Leech alluded to these tensions after attending the Canadian Transit Association Meeting in Montréal in June 1967. Leech praised the host city's extensive expressway and transit networks, but noted that unlike in Winnipeg, cooperation between federal, provincial and municipal governments in Montréal "must be of the greatest" to support such projects. He suggested the creation of a transit commission, like in Montréal, would avoid the problem of political interference.⁵¹⁵

Metro Director of City Planning Earl Levin was a key figure in the Winnipeg debates. A seasoned planner who had worked in a number of cities including London, Vancouver, Ottawa and Regina, Levin was a vocal critic of the metro administration despite also being a member of the group. Levin argued that the metro administration was oftentimes dysfunctional, unable or unwilling to overcome fragmentation to operate as a cohesive and unified governing body.⁵¹⁶

⁵¹³ Werier applauded efforts to bring development plans to the city's riverbanks as well as city planner Earl Levin's proposal to create an industrial development centre in the poor area of the city, complete with research facilities, product design, technical and vocational training, and an apprenticeship system. He stressed that all citizens had a stake in city planning. Val Werier, "Will the master plan become reality?" *The Winnipeg Tribune* 7 January 1967. Val Werier, "The city belongs to everyone," *The Winnipeg Tribune* 9 January 1967. Val Werier, "Who's in charge of planning?" *The Winnipeg Tribune* 10 January 1967. "Signs of weakness," (editorial) *The Winnipeg Tribune* 6 April 1967.

⁵¹⁴ Heather Crisvin, "Master plan battles 'incredible'," *The Winnipeg Tribune* 7 May 1967.

⁵¹⁵ D.I. MacDonald memo, 6 July 1967; B.R. Wolfe, "In brief highlight of the Canadian Transit Meeting held in Montréal June 18-23rd," 1-5; Metro GC-3, GC-4, City of Winnipeg Archives and Records Control (CWARC).

⁵¹⁶ "Downtown is dying, Levin says," *The Winnipeg Tribune* 14 December 1968.

Winnipeg Mayor Steve Juba (1957-77) fumed over Levin's criticism, arguing metro administrators like Levin should not interfere and insisting metro councillors, not directors, set policy.⁵¹⁷ The exchange between Levin and Juba was indicative of broader tensions between planning experts and elected officials, whereby planners argued they were hampered by the limited mandates of uninformed politicians, and politicians complained about planners pushing their own agendas.

Levin saw Winnipeg as a city facing challenges as well as opportunities and urged politicians and citizens alike not to compare the city to larger urban centres like Toronto and Montréal. Levin argued that Winnipeg's slow postwar growth rate was actually a blessing because it allowed for thoughtful, careful planning. In his view, city residents should have been grateful not to deal with the larger scale development challenges facing Toronto and Montréal. According to him, Winnipeg's size was ideal and its location underrated.⁵¹⁸ The main challenge the city faced was a lack of confidence and an unhealthy emphasis on rapid growth in relation to other Canadian cities like Calgary and Edmonton that were, at the time, riding high. A vital inner city was essential and could not be replaced by any number of growing suburban centres. Levin explained, "The issue at stake here is not so much whether we will remain the number four city in the hierarchy of Canadian cities, but whether we can continue to improve the quality of our urban life."⁵¹⁹

⁵¹⁷ "City's downtown core will stay alive: Juba," *The Winnipeg Tribune* 19 December 1968.

⁵¹⁸ Val Werier, "Planner's concern: The quality of life," *The Winnipeg Tribune* 10 January 1968.

⁵¹⁹ E.A. Levin, "Winnipeg -- Downtown or Downhill?" (Address to Downtown Business Association) 23 April 1968, 10 (quote), 1-33. Dr. Earl A. Levin Collection, Institute of Urban Studies (IUS), University of Winnipeg.

A strong downtown, and a strong central business district in particular, was essential to the vitality of the whole metropolitan area. Levin offered a vivid description of the ideal city centre:

Our downtown should be full of people of every type and station, of every shape and description, rich and poor, young and old, smart and dowdy, because only people can endow any enterprise with life and with value. It should be full of things to see, to do, to enjoy, to buy, because that's what a downtown is for. It should be easy to get to, and having got there it should be such a delightful experience as to make one reluctant to leave. It should be a city within a city, with all the variety, choice, stimulation, wonder, gaiety, pleasures, ideas, experimentation, opportunities, and human richness that can possibly be crowded into its relatively narrow limits, because really that's what cities are all about.⁵²⁰

Levin stressed the main transportation problem facing the city was mobility within the city rather than between the city and outlying areas. Responding to federal plans to aid provincial governments in acquiring property for inter-urban arteries, Levin argued such a program would be useless for Winnipeg, as the city was not struggling with the same kind of rapid sprawl and growing population of other larger Canadian cities. Branding the financing program "typical" of the federal government and agencies like the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation, he explained, "The statutes and their administrative procedures are conceived in terms of the Toronto and Montréal situation, and have only the remotest relevance, if any, for the realities of the smaller cities of Canada."⁵²¹

⁵²⁰ Ibid, 11. Levin's position formed the basis for: Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, Planning Division, *Downtown Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: Metropolitan Corporation of Greater Winnipeg, Planning Division, 1969). The report included sections on the decline of the downtown core and suburban sprawl; the essential nature of a healthy central business district in ensuring the well being of the entire metropolitan area; and Winnipeg's rate of growth and standing in comparison to other Canadian cities, particularly Calgary and Edmonton as western metropolitan centres, and Toronto and Montréal as the two largest cities in the country.

⁵²¹ E.A. Levin, "Untitled Speech," (Address to Manitoba Regional Group, First Canadian Transportation Conference") 10 July 1968, 12. Dr. Earl A. Levin Collection, IUS, University of Winnipeg. Levin's contention that federal authorities were focussed on transportation challenges in bigger cities was consistent with remarks from Minister of Transportation Paul Hellyer, who told reporters that he wanted to see high speed monorails between airports and city centres in Vancouver, Toronto and Montréal. Bruce Phillips, "Hellyer off to conquer transport," *The Winnipeg Tribune* 19 September 1967.

As the city waited for the release of the final installment of WATS, *The Tribune's* editors continued to publish editorials on the city's transportation challenges. They argued the WATS plan would facilitate "the rot of the metropolitan centre" through urban decentralization like in San Francisco and Los Angeles, where officials were already looking to rapid transit for relief. Condemning the transportation plan as "the same tired old plan that has been prepared for every urban area these many years," the editors insisted planners could not address transportation problems without reference to broader development challenges.⁵²² *Tribune* editors also insisted that "modern concepts of urban development" must be employed, making urban centres "fully livable organisms once more."⁵²³

The depth of government divisions over WATS became clear almost immediately after the release of the final volume of the study. The relationship between metro and provincial officials was the main source of tension, with the two administrations at odds over the appropriateness of the extensive highway networks proposed in the WATS plan, as well as the expropriations underway in anticipation of the construction of some outlying sections. Metro Vice-Chairman Bernie R. Wolfe had already expressed local authorities' frustration with the lack of provincial cooperation during the WATS study, accusing the provincial government of not fulfilling its constitutional duty.⁵²⁴ Provincial government hostility was exemplified with Minister of Transportation Stewart McLean's (1968-69) assertion that education, not transportation, was the province's most pressing problem. McLean also reminded officials that

⁵²² "Transit needs," (editorial) *The Winnipeg Tribune* 24 January 1969.

⁵²³ "Urban transit meet," (editorial) *The Winnipeg Tribune* 11 February 1969.

⁵²⁴ B.R. Wolfe, "Re: W.A.T.S. Volume III: Projections and Recommendations 1968-1991," 27 February 1969, ST-10, CWARC.

transportation outside urban areas was equally important as transportation within urban areas.⁵²⁵

His position unnerved metro officials who, at the time, were just months away from releasing WATS.

Tensions between provincial and metro authorities were further exacerbated when McLean's successor as Minister of Transportation Joe Borowski (1969-71) raised questions about metro's expropriation procedures for the suburban beltway portion of the WATS network. At stake was the proposed Whittier Park development. It required the rezoning of industrial land to accommodate high rise apartment buildings but was instead expropriated by the city.⁵²⁶ In a television interview, Borowski said, "There are some places that outrageous sums were paid to the speculators. It's not people that are benefitting by this it were [sic] speculators and we were held up for large sums of money. I would think the government and metro would lose considerable money by it." Metro Chair and conservative suburban Councillor Jack Willis (1967-71) responded by blasting newly elected Premier Edward Schreyer (1969-1977) for allowing his minister to make such inflammatory accusations and for not relaying the province's concerns directly to metro authorities.⁵²⁷ These growing hostilities would soon be further inflamed, as the province ordered a full review of WATS, a move that outraged metro officials.

⁵²⁵ "'Education the main problem'," *The Winnipeg Tribune* 25 January 1969.

⁵²⁶ Mel Jones, "Metro will get bylaw to expropriate controversial Whittier Park property," *The Winnipeg Tribune* 24 April 1969. The developers' lawyer, Samuel J. Drache, defiantly told reporters the scheme that threatened his clients' project was, "just a piece of paper, pictures and lines."

⁵²⁷ Letter, J.E. Willis to E.R. Schreyer, 2 October 1969, File: Metro SC 5.8 (N/W) Box 294/295, CWARC. Willis also contacted Borowski prior to the minister's public comments expressing his frustration over the province's slow response to Metro's expropriation requests: Letters, J.E. Willis to Joe P. Borowski, and Joe P. Borowski to J.E. Willis, 19 September 1969 and 1 October 1969, File: Metro SC 5.8 (N/W) Box 294/295, CWARC. A few months before, the provincial election had fostered debate about city infrastructure and governance, exacerbating existing tensions. NDP candidate -- and soon to be Premier -- Edward Schreyer aggravated metro officials when he called for a regional urban council to replace metro, one which would be "more culturally and socially oriented than financially oriented." Bob Culbert, "Schreyer proposes new regional urban council," *Winnipeg Free Press* 25 June 1969.

One of the first critical evaluations of WATS to emerge from outside official ranks came from University of Manitoba Architecture Professor Dimitrios Styliaras. He argued that a public transit system was needed, and that expressways would be a wasteful and uncreative use of riverfront land in Winnipeg and St. Boniface. Instead of focussing on highways, Styliaras called for a city-wide renewal scheme that included transportation systems. He also stressed the importance of public participation in generating new ideas to guide planners, noting, “In many cities business or other groups are instrumental in generating alternative plans, which action they regard as their duty.”⁵²⁸

Metro Director of City Planning Earl Levin understood the growing significance of opposition from people like Styliaras in the context of the Spadina Expressway controversy in Toronto. Levin was particularly aware of the threat to the status and role of the “expert” in urban planning posed by energized citizen groups. At an engineering conference, Levin warned his audience that professionals no longer enjoyed the status of experts who were beyond reproach. Instead of engineers solving engineering problems, he explained, “ordinary citizens” had the power to intervene and thwart their efforts, questioning the “social morality” of projects like the Spadina route in Toronto. “Today,” Levin said, “there is a general reaction against the professional and a rejection of the expert by our society which at one time accorded them the highest respect.”⁵²⁹ He attributed the shift to a variety of factors including the social upheaval of World War II and the destruction of the atomic bomb, combined with an educated generations’ growing disillusionment with consumer culture and concerns about environmental

⁵²⁸ D. Styliaras, “A breakthrough is needed,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 30 April 1970.

⁵²⁹ E.A. Levin, “The Engineer as Citizen,” (Address to Engineering Conference “The Social Responsibility of the Engineer”) 1970, 7. Dr. Earl A. Levin Collection, IUS, University of Winnipeg.

stewardship.⁵³⁰ “Dissident groups” now occupied a central role in society, he contended, and there was no majority collective “to submerge radical views and render them relatively ineffectual.” What was even more troubling, he added, was that “The reaction against the professional is not confined to groups which can be described as radicals and malcontents. The suspicion and lack of trust and confidence with which the professions are now regarded, extends through a significant cross-section of society.”⁵³¹ Professionals in all fields, Levin concluded, had to address the problem and reposition themselves to ensure they were in tuned to society.

While Levin advised his colleagues to be cognizant of shifting public sentiment to avoid losing their influence to “dissident groups,” he also took more tangible measures to limit the resources of these critics. As metro considered whether to help fund the Institute of Urban Studies (IUS), a policy research centre affiliated with the University of Winnipeg, Levin advised Metro Executive Director D.I. MacDonald that the Institute should be a low priority. Levin recounted how officials had hoped the centre, formed in 1969, would generate useful information through studies, help disseminate and explain metro planning policy, and advise officials on planning issues. “Instead of being useful to the Corporation,” Levin explained, “the work of the Institute at best has had no relevance for the Corporation’s interests, and at worst has been obstructive and hostile.”⁵³² The IUS’s focus, he continued, was political activism, not objective research. The group believed the current political system was not representative, that citizens must reclaim their power, and that the Institute was “the natural successor to the government as

⁵³⁰ Ibid, 8-9.

⁵³¹ Ibid, 10.

⁵³² E.A. Levin to D.I. MacDonald, Memo, 25 May 1971, 1, P-3 Studies, CWARC.

the leader of ‘the people’,” Levin said.⁵³³ As a group that focused on small scale local problems that lacked any relevance to broader city planning issues, their work was of little value to metro and city residents, he concluded.⁵³⁴ While Levin grossly overstated the IUS’s ambitions to lead “the people,” the group’s members were vocal advocates for the restoration of the inner city and one of its’ graduate students, Terry Partridge, later became a leader of the anti-expressway opposition in the city.

“It is important to avoid applying the solutions of the 1960s to the 1970s”

The intergovernmental conflict that dominated the Winnipeg expressway debates revolved around provincial officials’ refusal to fund the WATS scheme. Provincial authorities were skeptical even before the formal plan was released of the need for expressways in Winnipeg, while local officials insisted their proposal was the product of sound planning and careful study. Minister of Transportation Joe Borowski’s early cool response to the prospect of freeways for Winnipeg was a sign of things to come, as provincial officials refused to make a funding commitment or even an official policy statement on WATS in the years following the plan’s release. Provincial officials’ continuing skepticism over the need for expressways was best exemplified in their creation of a WATS review committee which, predictably, exacerbated tensions with municipal officials who refused to participate and later attacked the committee’s unfavourable final report. The antagonism between provincial and municipal officials allowed local councillors to repeatedly postpone adopting their own official position on WATS. Those ongoing debates minimized the significance of feuds at city hall, as councillors’ approval without

⁵³³ Ibid, 2.

⁵³⁴ Ibid, 3.

provincial funding would not advance the plans. Still, the ongoing indecision of local councillors elicited anger and frustration from community activists who were becoming increasingly concerned with the apparent lack of leadership in their city.

Metro civil servants were soon fielding challenges to WATS from both provincial and city politicians. Metro Executive Director D.I. MacDonald authored a report to address city council's questions concerns raised by sociological and economic studies conducted for WATS, concerns which Metro Councillor John W. McGurran deemed "stupid."⁵³⁵ The province, meanwhile, had yet to make any kind of financial commitment to the WATS scheme. As metro tried to move the project forward, the province showed no signs of moving in the same direction. Metro Vice-Chairman Bernie R. Wolfe called for provincial and federal financial aid to help design urban transportation schemes. At the same time Wolfe advocated the purchase, by expropriation if necessary, of "land banks" along the expressway routes, with the eventual plan of reselling the land for substantially higher prices after the transportation projects were complete.⁵³⁶ Provincial Highways Minister Joe Borowski was not interested in metro's appeals for funding. He argued that instead of building the inner perimeter highway that was integral to the WATS network, metro should give residents free rides on the city's transit system. Borowski added that he wanted to avoid the mistake of other North American cities, noting, "when you

⁵³⁵ "Metro answers city's questions," *Winnipeg Free Press* 10 July 1970.

⁵³⁶ Wolfe noted other cities including Calgary, Edmonton and Baltimore, Maryland had all followed this model of land acquisition and resale. "Tri-level approach urged on urban plan," *Winnipeg Free Press* 25 August 1970. Metro Executive Director D.I. MacDonald noted the lack of the provincial or federal funding when City of Winnipeg officials requested detailed information on the funding arrangements in place for WATS projects: "We [metro council] would advise that, as yet, neither the Federal nor Provincial Governments have any meaningful programs of assistance for substantial urban transportation problems which face the major cities. The requirements are beyond the limited financial capacity of the urban centres, Metro Winnipeg included. Until such time as the necessary programs of assistance emerge from the senior governments, the Corporation can only maintain a very limited and inadequate scale of transportation improvements." D.I. MacDonald to Metro Council, 6 July 1970, ST-10, CWARC.

build more roads you create more traffic.” The minister acted on his conviction by freezing the province’s standard fifty percent contribution to expropriation costs.⁵³⁷

Borowski’s move fuelled speculation that the provincial government would soon announce its outright rejection of WATS freeways. Metro Chairman Jack Willis fought back, insisting the inner perimeter highway addressed needs public transit could not, and that the city’s growth would be stunted without the road.⁵³⁸ Metro Councillor Bernie R. Wolfe supported his colleague, reiterating their frustration that two years had passed since the official release of WATS and still the province had not committed to funding, or even issued a policy statement on the matter.⁵³⁹ Willis even petitioned Premier Schreyer for a statement on the province’s position on the beltway expropriations, to no avail.⁵⁴⁰ The province’s silence on the matter also affected public transit plans. Metro Director of Transportation H.F. Burns (1971-81) argued transit required a provincial subsidy because it was simply not profitable, noting the Ontario government had helped finance Toronto’s subway construction. As an “in-between” city, he acknowledged Winnipeg required something more than a bus system but noted its population was insufficient to support a subway. Burns added that no transit system could supplant the need for expressways.⁵⁴¹

⁵³⁷ Bob Lisoway, “Transit-road study called out-dated,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 26 November 1971.

⁵³⁸ “Metro hoots at plan,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 5 December 1970.

⁵³⁹ Transportation Committee Chair to Council, Memo and Attachment, Wolfe Statement, 3 December 1970; ST-10, CWARC.

⁵⁴⁰ J.E. Willis to E.R. Schreyer, 23 December 1970, SC 5.8, CWARC. Metro authorities were reluctant to abandon expropriations for the beltway and, by extension, attempts to secure provincial funding because they regarded it as an indispensable part of the region’s transportation network. Metro Executive Director D.I. MacDonald explained, “Since the Beltway is an integral part of the Winnipeg Area Transportation Study, it would, in effect, pull the props out from under that Study and make it largely obsolete.” D.I. MacDonald memo to Council, 16 December 1970, SC 5.8, CWARC.

⁵⁴¹ Susan Hoeschen, “Metro transport budget slashed,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 13 April 1971.

The growing tension between metro and provincial officials peaked in March 1971 when Minister of Transportation Joe Borowski notified Metro Chair Jack Willis that the province was putting together an advisory committee to review WATS. Borowski asked Willis to refer two metro representatives for the ten member group, but metro officials were enraged. Metro Executive Director D.I. MacDonald advised his fellow councillors they should demand control over the membership and mandate of the committee, or refuse to participate. MacDonald wanted to keep Winnipeg City Council members off the committee, arguing city officials “cannot be objective” and “automatically object to metro’s plans, regardless of their merit.”⁵⁴² “It appears to me,” MacDonald explained, “that the provincial government, being unable to make up its own mind, is now anxious to farm out some of the more difficult decisions respecting future transportation requirements to some as yet unidentified group of people. I am very dubious about the propriety of the Corporation becoming a party to this process.”⁵⁴³

Willis responded to Borowski’s request to appoint metro representatives to the committee by asking for a meeting to discuss the proposed provincial review, the stalled beltway expropriations, and an “economic study of the place of the metropolitan area in the Provincial economy.”⁵⁴⁴ Minister of Urban Affairs Saul M. Cherniack (1970) replied that the terms of reference were already set for the committee and requested Levin and Hryorczuk join the group on behalf of metro.⁵⁴⁵ Willis then requested a meeting with Premier Schreyer to discuss the committee stalemate. In a statement approved by metro council, the metro chair told Schreyer

⁵⁴² D.I. MacDonald to Council, 17 March 1971, ST-10, CWARC.

⁵⁴³ Ibid.

⁵⁴⁴ J.E. Willis to E.R. Schreyer, 18 March 1971, ST-10, CWARC.

⁵⁴⁵ S.M. Cherniack to J. Willis, 16 April 1971, ST-10, CWARC.

that the proposed provincial committee's terms of reference were such that all metro planning proposals -- including the Metropolitan Development Plan already approved by the province -- would be subject to review. The committee members would require "a higher degree of expertise" than the authors of the original studies, Willis reasoned, if they were to critique the plans. This remark about expertise attacked Borowski's goal of composing the committee of accountable citizens as completely inappropriate.⁵⁴⁶ Since the committee was to produce a critical evaluation of metro planning policy, Willis added, metro members would be in "an untenable position."⁵⁴⁷ In the meantime, Schreyer continued to ignore Willis's calls for a meeting, reiterating his request that metro name its two committee members.⁵⁴⁸ Willis would not be moved as he told Cherniack that metro would not appoint members to the group and instead called for "professional advisors," recommending DeLeuw Cather and Company -- consultants who had authored expressway plans for cities across the country -- whom he described as "likely the most knowledgeable firm in transportation and land use available in Canada."⁵⁴⁹

After six months, the committee charged with studying WATS relayed its findings to the premier. The group charged WATS was the product of outdated planning that was inconsistent with the new standard of interdisciplinary studies. "It is important," the committee wrote, "to avoid applying the solutions of the 1960s to the 1970s." It went so far as to question the premise

⁵⁴⁶ J.E. Willis to E. Schreyer, 23 April 1971, 2-3, ST-10, CWARC. Willis relayed Borowski's remarks to the media, quoting the Premier as saying of the prospective committee members, "I wanted to hear from these people because they live in this city, pay taxes, and will eventually have to stand up and defend their recommendations."

⁵⁴⁷ Ibid, 2-3.

⁵⁴⁸ Edward Schreyer to Jack Willis, 12 May 1971, ST-10, CWARC.

⁵⁴⁹ J.E. Willis to S. Cherniack, 13 May 1971, ST-10, CWARC. Willis reiterated his position in a subsequent letter to Schreyer, J.E. Willis to E. Schreyer, 18 May 1971, ST-10, CWARC.

of the plan, denying that a transportation crisis existed in Winnipeg.⁵⁵⁰ The group concluded that the WATS plan failed on every count: it was too expensive and included no reasonable funding proposal; it was justified only by “an arbitrary and narrowly based ‘standard of living’” criteria; freeways were inappropriately prioritized; the statistics used to support the plan were unreliable; the network was too basic; and no consideration of the environmental impact was included. The committee did not fully blame consultants for the shortcomings of the study, noting the problems could be attributed in large part to the limited terms of reference handed down by metro officials.⁵⁵¹ The province was careful to stipulate the committee’s scathing assessment was not to be interpreted as an official policy statement, but this did little to appease metro officials.

Enraged by the criticism, metro officials argued that the provincial committee that criticized the study’s limited terms of reference failed to understand the study’s mandate, insisting the plans were merely proposals that would be subject to a series of additional evaluations before graduating to the construction stage. Such subsequent studies would address other issues raised by the committee, including their charge that, “Environmental aspects of the transportation system are largely neglected and this is especially serious in the downtown area.”⁵⁵² Metro officials argued their provincial counterparts were unwilling to acknowledge the merits of the plan simply because they did not agree with the prioritization of automobiles over public transit.⁵⁵³

⁵⁵⁰ Bob Lisoway, “Transit-road study called out-dated,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 26 November 1971.

⁵⁵¹ Sidney Green to Stephen Juba and J.E. Willis, “Re: Provincial Advisory Committee on Transportation,” 25 November 1971; Provincial Advisory Committee on WATS, “Evaluation of WAT Study,” 1-7; MTC SC 5-8, CWARC.

⁵⁵² “Comments on the interim report of the provincial advisory committee on transportation,” 2 December 1971, 2; ST-10, CWARC.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid*, 4.

Metro officials insisted that they had paid attention to transit and that residents frequently used the city's already well developed network. They insisted that only federal and provincial governments had the authority to take steps such as taxing cars to help fund transit systems before they were economically self-sustaining.⁵⁵⁴ The provincial committee also characterized the study as "substantially unresponsive to the introduction of community considerations other than those of vehicle users,"⁵⁵⁵ but metro officials insisted on the plan's objectivity, stating, "There is no policy explicit or implicit. There is simply the principle of answering transportation needs in the most economical and efficient way within the structure of the existing modes of traffic."⁵⁵⁶

While the provincial committee's devastating evaluation of WATS frustrated metro officials, it did not mark the end of the plans. Metro officials enjoyed a morale boost courtesy of a Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation report on transportation in Manitoba that downplayed public transit, disregarded alternative forms of transportation like bicycles, and stressed the importance of accommodating the private automobile. While *Tribune* columnist Peter Calamai criticized the report for ignoring recent public backlash over inner city expressway projects, metro council nevertheless welcomed the praise for the city's high transit user figures, recommendation to divert some rural road financing to urban areas, and calls for \$20,000,000 to be invested in roads infrastructure annually.⁵⁵⁷ City politicians, on the other hand, were not moved by CMHC's report. During the 1971 mayoral race, current and soon to be re-elected

⁵⁵⁴ Ibid, 4.

⁵⁵⁵ Ibid, 3.

⁵⁵⁶ Ibid, 5. Metro Councillor William Hutton accused the province of "read[ing] policy into" the plan. "Hutton backs report," *Winnipeg Free Press* 2 December 1971.

⁵⁵⁷ Peter Calamai, "Driving cheaper than walking: transportation report," *The Winnipeg Tribune* 28 July 1971. D.I. MacDonald memo to Council, 1 September 1971; ST-10, CWARC.

Mayor Steve Juba attacked WATS, arguing the scheme was too expensive. Metro Chairman Jack Willis insisted Juba was exaggerating the costs and that the network was necessary for the city.⁵⁵⁸ The mayor maintained his opposition after his re-election but was careful to note that he did not oppose all facets of WATS, just what he called the “grandiose freeway proposals” and the associated costs.⁵⁵⁹

Metro executives in Winnipeg were also taking note of similar debates in other parts of the country in their effort to understand both the public and provincial opposition to the scheme. Although they were alarmed by the provincial cancellation of the Spadina Expressway in Toronto in June 1971, they liked the public transit funding arrangement Premier of Ontario Bill Davis announced at the time. The new agreement meant the province would cover half the construction and equipment costs of public transit as well as subsidizing half of the system operating costs, an arrangement similar to one metro executives campaigned for a few months earlier.⁵⁶⁰

Metro Executive Director D. I. MacDonald also distributed a report on the cancellation of the Spadina Expressway in Toronto to his metro colleagues. MacDonald told them, “I am not sure what the precise lesson is from the Spadina project, but it is clear that there are implications

⁵⁵⁸ Frances Bidewell, “Candidates speak, and speak, and . . .” *Winnipeg Free Press* 30 September 1971.

⁵⁵⁹ “Juba says answer is rapid transit,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 26 November 1971.

⁵⁶⁰ D.I. MacDonald, Memo, 7 September 1971; D.I. MacDonald and H.F. Burns, “Government of Ontario Support for Public Transit Systems,” 27 August 1971; J. Willis memo, 30 June 1971; K.E. Porter, Memo to Council, 30 June 1971; ST-10, CWARC. City officials also reviewed a student paper supporting WATS and sent a copy to the provincial Minister of Urban Affairs Sidney Green. In the paper, student Phil Backman argued freeways would help, not hurt, the city and that they were essential to any good public transit network. Backman characterized WATS opponents as irrational and uninformed, writing, “Criticisms of the WAT study have been emotionally based for the most part and have tended to come from academics who do not know anything about urban transportation in general, or transportation planning, or municipal politics, or the problems and possibilities of public transit. However by bandying about such cliches as ‘burying the city in a jungle of concrete’ the critics have managed to get the occasion to air their hysterical concerns for the ‘welfare’ of the public at the hands of fiendish transportation planners.” Andrew Currie to K.E. Porter, 7 January 1972, and Phil Backman, “The Urban Transport Problem . . . with particular reference to Winnipeg and the WAT study” (Student paper), 16, 22; MTC SC 5-8, CWARC.

in the transportation planning processes which are not yet fully appreciated and the problems are even more complex than they have hitherto been considered to be -- if that is possible.”⁵⁶¹ The Toronto based transportation and planning consultant who authored the report blamed opposition on citizens’ inability to understand the complexities of planning and argued Premier Davis had yielded to citizens’ unreasonable demands in cancelling the route.

Engineer and consultant John R. Crosby offered a long list of lessons from the controversy, arguing ultimately that opposition was unavoidable, noting, “citizens are frequently incapable of comprehending the need or desirability for change even within rapidly growing urban areas.”⁵⁶² Planners must be prepared with irrefutable facts and examine all possible alternatives in order to effectively manage citizen opposition, but community activists, whom he called “semi-experts,” should not be allowed to hijack the proceedings.⁵⁶³ The only truly legitimate community representatives, he maintained, were elected officials. Planners should also be aware that community opponents would oppose all components of a plan even if they only found one feature objectionable. Crosby further argued that the “cruel social cost” that Spadina opponents often complained of was actually inflicted on those who suffered from the expressway not being constructed. He was further unsatisfied with Davis’s explanation of the decision to cancel the road, saying it was devoid of factual reasoning and instead revealed the “emotional and philosophical” issues shaping the controversy.⁵⁶⁴ To avoid another Spadina-like

⁵⁶¹ Letter, MacDonald to Metro Council, 18 October 1971; ST-10, CWARC.

⁵⁶² John R. Crosby, “Combined Transportation Corridors, Part II: The Spadina Expressway: ‘The Abandoned Corridor’,” (Toronto: M.M. Dillon Limited, c. June-September 1971), 67; ST-10, CWARC.

⁵⁶³ Ibid, 68. Crosby lamented, “The current democratic process seems to require the total involvement of citizens in the decision-making role irrespective of the questions or issues involved. This appears to be a direct attack upon the mandate given to an elected representative and implicit in his success at the polls,” 74.

⁵⁶⁴ Ibid, 70.

defeat in the future, Crosby insisted master plans must be adopted by officials and updated periodically; once adopted, functional planning proposals would be generated. At that point, the schemes would “no longer [be] open to a question of need and/or desirability,” because, according to Crosby, “These questions cannot be answered at this stage, as they are completely unrelated to specific projects. They must be considered a direct attack upon the official plan and the related transportation plan.”⁵⁶⁵

Despite the lack of commitment from the province to WATS, metro officials moved forward with expropriations around the city. The acquisitions met with opposition from some local councillors and the ensuing debates increased pressure on city council to make an official decision on WATS, which it had yet to endorse or reject. Inconsistencies in expropriation approvals also drew criticism and calls for council to take a firm stand, as acquisitions for the proposed beltway and attendant crossing in Sturgeon Creek were approved, but expropriations for the southeastern freeway were blocked.⁵⁶⁶ The process was further complicated by the reluctance of the provincial government to approve expropriations without an official decision on WATS from the city.⁵⁶⁷ As D.I. MacDonald urged city officials to make a commitment, yet another meeting was scheduled in an attempt to reach a final decision.⁵⁶⁸

Meanwhile criticism of local government grew. The *Winnipeg Free Press* ran an editorial calling council disorganized, and accusing the group of having misplaced priorities that resulted

⁵⁶⁵ Ibid, 64-80.

⁵⁶⁶ “Expropriating sites for beltway backed,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 6 June 1972. “Approves closing crossings,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 9 June 1972. “Land purchase deferred,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 29 August 1972. “Acquisition of land urged,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 26 September 1972.

⁵⁶⁷ “City urged to set new transport policy,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 7 October 1972.

⁵⁶⁸ “MacDonald asks committee for firm stand on beltway,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 12 January 1973.

in delayed implementation of long term projects.⁵⁶⁹ Delays with the WATS scheme were of particular concern, with councillors taking nine months to consider the plan and as long as a year to make a decision regarding implementation. The editorial board also urged council to turn attention to the debates over railway relocation in the city, an issue linked with the WATS controversy.⁵⁷⁰ If downtown rail yards were to be relocated outside of the city, there would be substantial prime real estate to develop, while it was widely rumoured that relocating some rail lines would leave an ideal corridor for freeway development.⁵⁷¹ Consultants later admitted that their study on railway relocation was written under the assumption that the WATS network would be constructed, though Metro Councillor Bernie R. Wolfe maintained the rail plans were “conceptual” and that Winnipeg freeways would not be like the infamous American thoroughfares.⁵⁷²

Discord among city councillors and staff over the WATS scheme peaked in the spring of 1973 as they tried to come to an agreement as to their official position. In April, fifty city councillors met over two days to discuss the proposed railway relocations, downtown development, and WATS. Administrators argued the development plan was flawed from its

⁵⁶⁹ *Winnipeg Free Press* columnist Bob Lisoway in particular criticized the government for their lack of progress on development issues. On the first anniversary of amalgamation in June 1972, he noted the administration had yet to make any long term development decisions and that squabbling between committees prevented even the approval of a downtown development plan. Bob Lisoway, “Central city council had its first anniversary,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 12 October 1972; “‘No major decisions’,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 30 December 1972; “Committee uncertain about downtown plan,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 13 October 1972; and “A decision cannot be postponed,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 27 January 1973.

⁵⁷⁰ Bob Lisoway, “Odd sense of priorities,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 15 July 1972.

⁵⁷¹ A report jointly commissioned by the federal, provincial and metropolitan governments, CP Rail and Canadian National Railways proposed freed railway corridors should be geared towards “uses more amenable to social, environmental and economic goals and objectives of the urban community.” Bob Lisoway, “Rail relocation urged by report,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 29 June 1972.

⁵⁷² Charles Wyatt, “Transport planners criticized over freeway design system,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 27 March 1973.

inception because planners lacked adequate authority under the metro administration.⁵⁷³ City Planning Director Roy Darke responded by criticizing councillors for failing to support city administrators by upholding the city's development plan, adding that the plan could be amended if changes were necessary. Civic Environment Commissioner David G. Henderson agreed with Darke, accusing council of inaction and indecision, in turn preventing administrators from implementing policy.⁵⁷⁴

At the end of the marathon sessions, characterized by one newspaper as “[Mayor] Juba’s traveling circus,”⁵⁷⁵ Transportation Director Harry F. Burns maintained his support for the implementation of WATS,⁵⁷⁶ but most councillors opposed the freeway system including the suburban beltway component. While they acknowledged a freeway might be necessary in the future, they questioned current need. The group also agreed that the broader community should have a voice but that council would still make the final decision. Riverbank land acquisitions, they added, should be for parks, not freeways.⁵⁷⁷

“The trend towards the private car was assumed inevitable, and the proposal was to accommodate it at any cost”

The public opposition to expressways in Winnipeg resembled that in other cities. Many of the most vocal and active protestors were academics with the University of Winnipeg and the

⁵⁷³ *Winnipeg Free Press* 2 April 1973.

⁵⁷⁴ Frances Bidewell, “Administrators plead for policies,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 3 April 1973.

⁵⁷⁵ Mike O’Shaughnessy, “Juba’s travelling circus,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 7 April 1973.

⁵⁷⁶ *Winnipeg Free Press* 3 April 1973.

⁵⁷⁷ Mike O’Shaughnessy, “Majority on council opposes freeways,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 4 April 1973. The opposition also affected some of the less controversial elements of WATS as construction of the Sherbrook-McGregor overpass was delayed to allow community concerns to be heard. Paul Pihichyn, “Sherbrook-McGregor overpass decision stalled for a month,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 13 April 1973.

University of Manitoba who publicized their position and recruited supporters by organizing public meetings and publishing anti-expressway literature. Academics in Winnipeg operated much like their colleagues in other cities, networking with like-minded activists both within and outside of the university communities to garner broader public support and pressure officials to take a firm stand against the highways. Observing the lack of provincial support for WATS, activists focused their efforts on local politicians, most of whom had repeatedly avoided a stance on WATS as metro and provincial authorities battled over the proposal. Protestors were particularly concerned about the relationship between local politicians and civil servants, alternately accusing each group of exerting undue influence over city planning and pursuing their own, undisclosed agenda with little regard for what was best for the city and its residents in the long term. While activists raised the public profile of the expressway debates and asked important questions about the power dynamics within the city's administration, the fate of the Winnipeg expressways was really sealed by the provincial government's refusal to fund the schemes. The consistent lack of provincial support for WATS freeways meant activists' efforts to turn local officials against the scheme were never instrumental in the defeat of Winnipeg's expressways.

The most important protest group in Winnipeg was the Coalition On Sensible Transport (COST), a citizen group that mobilized in response to concerns over the city's freeway plans. Terry Partridge, COST's leader and a graduate student working out of the Institute of Urban Studies at the University of Winnipeg, argued that planning reports throughout the 1950s and 1960s appeared to be "purely technical" but in reality, "The trend towards the private car was assumed inevitable, and the proposal was to accommodate it at any cost." The WATS

recommendations, he argued, were a foregone conclusion.⁵⁷⁸ Like other activist groups across the country, COST members were eager to mobilize opposition to the expressways and later, they were careful to document their key role in the debates. Prior to the formation of COST there were already a number of concerned community groups engaged in discussion over the WATS scheme. The initial impetus for community concern was the plan to remove rail lines in the city, which activists from groups including the IUS, the Neighbourhood Service Centre, the Community Welfare Planning Council and some Resident Advisory Groups regarded as the first step in making way for the WATS expressways. Officials repeatedly denied the removal of rail lines and yards meant expressways would follow, insisting such roads were but one possibility for the way in which the cleared land could be repurposed. Partridge explained the group's position: "It appeared obvious that the freeway plan was being pushed hard and that it was far from the remote possibility it was being made out to be. Unless it was debated before the rails were removed, it would be a virtual *fait accompli*."⁵⁷⁹

As far the activists were concerned, a public meeting in January 1973 was simply another venue for officials to issue their denials. IUS members decided to target city meetings by preparing probing questions that would disrupt officials' carefully constructed presentations and encourage attendees to question official plans. They worked with local Pollution Probe member Andrew Little as well as Peter Hudson, from the University of Manitoba's social work school, to refine their approach while the Community Welfare Planning Council contacted Resident Advisory Groups to set up meetings to make their presentation on the rail track removal scheme.

⁵⁷⁸ Terry J. Partridge, *Transportation Advocacy Planning: Winnipeg: The Case of C.O.S.T.* Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg, c. July-December 1973), 3-14, 8 (quote).

⁵⁷⁹ Ibid, 33.

In February 1973, this network of activists banded together as the Coalition on Sensible Transport. The group made presentations on the rail issue to the Central Area Council, which coordinated social agencies in the city. Soon the Winnipeg Citizens Transit Committee, the Manitoba Environment Council, and the Community Planning Association of Canada joined the opposition.⁵⁸⁰

As Partridge explained, councillors and officials were at odds:

The administration voiced frustration at the lack of direction. They had prepared a development plan, a major transport plan (WATS), a downtown development plan, and the railway study. They wanted decisions to be made regarding implementation. Council was not in fact giving direction. Positions had not been taken in public debate during the election because that was not the nature of the supposedly non-partisan city politics.⁵⁸¹

Director of Transportation H.F. Burns admitted publicizing the \$767,000,000 cost of WATS was likely a mistake. Partridge argued it was civil servants who were the driving force behind the city's development policies. He noted:

The administration's influence on policy was enormous. They had a monopoly control of the plans and the technical reasons that supported the plans. Council relied solely on them for advice. One councillor in a Freudian slip even referred to the administrators as 'policy makers'. Another councillor complained that the administrators were giving sales pitches for the development plans and were not presenting council with alternatives.⁵⁸²

The majority of councillors preferred public transit and the development of arterial roads to expressways. COST continued to hold a series of public meetings, each time inviting public

⁵⁸⁰ "Rail effects study set," *Winnipeg Free Press* 19 March 1973.

⁵⁸¹ Terry J. Partridge, *Transportation Advocacy Planning: Winnipeg: The Case of C.O.S.T.* Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg, c. July-December 1973), 39.

⁵⁸² *Ibid*, 40.

officials and councillors to join activists in debate over the scheme, but city officials only agreed to deliver presentations.⁵⁸³

Growing public scrutiny increased pressure on local politicians to take a clear stand on WATS. COST pushed the debate to the next level by moving beyond the merits of the WATS expressways to questioning the need for such roads in Winnipeg. The “Why WATS?” paper was born out of this effort, and sent directly to councillors, planners and community groups.⁵⁸⁴ Partridge argued freeways were not worth the exorbitant costs and questioned the statistics metro officials and consultants used to demonstrate the need for the roads. Partridge questioned the forecasting tools and procedures of the government’s consultants, saying the projections were based on assumptions and criteria that were not clearly explained in the official reports. Intangible factors such as comfort, reliability and trip continuity could not be factored into quantitative data, he added. Partridge also questioned the utility of constructing networks to accommodate peak traffic volumes.⁵⁸⁵

For Partridge, the larger issue was the detrimental impact WATS would have on the heart of the city. The freeways were not compatible with the downtown development plan, he argued, since the routes facilitated decentralization and core depopulation. These growth patterns in turn increased the demand for new and existing roads, while making effective public transit

⁵⁸³ Ibid, 28-52. COST’s calls for public participation in the planning process were supported by the Free Press editors, who argued accommodating community participation was the right way to proceed, even if it slowed the decision making process. Paul Pihichyn, “In the proper spirit,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 16 June 1973.

⁵⁸⁴ Terry J. Partridge, *Transportation Advocacy Planning: Winnipeg: The Case of C.O.S.T.* Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg, c. July-December 1973), 28-52. The Why WATS paper was later included as part of a co-authored submission to the Environment Committee. Lloyd Axworthy and Terry Partridge, “Presentation on Transportation Planning to Environment Committee, City of Winnipeg” (16 April 1973), 2-3. IUS Library, University of Winnipeg.

⁵⁸⁵ Terry Partridge, *Why W.A.T.S.* (Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg: March 1973), introduction, 6, 7-8. IUS, University of Winnipeg. Partridge also questioned the role of consultants’ statistics in supporting the plan: “As early as 1964, before the model had even been tested on the 1962 data, metro transport planners announced the need for a plan similar to that proposed today. It is time for a rethink,” *Why W.A.T.S.*, 15.

increasingly difficult to provide.⁵⁸⁶ The promotion of decentralized development combined with the focus on freeways at the expense of public transit would also negatively impact city residents. As Partridge explained:

More than a third of any urban population, old people, children, the handicapped, and the poor will always be dependent on public transport . . . [the] environmental and social costs to the victims of progress should receive fair consideration and generous compensation should be made when disruption is deemed necessary for the general good.⁵⁸⁷

“The results of the comprehensive six year study of urban transportation had been essentially rejected by a drastic change in public values”

The death knell for WATS came in May 1973 when Premier Edward Schreyer came out against the scheme. Speaking in the legislature, Schreyer supported his announcement by referencing a provincial report on transportation in Winnipeg which called for a better bus system with lower fares and transfer stations, weather-protected pedestrian paths, and more expensive downtown parking rates to deter drivers from bringing their cars into the city by “bring[ing the] private costs of automobile use more in line with social costs.”⁵⁸⁸ Less than three months later in July, the Unicity Council followed the province’s lead by including in a general policy statement a resolution against freeways. The council “decided to reject freeways in favour of an expanded arterial street system, with increased emphasis on public transport.”⁵⁸⁹

After the provincial and municipal administrations both abandoned WATS, the plans quickly faded from the public agenda. Only small, isolated components of WATS that were

⁵⁸⁶ Ibid, 5-6.

⁵⁸⁷ Ibid, 14.

⁵⁸⁸ “Bus improvements urged by report,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 1 May 1973.

⁵⁸⁹ Terry J. Partridge, *Transportation Advocacy Planning: Winnipeg: The Case of C.O.S.T.* (Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg, c. July-December 1973), 45-46.

unrelated to the freeways survived, such as the Fort Garry-St. Vital bridge.⁵⁹⁰ The Manitoba Motor League remained hopeful that the network would be resurrected, but there was no political support.⁵⁹¹ In the 1974 municipal election campaign, all three parties running mayoral candidates -- the Independent Citizens Election Committee, the New Democratic Party (NDP), and the Civic Reform Coalition -- opposed freeways for the city.⁵⁹²

Several years after the defeat of WATS, consultants identified shifting public values as the reason for the scheme's demise. In an assessment that curiously failed to acknowledge the government conflict that provided the backdrop for the debates, consultants said simply, "The results of the comprehensive six year study [WATS] of urban transportation had been essentially rejected by a drastic change in public values." In self-defence, they noted the defeat of similar schemes in other cities and argued that the expressway component of WATS was widely publicized while the transit components were overlooked. They concluded, "The essential point to consider is that the change in current public values was only related to one component of the WATS recommendations, namely major roads, and perhaps in particular to only part of the component, namely the radial freeways orientated towards the downtown."⁵⁹³ The consultants also noted that official investment in regional transportation infrastructure declined in the years

⁵⁹⁰ "\$108,000 purchase of land approved," *Winnipeg Free Press* 19 December 1974.

⁵⁹¹ Manitoba Motor League, *Getting Around: A Look at Traffic & Transit Issues in Winnipeg*, (Winnipeg: Manitoba Motor League, 1974), 4-6, 21-25. IUS Library, University of Winnipeg. The League positioned itself as a moderate voice in the "car vs. people" debate, advocating a network that catered to both private auto and public transit users. They criticized those who advocated strictly for either cars or transit, branding both equally unrealistic visions. While supporting public transit, they argued Winnipeg's population concentration would not support a rapid transit system.

⁵⁹² "Transit scene in spotlight," *Winnipeg Free Press* 1 May 1974.

⁵⁹³ Damas and Smith Ltd. for the Winnipeg Tri-Level Committee on Urban Affairs, *Transportation: A Background Paper on Urban Transportation Systems for Winnipeg* (Winnipeg: Damas and Smith Ltd., 1978), 3-4. IUS Library, University of Winnipeg.

following the WATS defeat, though it was rebounding by the mid 1970s.⁵⁹⁴ Static long range plans that sought to predict and plan for changes over several decades like WATS were neither realistic nor feasible, they added. Instead, metro authorities should aim for flexible plans that include alternative arrangements and recognize both predictable and unpredictable variables in urban development.⁵⁹⁵

The government conflict over WATS was likely the most important factor in the eventual defeat of the scheme. Public opinion was undoubtedly shifting, a change that manifested in the mobilization of protest groups in the early 1970s, but it was the province's initial reluctance -- and later outright refusal -- to support metro's scheme that left the plans vulnerable to opponents. Squabbling between city politicians and officials further inflamed the debates.

Lawyer and former NDP City Councillor Lawrie Cherniack (1972-74) offered some insight behind the scenes of the controversy with his candid assessment of the problems between city politicians and civil servants. Cherniack blamed former Mayor Steve Juba for creating an incredibly contentious atmosphere in which planners were marginalized. Cherniack argued that morale was low among city planning staff because the politicians lacked direction and did not give planners the freedom to be creative with their work. He boldly accused Juba of ruling by fear, and said metro was unconcerned with consulting citizens about urban development. "At metro," Cherniack explained, "the atmosphere was that of a responsible tyrant -- a reasonable, although paternalistic, source of power. There was no need to consult citizens or to be concerned about the impact of metro's schemes on the citizenry." He also exposed the strategic nature of some appointments, claiming that Environment Commissioner David G. Henderson was awarded

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid, 6-8.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid, 57-60.

the job “because he was not Mr. Levin,” referring to Earl Levin, the outspoken planner who, despite his opposition to anti-expressway forces, also openly challenged his colleagues’ interpretation of development challenges in the city and urged them to tune into the shifting public sentiment behind the protests. Civil servants under Juba’s administration, Cherniack argued, had become politicized. He offered a bleak final assessment: “Morale is low among the administration within the environment section because they know how important they could be -- and they know how insignificant they really are.”⁵⁹⁶

The government conflict that plagued WATS throughout the late 1960s and 1970s was likely the most important factor in the scheme’s eventual demise, but public opposition also played a role. After provincial and municipal administrations both abandoned WATS in 1973, Coalition on Sensible Transport leader Terry Partridge reflected on the group’s role in the debates. In his estimation, COST’s role was “very similar in kind, though not in magnitude, to that of the Spadina protestors in Toronto and the Boston inner beltway critics of the late sixties.”⁵⁹⁷ Partridge offered a detailed analysis of his group’s contributions to the debates over expressways and planning in Winnipeg. He explained:

The contribution of COST to the events of 1973 constituted but one element in a complex planning process characterized by changing institutions, technologies and political debate. While organized action by community interest groups on planning issues is by no means new to Winnipeg, the degree of organization on an area-wide basis, the use of professionals, and the level of technical debate did represent a novel dimension.⁵⁹⁸

He argued advocacy was essential and that professional advocates in particular had an important role to play in planning and development decisions. Such advocates helped inform the public of

⁵⁹⁶ Lawrie Cherniack, “Ailing city: Politicians, not staff, blamed,” *Winnipeg Free Press* 14 September 1976.

⁵⁹⁷ Terry J. Partridge, *Transportation Advocacy Planning: Winnipeg: The Case of C.O.S.T.* (Institute of Urban Studies, University of Winnipeg, c. July-December 1973), 1.

⁵⁹⁸ *Ibid*, 47.

alternatives, forcing officials to compete with other groups for public support and in turn, improve their own work. Increasingly centralized and sophisticated planning methods had resulted in less responsiveness to local concerns, but advocates could help bring back more local perspectives in the planning process.

Partridge was careful not to overstate the group's influence, acknowledging that COST was "an ad hoc, spontaneous reaction to an immediate problem."⁵⁹⁹ Partridge admitted it was difficult to measure the group's success since there was no way of knowing how many citizens had received handouts and pamphlets, how many read, heard or watched press coverage, and no way to measure the impact of fostering debate. Ultimately, he concluded, advocacy groups depended on funding and would benefit greatly from "institutionalized channels for dissent in the form of public hearings, with provision for submission of evidence and cross-examination of technical witnesses."⁶⁰⁰

In many respects, the expressway debates in Winnipeg followed the national model. Planners presented a large scale transportation scheme, anchored by a network of expressways, as a modern solution to their city's transportation challenges. Officials debated the plans, public opposition emerged, and the plans were subsequently shelved. Furthermore, the real impact of the defeat of expressways in Winnipeg is still up for debate, as it is in many other urban centres. While the WATS expressways were never realized, the subsequent expansion of several main arteries in the city suggested the car was still king and that critics' calls to demote the automobile's central role in city planning were not heeded.

⁵⁹⁹ Ibid, 50.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid, 47-52, 51 (quote).

Important in Winnipeg was the consistent lack of provincial support for expressways, even before the plans were introduced. The dependence of cities on provincial financing for major projects meant provincial governments' willingness to fund expressways was essential to the realization of the schemes. Widely held reservations about the wisdom of inner city expressways and the appropriateness of such schemes for Winnipeg informed the province's stance. These considerations also affected the public response to the plans. Public opposition never grew to the level of other cities at least in part because the plans never progressed beyond some early expropriations outside of the city. Activists were motivated to mobilize by the prospect of expressways in their city and used the opportunity to offer broader criticism of operational problems in their local administrations. For most, however, the expressway threat was never that real as the many costs of the roads -- financial, social, environmental and even potentially political -- reinforced doubts among officials and residents alike about the plans.

Chapter 5: Montréal, Québec: “The autoroute is apparently going ahead over the heads of the citizens”

Even in Montréal where many freeways already existed or were in progress, initial plans for the east-west expressway -- later designated as part of the Trans-Canada and subsequently officially named the Ville-Marie Expressway -- initially encountered a mixed response and later sustained opposition. Opponents who first condemned the east-west's original waterfront site for threatening heritage blocks and the city's shoreline vistas were equally unhappy with a subsequent relocation inland that endangered residential areas. The inland route aroused opposition primarily because the neighbourhoods in its path were disproportionately working class and francophone communities. In a city and era where social activism was already robust, expressway objectors worked through local neighbourhood groups and later through broader based, higher profile coalitions of community leaders and politicians. Like in other cities, anti-expressway critiques evolved into broader calls for reforms in urban planning and government.

While the public protests mirrored those in other Canadian cities, early and full financial backing from metropolitan, provincial and federal governments propelled the construction of the east-west route despite the opposition. Unique circumstances, mainly the city playing host to both Expo '67 and the 1976 Olympics, led the province to fast track the city's road network for completion in time for the landmark events and ensured the availability of federal funding. Ironically, preparations for those same events led to delays on the construction of the east-west as other priority routes were fast-tracked. The slowing of progress allowed anti-expressway activists more time to campaign against the route and mobilize opponents in the municipalities the road traversed. Ultimately, the delays were so protracted that the east-west expressway was still incomplete when the Parti Québécois (PQ) won the 1976 provincial election. The PQ

government quickly cancelled the expressway, and while funding shortages were blamed, Québec's familiar cultural tensions seemed to be at play, as the cancellation stopped the road before it was built through the francophone districts clustered on the north end of the Island of Montréal.

Montréal

Montréal's geographic challenge to transportation planners is its position in southwestern Québec on the Island of Montréal where the St. Lawrence and Ottawa Rivers meet. The city built on its earlier role as a regional centre for the fur trade to become the most important industrial, commercial and financial centre in the country in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The development of the St. Lawrence seaway combined with railway construction reinforced these growth trends.⁶⁰¹ Both the city and the suburban communities on its outskirts continued growing after World War II when transportation planning was marked primarily by the construction of numerous highways crisscrossing the city.

Rising tensions between Francophones and Anglophones shaped the postwar era in many ways. Exemplified by the 1970 October Crisis and the 1976 provincial election of the separatist Parti Québécois (PQ), these tensions fuelled an exodus of Anglophone business interests. Combined with industrial decline in the face of growing international competition, observers have argued that the moves contributed to high unemployment and Toronto's dethroning of

⁶⁰¹ Montréal was the largest and most influential city in what would become Canada even before confederation. This early dominance gave the city an advantageous head start as it continued to develop in the late 1800s and early 1900s. For more on the city's pre-WWII growth: Gerald J.J. Tulchinsky, *The River Barons: Montréal Businessmen and the Growth of Industry and Transportation, 1837-53* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1977). Paul André Linteau, *The Promoters' City: Building the Industrial Town of Maisonneuve, 1883-1918* (Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1985). Robert Lewis, *Manufacturing Montréal: The Making of an Industrial Landscape, 1850 to 1930* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000). Robert D. Lewis, "The Development of an Early Suburban Industrial District: The Montréal Ward of Saint-Ann, 1851-71," *Urban History Review* 19, 3 (February 1991), 166-180.

Montréal as the financial heart of the country.⁶⁰² Montréal subsequently lost its status as Canada's most populous urban centre to Toronto in 1976 as its population experienced modest decline compared to Toronto's explosive growth. The loss of primacy did not mean the end of growth. During the expressway construction boom, Montréal grew from 903,077 in 1941, to 1,036,542 in 1951, to 1,257,537 in 1961, to 1,214,352 in 1971, and the metropolitan region grew from 1,192,235 in 1941, to 1,539,308 in 1951, to 2,215,627 in 1961, to 2,743,208 in 1971.⁶⁰³ The city's changing position created support for large infrastructure and prestige projects, as Montréal officials fought the growing dominance of their western neighbour.

Post WWII, Montréal's downtown centre shifted west and inland from the historic core. The new heart of the city was targeted by urban renewal campaigns which sacrificed heritage properties for massive developments. This trend was symbolized by Place Bonaventure and Place Ville Marie, complexes which housed office towers connected to an extensive underground network of shops, restaurants, businesses and several Metro stations.⁶⁰⁴ Other significant projects undertaken at the same time as the expressway construction boom included the construction of a subway system initiated in 1966 as well as hosting Expo '67 and the 1976 Summer Olympics. Renewal made many of these projects possible, as older areas in need of repair were cleared to make way for the new, modern Montréal. As in other cities, historians

⁶⁰³ "Montréal en bref: Evolution de la population de Montréal - 1660 a nos jours," Groupe d'interventions stratégiques et tactiques, Direction de la planification du développement du territoire (May 2007). <http://www.webcitation.org/5InDug8hA>.

⁶⁰⁴ Jean Claude Marsan makes a case for the importance of Place Ville Marie and Place Bonaventure as symbolic of the new city and provides detailed descriptions of the developments in his book, Jean Claude Marsan, *Montréal in Evolution: Historical Analysis of the Development of Montréal's Architecture and Urban Environment* (Montréal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 346-358.

have emphasized the social inequality inherent in these schemes, as disadvantaged communities were disproportionately impacted both in terms of displacement and negative environmental and health consequences, especially where highways were concerned.⁶⁰⁵

At the helm during these transformative years was Mayor Jean Drapeau (1954-57; 1960-86). Drapeau led the Parti Civique de Montréal, which dominated council during much of his tenure, implementing his growth agenda. The mayor made his mark on the city by focussing on large scale projects designed to transform the city and raise its international profile. Historians have argued that Drapeau's preference for legacy monuments in the modernist style -- "projets de grandeur" -- was influenced by Montréal's shifting status and stature.⁶⁰⁶ They also note that the limited opposition to many early projects foreshadowed the more robust citizen activism that would develop in the late 1960s.⁶⁰⁷

During the expressway debates, Montréal was governed by an elected mayor and council as well as an executive committee, consisting of councillors chosen by the mayor, that controlled the city's budget and by-laws. The 1970 creation of the Montréal Urban Community (MUC) added another layer of administration as a regional body with jurisdiction over urban planning among other responsibilities. Despite this move, academics have been unanimous in their depiction of Drapeau's administrations as top-down regimes under which the municipal

⁶⁰⁵ Claire Poitras, "A City on the Move: The Surprising Consequences of Highways," in Stéphane Castonguay and Michèle Dagenais, *Metropolitan Natures: Environmental Histories of Montréal* (Pittsburgh, Pa.: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2011), 168-183.

⁶⁰⁶ Robert Prévost, *Montréal: A History* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1993), 386-396.

⁶⁰⁷ Stephen J. Shaw, "The Canadian 'World City' and Sustainable Downtown Revitalisation: Messages from Montréal 1962-2002," *British Journal of Canadian Studies* 16, 2 (2003), 363-377. The "projets de grandeur" that punctuated Drapeau's reign also had the perhaps unintended affect of serving as incubators for young designers. Lydia Ferrabee Sharman, "Design and Innovation in Montréal Through the 1960s and 1970s," *Material History Review* 61 (2005), 43-51. Some have also highlighted student campaigns in the 1950s to challenge the notion that Québec was devoid of activism prior to the 1960s: Nicole Neatby, "Student Leaders at the University of Montréal from 1950 to 1958: Beyond the 'Carabin Persona'," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 29, 3 (Fall 1994), 26-45. Neatby's case study considers students focused on educational reform at the University of Montréal.

government dictated development and increasingly worked with industry and other private interests.⁶⁰⁸ Pierre Filion has argued that the introduction of a federal program in 1973 to promote citizen participation had little effect in Montréal as Drapeau continued to pursue centralized planning and policy-making.⁶⁰⁹ Annick Germain and Damaris Rose agree that there was no real move towards the kind of citizen participation that expressway opponents sought until the post-Drapeau era.⁶¹⁰ Many scholars have contended that the citizen activism of the 1970s was a direct response to the mayor's governing style, as critics united under the reformist municipal party the Montréal Citizens Movement in 1974 and subsequently won seats as councillors and mayor.⁶¹¹

A “cross-island boulevard”

As early as 1925 Montréal officials discussed ways to relieve the downtown bottleneck between Mount Royal and St. Lawrence with a 150 foot wide “cross-island boulevard” running the length of the island.⁶¹² Almost ten years later the idea of a waterfront expressway was still

⁶⁰⁸ Robert K. Whelan, “The Politics of Urban Redevelopment in Montréal: Regime Change from Drapeau to Dore,” *Québec Studies* 12 (September 1990), 155-169.

⁶⁰⁹ Pierre Filion, “The Neighbourhood Improvement Plan Montréal and Toronto: Contrasts Between a Participatory and a Centralized Approach to Policy Making,” *Urban History Review* 17, 1 (June 1988), 16-28.

⁶¹⁰ Annick Germain and Damaris Rose, *Montréal: The Quest for a Metropolis* (Toronto: Wiley, 2000). Refer to especially, chapter 3: “Montréal's Built Form: French Heritage, Victorian Legacy and Modernist Ambitions,” 35-91.

⁶¹¹ D'Arcy O'Connor, “The Montréal Citizens' Movement,” *Working Papers for a New Society* 3, 4 (1976), 22-29. Jacques Léveillé and Jean-François Léonard, “The Montréal Citizens' Movement Comes to Power,” *International Journal of Urban & Regional Research* 11, 4 (December 1987), 567-581. Timothy Lloyd Thomas, *A City With a Difference: The Rise and Fall of the Montréal Citizen's Movement* (Montréal: Vehicule Press, 1997). Discontent over the infamous failure to effectively repurpose the city's massively expensive Olympic infrastructure after the games also fostered opposition. Romain Roult and Sylvain Lefebvre, “Planning and Reconversion of Olympic Heritages: The Montréal Olympic Stadium,” *International Journal of the History of Sport* 27, 16-18 (November/December 2010), 2731-2747.

⁶¹² “150-foot highway length of island to be studied,” *The Gazette* 8 August 1925. These early plans were the first incarnation of expressway plans for Montréal.

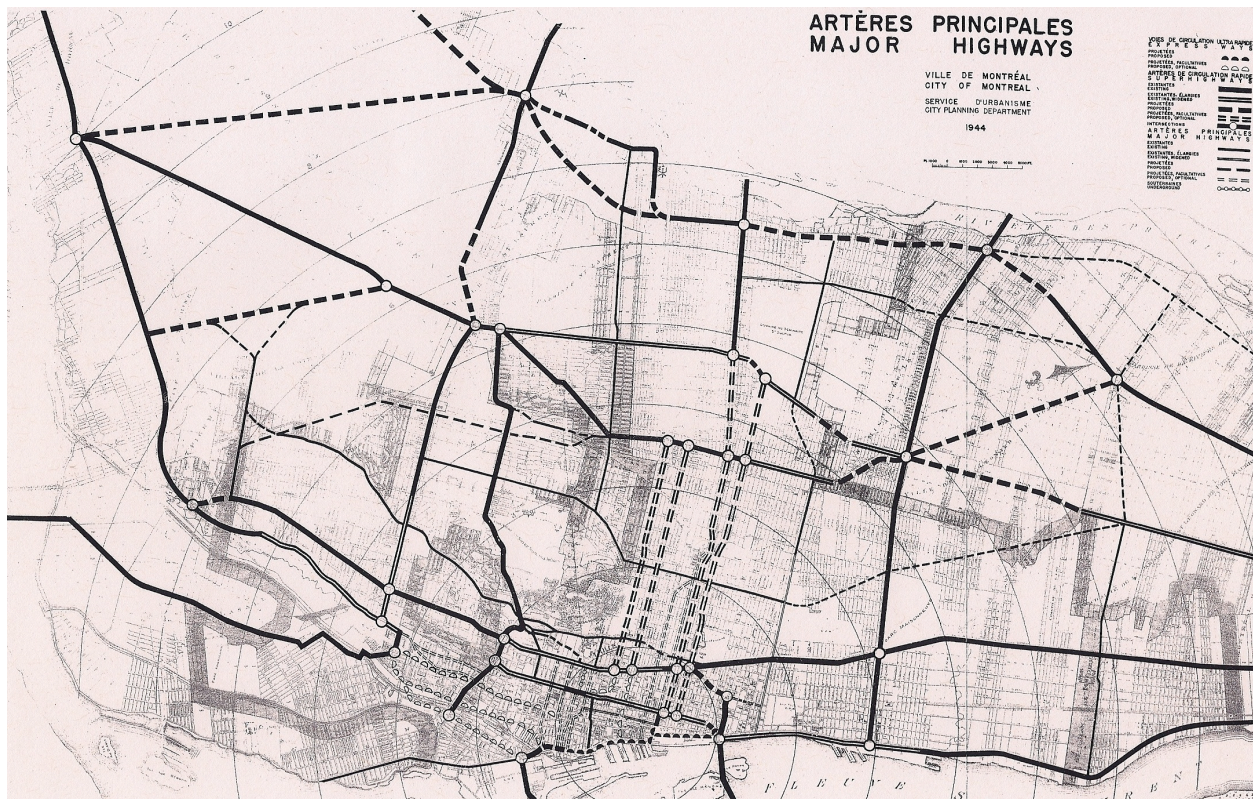


Image 1: "Major Highways 1944," Department of City Planning, City of Montréal, Master Plan: Preliminary Report: Planning for Montréal (Montréal: November 1944). Courtesy of Archives de la Ville de Montréal, XCD00_p5400.

being discussed. Reporters explained that Montréalers were "proud" of their waterfront and, accordingly, wanted a boulevard to enhance the harbour. They said, "Local people would like to think that they had beautified their harbour as Toronto has done," adding that the boulevard would be "for the benefit of people getting a good view of the harbour or for making it a show spot for tourists." But even in 1932 the harbour commissioners had the foresight to predict there was little chance of such a project ever going through because of roadblocks including the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) rail yards.⁶¹³

⁶¹³ "Obstacles in way of harbour boulevard are man; situation explained by expert in city," *The Gazette* 27 August 1932.

By 1945, city officials cited congestion as a significant problem in the city's master plan. From this point forward, expressways were justified as necessities with little mention of aesthetics or tourism. Two highway studies targeted the problems, one for a route along the harbour and Lachine Canal and another to run between Park Avenue and Saint-Laurent Boulevard. Parking shortages and congestion throughout the city were highlighted as pressing problems for the city.⁶¹⁴ The planners carefully noted the importance of flexibility in city planning, saying, "It must be noted that a master plan can in no case be final. It remains essentially alive as a constant guide to urban evolution."⁶¹⁵

A few years later in February 1948 formal plans for the east-west expressway were released. Officials argued the expressway would help ensure Montréal kept pace with major American cities where expressways proponents claimed they mitigated a number of urban ills including decentralized development. As they explained:

Montréal is keeping pace with leading American cities, which have recognized the necessity of rapid and free flowing traffic thoroughfares, in order to relieve congestion and avoid its harmful consequences of mounting accident tolls, great losses in depreciated property values, interference with business expansion forcing decentralization, costly delays in transportation and, in some cases, the spreading of blight.⁶¹⁶

⁶¹⁴ Department of City Planning, City of Montréal, *Master Plan: Preliminary Report: Planning for Montréal* (Montréal: November 1944), 31-34. Blackader-Lauterman Library of Architecture and Art, Redpath Building, McGill University. The plan also included a detailed discussion of housing plans for the city, including outdated housing, housing zones for rehabilitation and building codes (35-42).

⁶¹⁵ Ibid, 47.

⁶¹⁶ City Planning Department, *An East-West Expressway* (City Planning Department, City of Montréal, 16 February 1948), cover letter, 1. Archives de Montréal (AM). City planning director Aimé Cousineau offered numerous examples of recently constructed American freeways, including the Chicago Outer Driveway, the Davison Expressway in Detroit, the Arroyo Seco and Cahuenga Parkways in Los Angeles, and the \$600,000,000 freeway network in New York. Cousineau further emphasized the trend by also highlighting projects that were under construction, including the Bayshore Freeway in Oakland, several freeways in Los Angeles, the Central Boulevard Expressway in Dallas, the Calumet and Tri-State Outer Highways in Chicago, the John C. Lodge and Edsel Ford Expressways in Detroit, the Penn-Lincoln Parkway near Pittsburgh, the Willow-Newburgh Freeway in Cleveland and ongoing roads work in New York.



Image 2: Cover Photograph, City Planning Department, An East-West Expressway (City Planning Department, City of Montréal, 16 February 1948). Courtesy of Archives de la Ville de Montréal, XCD00_p6893.

Officials accented the wholly practical purpose of expressways, noting, “Expressways are not merely by-passes or tourist facilities but highly utilitarian roadways, to serve primarily the traffic moving about the metropolitan region and traffic with either origin or destination in the city itself.”⁶¹⁷

⁶¹⁷ Ibid, cover letter, 1. Later in the report officials expanded their idea of an expressway, explaining, “Broadly defined, an expressway is a thoroughfare with no traffic lights, no intersections at grade, with opposing streams separated, and with entrances and exits limited to a few chosen points. The important streets crossing the right-of-way are carried over or under the expressway. It is a street for continuous movement of traffic especially at the periphery of the territory, unhampered by start-and-stop driving, parking or pedestrian problems, and with the danger of accidents greatly reduced” (8).

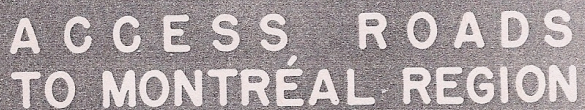


Image 3: “Access Roads to Montréal Region,” City Planning Department, An East-West Expressway (City Planning Department, City of Montréal, 16 February 1948). Courtesy of Archives de la Ville de Montréal, XCD00 p6893.

The route was designed as a twelve mile, four lane partially elevated road, estimated to cost \$24,600,000.⁶¹⁸ The road was projected to carry an estimated 50,000 vehicles a day on four lanes as opposed to the fourteen to eighteen lanes of “ordinary” streets that currently carried the traffic, and require \$15,000,000 worth of expropriations.⁶¹⁹ Beginning in the west end with an interchange linked to Westminister Avenue and the Toronto Highway, the road would run east along the Montréal Tramways Company’s right of way bordering the Turcot Yards, to Côte Saint-Paul Road. A north-south link was also planned to connect Girouard Avenue with the expressway and de l’Église Street.⁶²⁰ City Planning Director Aimé Cousineau argued the east-west proposal, the product of several planning reports as well as traffic and parking studies, would help “integrate the various communities of Montréal, facilitat[e] business operations, and solv[e] our major traffic problems.”⁶²¹ Cousineau explained:

The project expressway will perform many important functions for Montréal and the surrounding communities. It will provide the free circulation of through traffic and afford facilities for channelizing local movements; it will tie together parts of the city which have been laid out as independent sections; provide a rapid means of connection between the heart of the city, the outlying districts and the adjoining Provincial highways; aid the decongestion of the central area; afford better access to and from adjoining industries, warehouses and the waterfront, and by doing so, will facilitate industrial and commercial transportation which is essential to the economy of Montréal.⁶²²

⁶¹⁸ Ibid, 32-35. The proposed speed limit was 65 kilometres an hour. The estimate covered construction only costs, not “consequential damages, relocation of tramway and rail lines, maintenance of utilities construction of engineers’ fees” or expropriation, though they estimated the value of the land and buildings affected was \$15,000,000.

⁶¹⁹ Clive Clift, “\$24,600,000 expressway proposed here,” *The Montréal Herald* 28 February 1948. “Speedway proposed to council,” (editorial) *The Standard* 28 February 1948.

⁶²⁰ City Planning Department, *An East-West Expressway* (City Planning Department, City of Montréal, 16 February 1948), 28-32. AM. Interchange locations: 34.

⁶²¹ Ibid, cover letter, 2.

⁶²² Ibid, cover letter, 4.

The freeway was intended to complement the city's current street widening program and, according to planners, was more urgently needed than a north-south route. Expressways such as the east-west were regarded as a necessary part of the city's transportation infrastructure, along with subways to serve mass transportation needs.⁶²³ Cousineau argued that the expressway would facilitate connectivity across the city with minimal disruption:

The east-west expressway will connect the provincial boulevard and the industrial region in the west and with the business, industrial and harbour districts in the central area, and may be continued eastward along the waterfront to provide a direct route to the east end of the Island. The route selected for this project affords convenient traffic facilities without interfering with residential neighbourhoods or the parks, playgrounds, churches and local shopping centers serving them.⁶²⁴

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⁶²³ Ibid, 16.

⁶²⁴ Ibid, cover letter, 3.

⁶²⁵ Ibid, 16.

⁶²⁶ Ibid, cover letter, 3.

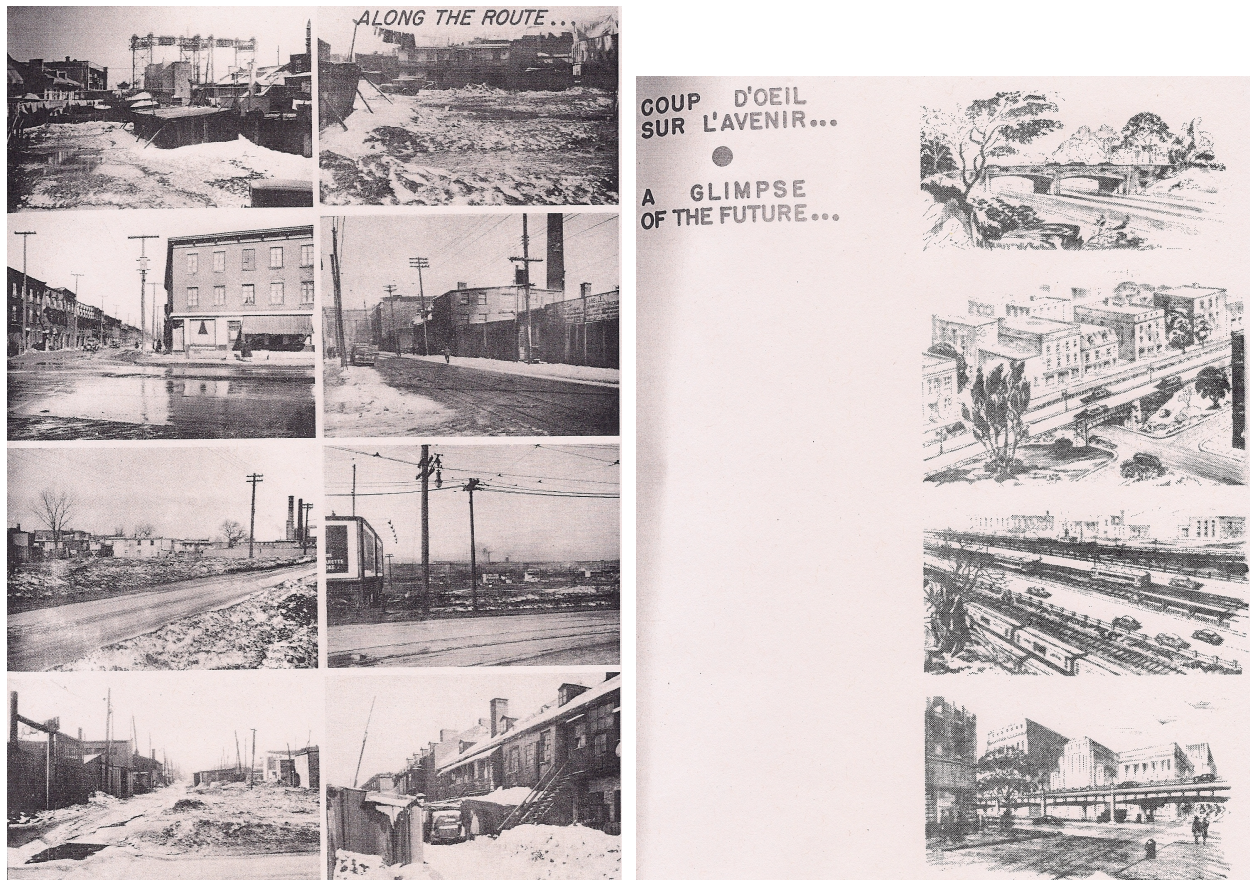


Image 4 (left): “Along the route . . .” page 33, City Planning Department, An East-West Expressway (City Planning Department, City of Montréal, 16 February 1948). Courtesy of Archives de la Ville de Montréal, XCD00_p6893.

Image 5 (right): “A glimpse of the future . . .” City Planning Department, An East-West Expressway (City Planning Department, City of Montréal, 16 February 1948). Courtesy of Archives de la Ville de Montréal, XCD00_p6893.

Planners envisioned the expressway as a tool for urban renewal, explaining that land acquisition for routes in depressed urban areas was relatively inexpensive, and that expressways boasted the added benefit of increasing surrounding land values once constructed. “By running through slums and blighted city blocks,” they reasoned, “construction will be less costly as regard [sic] land acquisition and will at the same time enhance the value of the adjacent area. If the expressway is conceived along those principles, it can aid in urban rehabilitation, without

impairing its primary function of meeting predetermined traffic needs.”⁶²⁷ Indeed, a number of alternative alignments were ruled out in the planning stages because of the high cost of expropriation in office or industrial areas. Routes suggested by concerned citizens were also deemed impractical.⁶²⁸

“Everyone desires to make Montréal as modern a city as there is”

Local print media generally approved of the proposal but expressed doubts over whether the government would act on the plans. *The Gazette*’s editors questioned whether the plans would be realized, noting the east-west link in an expressway network proposed in 1946 was “still gathering dust.” They argued the city’s transportation system should prioritize both expressways and mass transit, noting Toronto’s subway plan had already been approved.⁶²⁹ *The Montréal Star*’s editorial echoed the *Gazette*’s perspective, saying the east-west route plan was well designed but noting the lack of action on the scheme. The board also agreed with Planning Director Aimé Cosineau that expressways and public transit -- specifically, subways -- must be planned together.⁶³⁰ *The Montréal Herald* applauded the proposal, saying the expressway “would enable Montréal to keep pace with leading American cities.”⁶³¹ *La Patrie* also approved

⁶²⁷ Ibid, 18-19. The report also included a page of eight ground level photographs of scenes along the route, all showing run down buildings and empty streets, 33.

⁶²⁸ Ibid, 23-28. Officials characterized citizen suggestions as, “interesting graphic illustrations which, when considered in the light of sound technical and economical principles, generally contains implications precluding their implementation,” 28.

⁶²⁹ “Just another idle dream?” (editorial) *The Gazette* 3 February 1948.

⁶³⁰ “Another expressway plan,” (editorial) *The Montréal Star* 3 February 1948. *The Montréal Star* also called the plan “one of its [the Planning Department’s] loveliest dreams of the future” in the article, “12-mile expressway proposed by city planners,” *The Montréal Star* 28 February 1948. The editors supported their argument in favour of expressways and mass transit together by pointing to New York City, where an extensive expressway network had not cancelled out the need for mass transit.

⁶³¹ Clive Clift, “\$24,600,000 expressway proposed here,” *The Montréal Herald* 28 February 1948.

of the east-west highway as long as the route was not treated as a substitute for improved public transportation.⁶³²

Meanwhile in 1950 a provincial act established the Montréal Transportation Commission. It enabled the city to appoint five commissioners, take over the Montréal Tramways Company, and establish an urban transit system for the city. It began replacing the streetcars (tramways) with buses and trolleys. By 1970, the service covered 370 miles of city streets with 2,000 vehicles and 5,000 employees. To service the city's growing central business district the commission argued neither private nor public automobiles would be sufficient:

With all due respect and admiration for the modern automobile as an unsurpassed means of personal travel, the fact must be faced that it is a notoriously poor vehicle for assembling or dispersing large numbers of people. Its mobility evaporates completely when too many of them try to be in the same area at the same time. New streets, wider streets, and parking areas will be provided, but whenever such new facilities are built, they seem to fill up almost immediately, and little overall progress is made in solving the traffic problem.⁶³³

Government discussions about the expressway in the 1950s focused almost entirely on securing financing despite the fact the route had yet to be determined.⁶³⁴ After returning from a New York City trip to consult "engineering experts," City Planning Director Aimé Cosineau and Public Works Director H.A. Gibeau acknowledged there was still no firm decision on the east-west proposal. Expressway advocates complained that delays would likely result in higher

⁶³² "Autostrade et metro," (editorial) *La Patrie* 3 March 1948.

⁶³³ Montréal Transportation Commission, *Urban Transit in Montréal: 1861-1961* (Montréal: Transportation Commission, 1970). Humanities and Social Sciences Library, McLennan Building, McGill University.

⁶³⁴ S-Henri residents voiced their opposition to the east-west route early on, arguing it would divide their neighbourhood. "S-Henri ne veut pas être sectionné par l'autostrade," *La Presse* 13 April 1951. City planning director Aimé Cosineau acknowledged in May that no decision had been made on the east-west route. Gene Lees, "Expressway need again emphasized," *The Montréal Star* 5 May 1953.

costs.⁶³⁵ Despite concerns over the high cost of expressways, officials maintained the roads must be built. Councillor J.O. Asselin, Chair of the City Executive Commission, acknowledged that public demand for auto infrastructure was greater than public support for the financial costs, but insisted residents had to bear the costs of making Montréal a modern city.⁶³⁶ Asselin called on civic organizations “to explain to the broad body of citizens that though everyone desires to make Montréal as modern a city as there is ‘we must be prepared to pay the costs’.”⁶³⁷

Over three years later officials still had failed to secure financing for the east-west expressway. In December 1957 city traffic director Jean Lacoste told reporters the east-west waterfront route was still a possibility if funding was available.⁶³⁸ The following year, new estimates pegged the cost at \$125,000,000. Executive Committee Chair J.M. Savignac (1934-36; 1936-38; 1957-60) met with Premier Maurice Duplessis (1936-39; 1944-59) to request provincial funding as officials considered linking the east-west route to provincial highways to obtain funding. Savignac also called for fifty percent federal funding for slum clearance in the south-west district of St. Henri and was clear that the east-west route was the administration’s priority, while the north-south road was second in line.⁶³⁹ Shortly after the provincial meeting,

⁶³⁵ “City expressway ‘engineering’ plans give years away even if ordered now,” *Gazette* 21 August 1953. The article also included a comparison to Toronto, noting the city was close to completion on its subway line and that the Metro council executive had recently approved a \$20,000,000 unnamed expressway. Two additional east-west expressways [or route possibilities] were planned at the time, by the waterfront near Back River by Gouin Boulevard.

⁶³⁶ “Waterfront, back river study bared,” *The Montréal Star* 27 May 1954. Businessmen opposed the elevation because they would lose visual advertising if their storefronts were blocked.

⁶³⁷ *The Montréal Star* 27 May 1954. Asselin as paraphrased by unnamed author.

⁶³⁸ “Waterfront expressway under study,” *The Montréal Star* 13 December 1957.

⁶³⁹ “Project cost may exceed \$125 million,” *The Montréal Star* 8 January 1958; contradiction -- the city sought provincial permission for east-west waterfront route; Wilbur Arkison, “Highway by river in city?” *The Gazette* 8 January 1958. The following year an engineering report on the waterfront expressway by Lalonde and Valois suggested two alternate routes, between Ville St. Pierre and Jacques Cartier Bridge, but did not include cost estimates. “Waterfront road plan goes to council,” *The Gazette* 31 January 1959.

the city's Executive Committee approved a \$50,000,000 loan for the waterfront expressway, but a city council meeting ended in deadlock at midnight over whether to approve a \$15,000,000 loan for the waterfront route. Councillor and Civic Action League member Roger Sigouin was credited with prolonging the debate which journalist Wilbur Arkison described as being characterized by "considerable argument and hubbub."⁶⁴⁰

By August 1959 concerns were growing about the threat the waterfront route posed to many historical properties. Concerns about the route at this stage revolved around the impact it would have on the waterfront area. Critics argued the construction of a massive, elevated expressway would sever the waterfront from the rest of the city and that even shoreline vistas would be destroyed. Opponents also focused on the loss of numerous heritage buildings in the blocks near the waterfront that constituted the historic heart of the city. Support emerged from the city's planning department for a formal survey of historic buildings and preservation plan. The expressway was slated to run through the old quarter of the city, including the Bonsecours Market and the Chateau de Ramezay. This was not the first show of concern for heritage properties in the city. A few years prior, respected French city planner and architect Jacques Gréber released a tentative master plan that combined the expressway with restoration and preservation plans, marking buildings to be preserved and relocating some parks to make way for the road.⁶⁴¹

Others also supported calls to protect the city's historical properties in the face of the expressway threat. *Gazette* editors, for example, said officials had been "strangely careless" with

⁶⁴⁰ "Waterfront expressway goes ahead," *The Montréal Star* 26 February 1958. "Session of council collapses; Savignac blames CAL action," Myer Negru, "Expressway issue in air," *The Gazette* 18 March 1958.

⁶⁴¹ Myer Negru, "Survey needed to save buildings," *The Gazette* 11 August 1959.

Montréal's history and urged officials to find a compromise between progress and preservation, pointing to Boston and Philadelphia as model cities in this regard. The editors ended on a pessimistic note conceding, "No doubt certain old buildings, rich in history though they may be, have to be removed as the price of progress."⁶⁴² Executive Committee Chair J.M. Savignac responded to these concerns by ordering a survey of historical sites threatened by the waterfront expressway.⁶⁴³ Still, some were not as concerned by the probable destruction of heritage properties. The Montréal Businessmen's Association sponsored their own traffic study of the city to support their contention that more highways were needed in the city to alleviate congestion. The group also called on officials to balance their efforts between building infrastructure for both private and public transportation.⁶⁴⁴

Updated plans for the east-west expressway -- still largely along the waterfront -- were released in March 1960, calling for a \$130,000,000, 8.5 mile route from the western limit of Montréal West to the east end of Moreau Street. Montréal Executive Committee Chairman J.M. Savignac immediately called for a Trans-Canada designation for the route in order to tap into

⁶⁴² "Save oldest Montréal," (editorial) *The Gazette* 12 August 1959.

⁶⁴³ "Order survey of historical sites in city," *The Montréal Star* 13 August 1959. Myer Negru, "Preservation survey set," *The Gazette* 13 August 1959.

⁶⁴⁴ Association des Hommes d'Affaires de Montréal, "Etude sur la circulation a Montréal," 1959; 41P6/42, Université du Québec a Montréal Archives. The Transport Routier du Québec also expressed support for the east-west freeway some years later in its December 1971 newsletter, playing off the name of the main protest organization by titling their article, "Front commun pour l'autoroute est-ouest." "Front commun pour l'autoroute est-ouest," *Transport Routier du Québec* [Newsletter], (December 1971). Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec (BANQ). The University of Québec released another report supporting the expressway at this time. Joseph Hanafin, "Highway plan is on, says premier," *The Montréal Star* 28 January 1971. The lack of more vocal and sustained support for expressways in Montréal from these kinds of interested parties may be attributed to the consistently strong government support behind the routes. With that driving force, industry supporters likely saw no need to launch the same kind of public campaigns as anti-expressway protestors.

federal funding.⁶⁴⁵ The city's Urban Housing and Re-Development Committee responded to the proposal by calling for a route adjustment to avoid the planned CBC headquarters at Papineau Avenue and Craig Street where urban renewal plans were already underway. Engineers quickly decided to explore other sites for the CBC building.⁶⁴⁶

The media response to the updated plan was dominated by concerns over the high cost of the project. *The Star's* editorial board approved of the plan but argued the cost exceeded the city's resources, and that both provincial and federal funding should be granted because "the expressway is clearly of a metropolitan character."⁶⁴⁷ *La Presse's* editorial board argued city officials knew the cost of the project would exceed estimates but failed to secure contributions from provincial and federal governments.⁶⁴⁸ A few months later *Le Devoir's* editorial board joined the chorus of critics, noting rapidly rising cost estimates and objecting to the ongoing expenditures for studies on a project that had yet to begin.⁶⁴⁹ Others, like *La Presse's* editorial board, supported the city's push for the east-west waterfront route. Large public works projects, the board explained, were "à la mode" and the expressway was a worthy addition that could

⁶⁴⁵ Gerard Dery, "Elevated roadway plans before city," *The Montréal Star* 25 March 1960. Bob Hayes, "\$130,500,000 expressway plan unveiled," *The Gazette* 25 March 1960. Copies of the plans were distributed to the Montréal Metropolitan Corporation, provincial officials and the National Harbours Board. *The Gazette* reported consultants charged \$445,085 for the east-west waterfront proposal. Consultants promised the new road would allow drivers to cross the downtown in only 20 minutes. "Expressways preliminary plans now estimated at \$445,085," *The Gazette* 9 June 1960.

⁶⁴⁶ Gerard Dery, "Seek route change for express road," *The Montréal Star* 26 March 1960. "Expressway hits CBC site alternate route needed," *The Gazette* 26 March 1960. "Expressway route change considered," *The Gazette* 29 March 1960.

⁶⁴⁷ "Expressway project has Metro character," (editorial) *The Montréal Star* 26 March 1960.

⁶⁴⁸ "Une assistance indispensable," *La Presse*, 26 March 1960.

⁶⁴⁹ "Des plans qui devaient couter au depart \$150,000 coutent \$400,000" *Le Devoir* 9 June 1960.

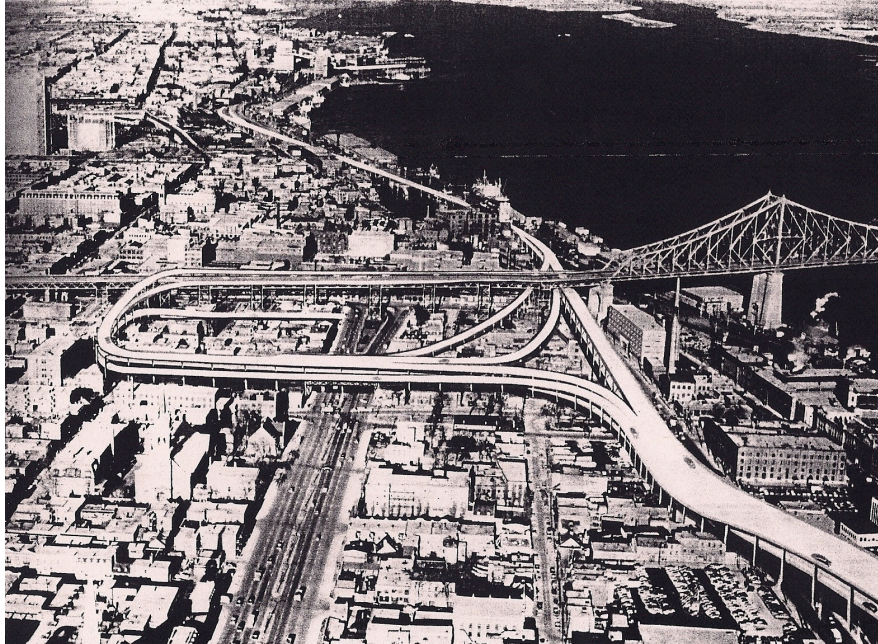


Image 6: “A l’est du pont Jacques-Cartier,” page 10, LaLonde & Valois, Ingenieurs Conseils, Autostrade Est-Ouest: A Proximité du Fleuve St-Laurent, Cite de Montréal, Québec: Photographies (Mars 1960). Courtesy of Archives de la Ville de Montréal, XCD_p6896.

connect bridges on either side of the city and address Montréal’s transportation problems just as similar infrastructure had in New York City.⁶⁵⁰

The cost of the route was not the only concern included in initial critiques of the plans. In December 1960 a report by Montréal Port Council planners Jacques Pimard, H.P. Daniel van Ginkel, and Blanche van Ginkel declared the east-west waterfront expressway was “impractical or even impossible.” The planners argued the expressway plans were shortsighted and “based only on the requirement to create a cross-town thoroughfare without any recognition of its effect on contiguous industrial areas, on the harbour, or on the old city.” The group also noted cost estimates only included construction and expropriation fees and excluded the considerable

⁶⁵⁰ “L’autostrade du St-Laurent,” *La Presse*, 2 February 1961.

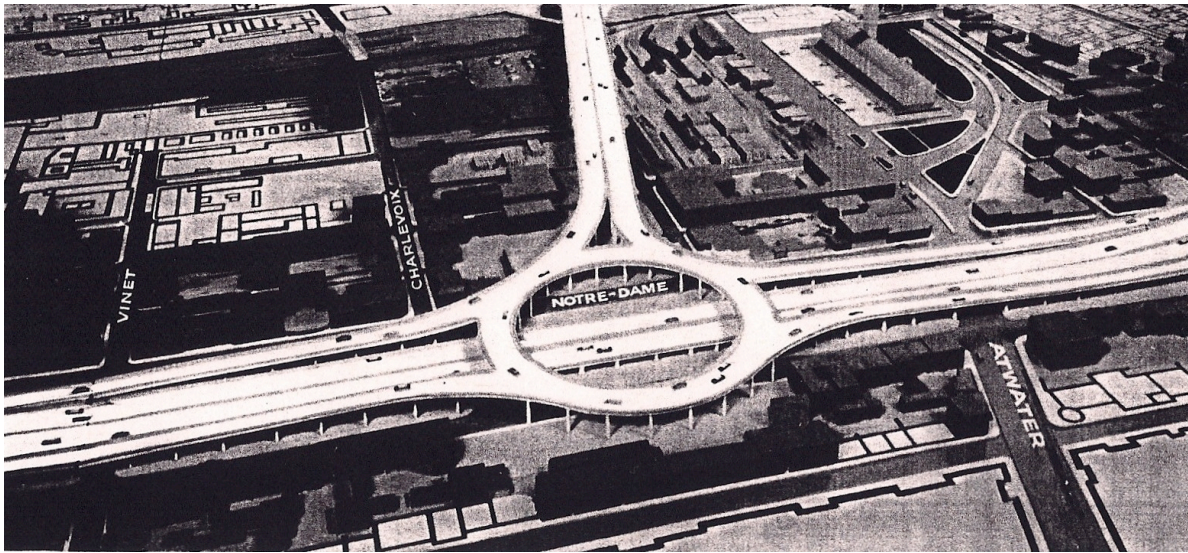


Image 7: "Raccordements au rond-point de l'approche du pont Champlain," page 15, LaLonde & Valois, Ingenieurs Conseils, Autostrade Est-Ouest: A Proximité du Fleuve St-Laurent, Cite de Montréal, Québec: Photographies (Mars 1960). Courtesy of Archives de la Ville de Montréal, XCD_p6896.

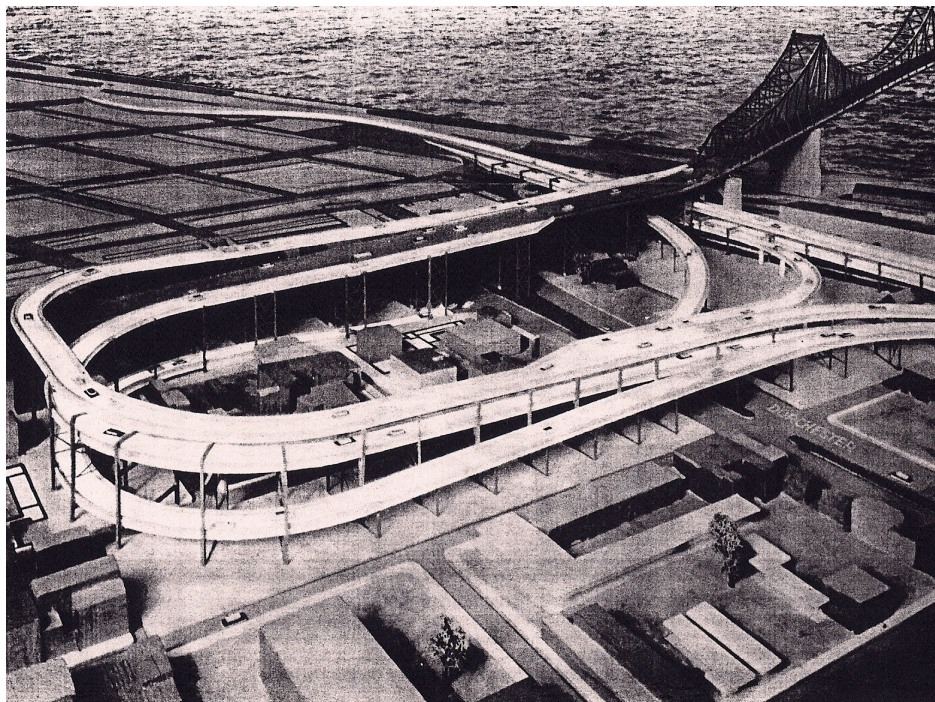


Image 8: "Jonction des raccordements au pont Jacques-Cartier," page 25, LaLonde & Valois, Ingenieurs Conseils, Autostrade Est-Ouest: A Proximité du Fleuve St-Laurent, Cite de Montréal, Québec: Photographies (Mars 1960). Courtesy of Archives de la Ville de Montréal, XCD_p6896.

expense associated with accesses and widening arteries to accommodate the route.⁶⁵¹ The group of planners argued the solution the consultants offered would result in traffic pouring into the old quarter of the city from an elevated expressway that would create a physical barrier between the city and its harbour. Instead, the planners called for an expressway combined with a smaller harbour road.⁶⁵² Former Executive Committee Chairman J.M. Savignac responded to the report, arguing the planners did not understand the city's needs, and that the official scheme "would contribute to rebuild[ing] several obsolete sections of Montréal."⁶⁵³

"Montréal will have the best roads system in all of Canada"

The following year the provincial government announced a bold move that would impact the expressway debates as well as conversations about the city's other development projects. Spurred by the approach of Expo '67, officials began working to fast track the entire road network planned for the western part of the island including a "belt" surrounding an approximately twenty square mile section of the downtown.⁶⁵⁴ Then in August 1963 federal, provincial and municipal governments announced a new route for the Trans-Canada through Montréal.⁶⁵⁵ The \$175,000,000 plans for the north-south, fifteen mile, six lane route included a

⁶⁵¹ Myer Negru, "One harbour expressway 'impractical'," *The Gazette* 15 December 1960.

⁶⁵² Ibid. Gerard Dery, "Harbour expressway plans denounced by later survey," *The Montréal Star* 15 December 1960.

⁶⁵³ "Expressway defended by Savignac," *The Montréal Star* 16 December 1960.

⁶⁵⁴ Charles Lazarus, "Road planned on lakeshore," *The Montréal Star* 17 August 1961. Much of the network was intended to alleviate congestion west of the Décarie interchange. St. John's Road in particular was to be improved north of the Trans-Canada in an effort to open the area for industrial and residential development. A subsequent 1963 City Planning Department document showed the belt design, typical of the inner city expressway networks of the era. Montréal City Planning Department, "Metropole" (1963). Centre de Documentation Marie-Victorin (CDMV), City of Montréal.

⁶⁵⁵ *The Monitor* 12 August 1965.

mostly elevated riverside expressway, a tunnel-bridge across the St. Lawrence at Boucherville, and a link to the planned east-west expressway. The road, according to the plan, would transition between ground level, elevated, and depressed “as required.” The budget breakdown indicated \$100,000,000 of provincial financing, \$40,000,000 of federal financing, and \$35,000,000 of municipal financing.⁶⁵⁶ Federal Minister of Public Works Jean-Paul Deschatelets (1963-65) was careful to note the project qualified for federal funding through the Trans-Canada Act because it was designated as part of that highway.⁶⁵⁷ By selecting the Décarie path over the Cavendish option, the announcement put to rest long running debates over the Trans-Canada alignment. Provincial Minister of Roads Bernard Pinard (1960-1966; 1970-1973) said the north-south route would be completed in time for Expo '67, but the east-west route would not since the path was not finalized. The routes were “approximated,” officials warned, “to cope with the unexpected, a high degree of flexibility must be maintained.”⁶⁵⁸ But even as city planning officials faced a three month deadline to finalize the route, residents in areas like Côte St. Luc that were threatened by possible rerouting had not yet been consulted.⁶⁵⁹

⁶⁵⁶ Bill Bantey, “Trans-Canada highway through island area costs \$175,000,000,” *The Gazette* 30 August 1963.

⁶⁵⁷ Myer Negru, “City share of cost of two expressways set at \$40,000,000,” *The Gazette* 30 August 1963. The original Trans-Canada route through Montréal was to run north Montee Street Leonard to Metropolitan Boulevard. Bruce Garvey, “\$75 million project portion of Trans-Canada highway,” *The Gazette* 1 August 1963; more route details in article, including map with old and new routes. Federal sources also noted their Décarie plan was almost identical to the city’s Décarie plan of 1961. Local federal MP E.T. Asselin extolled the virtues of the plan, saying the Décarie Trans-Canada route would improve local safety by reducing traffic volumes on residential streets. “Asselin lauds plan,” *The Monitor* 29 August 1963.

⁶⁵⁸ Bill Bantey, “Trans-Canada highway through island area costs \$175,000,000,” *The Gazette* 30 August 1963.

⁶⁵⁹ Charles Lazarus, “City given deadline to complete plans for new highway,” *The Montréal Star* 29 August 1963. Later west end Mayor Samuel Moskovitch of Cote St. Luc was disappointed the Cavendish route would not be developed, saying the Décarie would become a bottleneck. Local MP E.T. Asselin said of the route slated to go east to meet the Décarie, “This new highway will be good for exercising the horses from Blue Bonnets raceway but good for nothing more.” “The west end view of Trans-Canada plans,” *The Monitor* 5 September 1963.

By February 1964 the province issued expropriation notices for the Trans-Canada extension. Settlements with residents were expected to take months or even years despite the fact the demolition was scheduled to begin in July.⁶⁶⁰ While the filing of expropriation notices marked significant progress towards the realization of the expressway, the move aroused the public opposition that would plague the project for years to come. *Star* journalist Charles Lazarus attributed the “rising chorus of objections from home-owners and others” to the expressway’s path through some residential areas, instead of following the Décarie strictly between Metropolitan Boulevard and the waterfront. Officials preferred these residential expropriations over commercial requisitions because residential compensation payments were significantly lower and the impetus to expedite expropriations despite the lack of secured funding was, of course, the government’s goal of having the expressway completed in time for Expo ’67.⁶⁶¹

Despite some local resistance, officials moved ahead with the expropriations. One resident registered his opposition by lamenting the displacement of families and loss of local parks. Instead of “the monstrous super-highway,” he called for a tunnel to house the road between Côte St. Luc and Sherbrooke Street. Warning that catering to the Expo would ruin the Notre-Dame-de-Grâce region “forever.” He urged the province to relocate the highway to the

⁶⁶⁰ Charles Lazarus, “Décarie land to be bought,” *The Montréal Star* 3 February 1964. “Décarie as Trans-Canada route,” *The Gazette* 4 February 1964. Federal authorities were paying for a portion of demolition costs but not for expropriation. Properties around the Décarie south of Cote St. Luc Road were spared because of the high costs of “certain enterprises in that area.”

⁶⁶¹ Charles Lazarus, “World’s fair need pushes Trans-Canada road job here,” *The Montréal Star* 4 February 1964. Several projects costing an estimated \$400,000,000 were planned in advance of Expo ’67, with the province’s share of the bill being \$267,000,000 or 65 percent. The bridge and tunnel crossing between Montréal and Boucherville was estimated at \$75,000,000 while the “Trans-Canada Highway via the east-west expressway and Décarie Boulevard” would cost \$175,000,000, and the remaining plans required \$225,000,000.

city's outskirts.⁶⁶² The Province of Québec Association of Architects also raised concerns about the impact of the route on the neighbourhood. The group targeted the elevated sections, arguing elevated roads were "detrimental to the economical and aesthetic values of a city." The east-west route was necessary, they conceded, but insisted "it is vitally important that the intimate physical relationships between the old city and the waterfront, and consequently the World Exhibition site, be maintained and further enhanced."⁶⁶³

Provincial officials were unmoved. The legislative assembly approved \$12,000,000 for expropriations for the north-south section of the Trans-Canada, with construction scheduled to begin by spring 1964. Minister of Roads Bernard Pinard announced residents would be expected to move in a "few weeks or months" and would be paid seventy-five percent of the municipal valuation of their homes immediately, with the "balance subject to a later negotiation." Both Pinard and Premier Jean Lesage (1960-66) were careful to note the \$12,000,000 was the "book value" -- not the total cost -- of expropriations, and reiterated the need to move forward with the project to ensure completion for Expo '67.⁶⁶⁴ Of the estimated 125 homes to be expropriated, the *Star* reported the majority were only a few years old, and most of the displaced families had to be relocated outside their existing neighbourhood in Pointe-aux-Trembles, a few miles east of the expressway.⁶⁶⁵

⁶⁶² "Depressed expressway means unsightly gouge through N.D.G.," (anonymous letter to editor) *The Montréal Star* 25 February 1964.

⁶⁶³ "Elevated road plan rapped by architects," *The Gazette* 21 January 1964. "Route opposed by architects," *The Montréal Star* 22 January 1964.

⁶⁶⁴ "Highway plan given approval," *The Montréal Star* 12 February 1964. At the time there was still no final route decision for the east-west waterfront expressway, as the city was in the midst of negotiations with the National Harbours Board.

⁶⁶⁵ Stanley Cohen, "Big move takes time," *The Montréal Star* 24 February 1964.

In March the financing agreement for the Trans-Canada was announced: federal authorities would pay ninety percent of the road costs and Québec would cover ten percent, while municipalities were responsible for expropriation costs for land needed for approaches and service roads, as well as the construction cost of service roads.⁶⁶⁶ The final route for the Trans-Canada through downtown Montréal ran between the Canadian Pacific Railway tracks and St. Antoine street, including a tunnel between Mountain Street and Beaver Hall Hill. The expressway would be fed by a four direction interchange above the Canadian National Railway's Turcot Yards. Despite the announcement, construction was still slated to start after Expo '67 as the north-south portion of the network remained the priority.⁶⁶⁷

By fall 1964, city council agreed to the joint provincial and federal plan for the \$175,000,000 Trans-Canada link. Under the arrangement, the city would pay an estimated \$40,000,000 maximum, with a \$35,000,000 federal contribution and the province paying the remainder, subject to the approval of the National Harbours Board.⁶⁶⁸ Confident of the plan, federal Minister of Public Works Jean-Paul Deschatelets boasted that "Montréal will have the

⁶⁶⁶ "Pact reached on highway," *The Montréal Star* 20 March 1964.

⁶⁶⁷ Charles Lazarus, "Downtown expressway route decided," *The Montréal Star* 25 March 1964. Myer Negru, "Trans-Canada highway route set," *The Gazette* 10 April 1964. Service d'Urbanisme, "Communiqué de Presse: Route Trans-Canadienne," (Montréal: 6 April 1964); AM.

⁶⁶⁸ Myer Negru, "\$20,000,000 authority given for highway loan," *The Gazette* 30 September 1964. "Expressway work to start," *The Montréal Star* 30 September 1964. Route discussion: Myer Negru, "Route of highway on agenda," *The Gazette* 26 September 1964. "Tackle final plans," *The Montréal Star* 26 September 1964. Later Expo Deputy Commissioner General Robert F. Shaw and chief engineer for Québec Roads Department Oliver Mathieu expressed concerns construction delays could mean the Décarie Trans-Canada route would not be finished in time for the Expo. Charles Lazarus, "Trans-Canada road delayed," *The Montréal Star* 2 December 1964. The province granted the city a \$1.5 million advance on Trans-Canada funds to acquire buildings on the metro route, but the east-west expressway was postponed as council requested more information on the expropriations. "City given \$1,500,000," *The Montréal Star* 3 December 1964. "Postpone request for expressway," *The Montréal Star* 15 January 1965. A call for bids on a 1.18 mile, six lane, partly elevated expressway to the Champlain Bridge estimated at \$12 million was expected in June 1965. "June call on expressway project," *Daily Commercial News and Building Record* 13 April 1965. Later details for an elevated bridge and more expropriation plans were released. Gerard Dery, "New elevated road planned for bridge," *The Montréal Star* 6 February 1965. In April 1968 the National Harbours Board awarded a \$4,700,000 contract for the last section of the Bonaventure Expressway, to be finished before the Expo. Myer Negru, "Roadway contract awarded," *The Gazette* 28 April 1966.

best roads system in all of Canada.”⁶⁶⁹ While the north-south section of the network remained the priority, officials explained the east-west route was also being deliberately delayed until after Expo '67 in response to fears of a lag in construction and attendant economic downturn after the pre-Expo construction boom. The strategic scheduling was generally well received, but Minister of Roads Pinard nevertheless reminded officials: “It is the responsibility of governments to plan their projects so there is no recession after 1967.”⁶⁷⁰

Except for the scheduled delay on the east-west route, the rest of the city's expressways moved ahead relatively quickly during this period. The Bonaventure Expressway opened in April 1965, billed as “a fast link between downtown Montréal and Expo '67.”⁶⁷¹ Meanwhile the opening of the Décarie Trans-Canada was announced for April 24, days before the Expo opened. *The Montréal Star* dubbed the route “The spectacular Décarie Expressway,” noting it was the “first depressed speedway in Québec and one of the largest of its type in Canada.” The project cost \$65,000,000, half of which paid for expropriations and the Turcot interchange. The interchange was the “nucleus” of the city's transportation system, directing traffic to different areas of the city. The opening of the Décarie Expressway and Turcot Interchange meant visitors could travel from Toronto through Ottawa and on to Montréal all on the Trans-Canada, and the expressway routes allowed travellers to proceed “without being encumbered by intersections, traffic lights or pedestrians.”⁶⁷²

⁶⁶⁹ Jean de Guise, “Minister's forecast for Montréal,” *The Gazette* 15 October 1964.

⁶⁷⁰ “The East-West road,” (editorial) *The Montréal Star* 6 August 1965. Lewis Seale, “Road expropriation to start soon,” *The Gazette* 4 August 1965; “Plan mid-town route,” *The Montréal Star* 4 August 1965.

⁶⁷¹ Charles Lazarus, “New expressway gives elbow room to traffic,” *The Montréal Star* 15 April 1967.

⁶⁷² Harold Poitras, “Expressway link to debut April 24,” *The Montréal Star* 17 April 1967.

Provincial officials were proud of the progress made on the city's expressway network under their stewardship. They touted the completion of the Metropolitan Expressway in 1960 and the Décarie and Bonaventure Expressways in 1967 for the Expo.⁶⁷³ As Expo came and went work on the east-west had yet to begin. A provincial engineer said he would be "very surprised" if work on the east-west section of the Trans-Canada began before 1969, but a department source told one reporter the start date could be as late as 1970.⁶⁷⁴ Some were critical of the government's ambitious pre-Expo construction schedule and challenged its boast of gains. Critics complained that portions of the expressway network categorized as finished actually included incomplete sections that still required permanent paving and additional lanes. These detractors blamed the situation on the rush to complete the Bonaventure-Décarie project in time for Expo '67 as well as incomplete funding for some sections, which they linked to "the state of the provincial treasury."⁶⁷⁵ Minister of Roads Fernand Lafontaine (1966-70) shot back that critics should complain to the city and the National Harbours Board since provincial authorities were only responsible for the stretch of the Bonaventure between the aqueduct region to Décarie Boulevard and the Turcot Interchange.⁶⁷⁶ As in other cities, the involvement of multiple levels of

⁶⁷³ Ministry of Transport, *Transport Plan for Montréal* (October 1967); CDMV, City of Montréal. The report also highlighted the standard funding arrangement whereby the province financed 80 percent of urban highways and commissioned the required studies, but planning decisions were made jointly between the province and the city. Trans-Canada routes, of course, were financed differently, receiving 50 percent federal funding.

⁶⁷⁴ Charles Lazarus, "Cross-city road job deferred," *The Montréal Star* 18 April 1968. An anonymous "informant" from the provincial roads department said work on east-west section between Turcot Interchange and Hippolyte-Lafontaine bridge/tunnel likely not to begin until 1970 because the funding arrangement had not yet been finalized.

⁶⁷⁵ Charles Lazarus, "Highway link still far off," *The Montréal Star* 3 January 1968. Critics also complained that the Bonaventure merging ramps at the Atwater access were dangerous and the median was eventually lowered to improve visibility, an adjustment they wanted on the Metropolitan as well. Len Rowcliffe, "The Bonaventure is fixed but how about Metropolitan?" *The Montréal Star* 20 November 1970.

⁶⁷⁶ "Québec denies responsibility for problems on expressway," *The Gazette* 20 January 1968. "Roads head answers critics," *The Montréal Star* 20 January 1968. Paul Thurston, "The Bonaventure: perilous after dark," *The Gazette* 31 December 1968.

government with jurisdiction over the different metropolitan regions expressways traversed complicated the process significantly.

“Elevated urban expressways have proven a costly, inefficient and disruptive answer to urban transportation”

Opposition to the east-west expressway really began to build momentum as construction continued into late 1960s. The receipt of expropriation notices by residents living in the roadway's path motivated local groups to mobilize against the route. The Lower Westmount Citizens' Committee (LWCC) -- sometimes also called the Westmount Citizens' Committee -- led efforts to publicize the threat to homes and fight against pro-expressway forces. Despite Westmount's image as a community of affluent anglophones, Lower Westmount was actually overwhelmingly working class, and thus consistent with the kinds of neighbourhoods most often threatened by expressway plans. In addition to the LWCC, other more broadly based advocacy groups that represented anglophone and francophone communities alike became involved as the fight wore on. The first larger group to join the cause was the Housing and Urban Renewal Committee (HURC). Led by local politicians, professionals and academics, these groups offered a series of arguments against the expressways.

Most objections revolved around the loss of housing, as critics pointed to a shortage of affordable housing in the city. They challenged claims that the homes slated for expropriation were dilapidated structures that would constitute no real loss to the city's housing stock. Expressway opponents also argued that the funding for the roads should be diverted to other infrastructure needs, the most pressing of which was a large scale overhaul of sewage and sanitation systems. More cutting commentaries speculated on the reasons why the destruction of

communities was considered a justifiable sacrifice in exchange for another inner city expressway. These arguments resembled objections seen in other cities where working class and lower income neighbourhoods were marked expendable. The unique Montréal angle was that in addition to or instead of charges of classism and racism, protestors questioned how tensions between francophones and anglophones affected the debates, and speculated that working class and francophone communities were considered expendable by highway planners.

Once the route of the east-west expressway was relocated inland from the harbour, opponents focused their objections on the section that threatened residential areas. Paul-Émile Sauvageau, the Union Nationale member for Bourget, called on the province to ensure the estimated 3,000 families who would lose their homes in that area would be properly compensated and relocated in comparable dwellings.⁶⁷⁷ Others were unhappy with the city's record on expropriations. *The Star's* editorial board criticized the long delays between the time when residents were expropriated and when construction was scheduled -- or rumoured -- to begin. The editor argued that widespread expropriations and demolitions increased the numbers of empty properties which were eventually converted to interim parking lots. In an editorial titled "People come second," the editor wrote, "We have already been through one unhappy period of expropriation and destruction involving the families in the Selby street area of Westmount Yet yesterday it was revealed that there is no more than a good chance that

⁶⁷⁷ Don Foley, "Family aid wanted in relocation cases," *The Montréal Star* 5 January 1968. Sauvageau also wanted the same protections for those who had already been expropriated for the Hippolyte Lafontaine tunnel-bridge.

highway construction work will begin in 1969, or perhaps it will be 1970.”⁶⁷⁸ Residents, the editor argued, were “a pretty low priority” while businesses were given advance notice and an opportunity to relocate: “We hope civic intervention on behalf of our most depressed groups will at last make certain that people do come first.”⁶⁷⁹

After these delays in the late 1960s, construction on the Trans-Canada extension east from the Turcot Interchange began in November 1970.⁶⁸⁰ Although expropriations for the east-west route were already under way, Minister of Roads Bernard Pinard warned locals that an estimated 1,500 to 2,000 families still had to be moved. City hall echoed that estimate, announcing 2,000 families would be displaced by the Trans-Canada Turcot and Louis Hippolyte-Lafontaine bridge-tunnel extension alone, and that city officials hoped the province would help fund the construction of low-cost housing to accommodate displaced residents.⁶⁸¹

Community groups rallied in the face of these expropriations to defend their neighbourhoods. The Lower Westmount Citizens’ Committee was particularly concerned about 125 housing units targeted for expropriation in the Selby Street area.⁶⁸² Westmount citizens

⁶⁷⁸ *The Montréal Star*’s editorial repeatedly criticized the government’s handling of the expropriations and recalled the Selby Street example on a number of occasions. The board called for more intergovernmental cooperation to avoid a repeat of the Selby Street expropriations, where 250 families were moved out years before construction began and denounced the city’s expropriation policy at large, charging, “There has been a willy-nilly destruction of serviceable housing in many parts of Greater Montréal. “Westmount housing,” (editorial) *The Montréal Star* 10 December 1970.

⁶⁷⁹ “People come second,” (editorial) *The Montréal Star* 19 April 1968. *Le Devoir*’s editors had also raised similar concerns around the same projects earlier, arguing the city’s priority must be to rehouse expropriated residents, particularly in Lower Westmount as well as in Little Burgundy where renewal projects were planned. “Vers la rénovation urbaine et une politique d’habitation,” *Le Devoir* 12 January 1966. The board’s assertion was perhaps supported by the case of Whitey’s Hideaway, a bar on Aqueduct Street that had received several expropriation notices from November 1967 but was only forced to vacate the location in January 1971. Chris Allan, “Umpteenth closing will stick -- probably,” *The Gazette* 19 January 1971.

⁶⁸⁰ Charles Lazarus, “Eerie underworld awaits traffic,” *The Montréal Star* 19 November 1970.

⁶⁸¹ Kendal Windeyer, “Citizen’s groups hit Québec jobless aid,” *The Gazette* 26 November 1970. The city hoped to obtain provincial funding to help relocate the displaced families. “City will help to relocate those put out by highway,” *The Gazette* 28 November 1970.

⁶⁸² “Wanted: Homes for 2,000 families,” *The Montréal Star* 26 November 1970.

found support from the Housing and Urban Renewal Committee, co-chaired by Montréal architect and McGill Professor Joseph Baker.⁶⁸³ Described as a group of “seventy professional men, clergy and union representatives,” HURC opposed the Trans-Canada extension, arguing funding for the road should instead be used for developing low cost housing and rapid transit, and combatting pollution. Many groups who opposed the Trans-Canada extension pointed to the health problems plaguing the threatened areas. In the previous provincial election candidates had promised new hospital facilities for the region, yet no progress had been made. As a St. Henri citizen’s group said, “Expressways are just fine. A hospital is even better.” Gerard Riberdy, the spokesman for the Comité des Citoyens de L’Hospital Saint Henri agreed, remarking, “You could write a book about the health problems in this section of town.”⁶⁸⁴ Expressway opponents also found support from Jean-Paul Guay, an urban planner who had worked for the city on the Décarie and east-west expressways, when he told a Association Francophone Pour le Savoir audience that “indirect” costs should be included in expropriation estimates, moving beyond the basic “monetary value” to also account for the perhaps more significant “social and economic use” of lost land and buildings.⁶⁸⁵

HURC Co-Chair Joseph Baker criticized the Trans-Canada extension, claiming the expressway was an ineffective way to respond to congestion and adding that the money should

⁶⁸³ The Housing and Urban Renewal Committee had already been active on this front, appealing to Lucien Saulnier, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the City of Montréal in June 1970. Among their concerns was that the need for housing would be demoted in favour of improvements to the city’s transportation infrastructure. Instead of destroying housing to accommodate street widening programs, the Committee stressed the need to extend the Metro system. Rolf Latte and Serge Carreau, Co-Chairmen of the Committee on Housing and Urban Renewal of the Montréal Metropolitan Area, to Lucien Saulnier, Chairman of the Executive Committee, Letter, 22 June 1970; MG 2076, C. 3, File 131, McGill University Archives (MUA).

⁶⁸⁴ Kendal Windeyer, “Citizen’s groups hit Québec jobless aid,” *The Gazette* 26 November 1970. The extension ran from the Turcot Interchange to the east end of the island and linked to the Hippolyte-Lafontaine bridge/tunnel.

⁶⁸⁵ Jean-Paul Guay, “L’évaluation des effets sur le milieu dans la localisation d’une autoroute urbaine,” Presentation at ACFAS 36th Congres, November 1968; CDMV, City of Montréal.

instead be spent on expanding the city's metro system, creating more low income housing as well as rehabilitating existing housing, and constructing new sewage treatment plants. As Baker explained, expressways in other North American cities had proven to be overpriced and ineffective, often exacerbating traffic problems and significantly delaying the planning of mass transit systems.⁶⁸⁶ The group elaborated, saying, "In numerous examples across the North American continent, elevated urban expressways have proven a costly, inefficient and disruptive answer to urban transportation, most often aggravating the very condition they seek to cure and postponing the construction of adequate mass transit facilities."⁶⁸⁷ Expressways were obsolete and typically resulted in the displacement of already disadvantaged communities. The committee concluded simply: "Don't build it."⁶⁸⁸

The provincial response to growing local opposition was to downplay the impact of the route and emphasize its utility. A spokesman for provincial officials maintained that the families displaced by the route lived in primarily "blighted areas." The road, he explained, would serve a number of important functions in the city, easing downtown congestion, linking the industrial areas of Lachine, St. Pierre and La Salle in the west and east ends, and opening up the south shore around Contrecoeur, Varennes and Verchères for industrial development.⁶⁸⁹

⁶⁸⁶ Joseph Baker, Co-President of the Committee on Housing and Urban Renewal of the Montréal Metropolitan Region, Unaddressed form letter, 25 November 1970; MG 2076, C. 3, File 128, MUA.

⁶⁸⁷ Joseph Baker and Serge Carreau, Co-Presidents, Committee on Housing and Urban Renewal of the Montréal Metropolitan Region, Press Release, 25 November 1970, 2; MG 2076, C. 3, File 128, MUA. The following year when officials received complaints about noise from the Trans-Canada, provincial roads engineer John Connally argued elevated expressways were the only solution. Charles Lazarus, "Noise problems studied [sic]," *The Montréal Star* 17 June 1971.

⁶⁸⁸ Charles Lazarus, "Turcot interchange extension justified economically," *The Montréal Star* 27 November 1970. The Housing and Urban Renewal Committee's critique of the expressway was also publicly endorsed by the Montréal Council of Social Agencies, who echoed the committee's insistence that housing must be prioritized over expressways. Peter S. Leggat, President of the Montréal Council of Social Agencies, to Claude Castonguay, Minister of Health and Family Welfare, Telegram, 8 December 1970; MG 2076, C. 3, File 128, MUA.

⁶⁸⁹ Charles Lazarus, "Turcot interchange extension justified economically," *The Montréal Star* 27 November 1970.

Local activists were unconvinced. Fernand Leclaire, president of the Lower Westmount Citizens' Committee joined with Housing and Urban Renewal Committee members in condemning the east-west route. Leclaire relayed community objections to the expropriation and destruction of 125 homes in the Selby Street area, arguing that plans for access ramps and service roads could be modified to save homes. The expressway scheme, Leclaire contended, hurt "the people least able to suffer the consequences," adding, "certain individuals have died from emotional effects directly attributable to the way they were evicted. The injustice we are still suffering was brought about by the lack of planning and unrestrained start of construction on the autoroute." Leclaire estimated 3,900 homes in the centre-east region of Montréal would be demolished in the initial phase of construction while another 10,000 would be targeted in subsequent stages. Only cars and cement companies benefited from expressways, he added, and inner urban neighbourhoods must not be sacrificed to benefit suburban neighbours.⁶⁹⁰

Frustrated by the lack of information they had received about aid for displaced families, Westmount representatives called for a meeting with city and provincial officials.⁶⁹¹ A few weeks later Leclaire accused the provincial government, which had not responded to the citizen's committee request for a meeting, of trying to coerce the twenty-nine families who would be displaced by an access ramp into signing expropriation agreements. After irritating locals by

⁶⁹⁰ Ralph Surette, "Highway extension renews opposition," *The Montréal Star* 20/30 November 1970.

⁶⁹¹ Walter Turner, "Westmount seeks meeting on Trans-Canada ramp," *The Montréal Star* 9 December 1970. It is unclear whether Leclair secured the meeting he requested: press reports suggested he did not, but internal documents of the Committee on Housing and Urban Renewal indicated Leclair and Joseph Baker had an agreement with "someone in the highway department" from 7 December 1970 that expropriation planning would be suspended until further ramp studies were conducted. Bob Davis relayed many of the details of the Westmount expropriation work and community response reported in the press to the Committee, including accounts of government agents intimidating residents, offering settlements that drastically undervalued homes, and even confiscating tenants' leases. Davis also reported that the FSA [?] was contacting FRAP, the P.Q. and the press in an effort to rouse support for their cause. Gilda to Michel and Ben, "Re: Evictions in lower Westmount for the East-West Highway construction," 15 December 1970; MG 2076, C. 3, File 128, MUA.

reportedly pressuring women whose husbands were not home to sign agreements, two government agents canvassing the area had to lock themselves in their cars to escape enraged locals. “Violence will explode in the area anytime now if this continues,” Leclaire warned.⁶⁹² The group hired a lawyer and threatened to seek an injunction against the expressway if the ramp was not relocated and expropriations halted until alternative housing was constructed. While some residents said they only sought a fair settlement, most completely refused to move, with one resident threatening to fight “the next s.o.b. who shows up with eviction papers”⁶⁹³ and another simply remarking, “I’m not moving. That’s all.”⁶⁹⁴

Meanwhile, the opposition spurred debates in the House of Commons. Some MPs opposed the Trans-Canada extension route, arguing that the housing shortage meant existing homes should not be sacrificed to the expressway. Georges Valade, a Progressive Conservative representative for Sainte-Marie, advocated what he called the “magnificent” harbour location as an alternative. Others including Member of Parliament (MP) and Secretary of State Gérard Pelletier (1968-73) as well as Greenwood NDP MP Andrew Brewin called for an underground expressway to avoid “butcher[ing]” residential areas in the east end.⁶⁹⁵ Premier Robert Bourassa (1970-76) admonished Pelletier, saying it was discourteous to speak out without contacting Bourassa first, and telling the minister the Trans-Canada expressway was not his area of expertise. Minister of Roads Pinard also reminded critics that the Trans-Canada route had been

⁶⁹² Walter Turner, “Citizens group charges ‘pressure’,” *The Montréal Star* 16 December 1970.

⁶⁹³ Joseph Baker quoting Shelia Baxter, “Architect feels ‘real priorities’ ignored in autoroute planning,” *The Montréal Star* 2 January 1971.

⁶⁹⁴ Sandra Dolan, “Westmount citizens group seeks to block highway,” *The Montréal Star* 17 December 1970.

⁶⁹⁵ Federal authorities were not included in the debates as federal involvement was limited to a contribution to provincial funding because of the Trans-Canada designation, although the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Company (CMHC) had advised officials they would be concerned by any significant loss of housing in the city. Arthur Blakely, “MPs oppose expressway plan,” *The Gazette* 16 December 1970.

endorsed by all three levels of government years prior.⁶⁹⁶ Pinard's defence did not prevent other critics from weighing in, including PQ leader René Lévesque (1968-85) who argued the highway was a temporary solution to the province's unemployment problem and one that would exacerbate the housing shortage. Lévesque shared the position of many other expressway opponents, arguing public funds should be used to build affordable housing and expand public transportation.⁶⁹⁷

Despite protests fuelled by the loss of homes, construction on the east-west route continued. Member of the National Assembly of Québec (MNA) and Liberal for Jacques-Cartier Claire Kirkland-Casgrain was confounded by the protests, noting the expressway route dovetailed perfectly with slum clearance in the area. "I really don't understand the protests," she said, "For years they told us people should be moved from poor to better housing. Most of the places to be torn down should have been demolished years ago. Now there's a chance to improve things -- and we get protests."⁶⁹⁸ Opponents criticized Kirkland-Casgrain's perspective, urging her to listen to protestors who called for more public transit. One objector, Stuart Kinmond, lamented "the enormous reduction through demolition of low-rental unsubsidized accommodations as well as the inestimable damage to the social structures which are so important to these lower-income, tight knit communities," concluding, "I feel Mr. Pinard is not taking any account of social costs in his calculations."⁶⁹⁹ Provincial officials held firm and dismissed criticism that the project would destroy the "social fabric" of the area calling it "so

⁶⁹⁶ Dan Pottier, "Pelletier gets hand slapped," *The Montréal Star* 17 December 1970.

⁶⁹⁷ René Lévesque, "L'erreur de l'autoroute," *Le Journal de Montréal* 29 December 1970.

⁶⁹⁸ Charles Lazarus, "Highway surges ahead," *The Montréal Star* 22 December 1970.

⁶⁹⁹ Stuart Kinmond, "Highway work may provide needed jobs but plan ignores damage to social structure," *The Montréal Star* 6 January 1971.

much nonsense.” The expressway was needed to alleviate congestion, they argued, and delays only cost jobs.⁷⁰⁰

“The time has come to decide whether Highway Men will continue to determine the social or physical parameters for our environment”

While community advocates debated the merits of the plan and politicians tried to make sense of the opposition, Westmount representatives appealed to the province to save their community from the expressway by changing the route. Despite initial reassurances from their provincial counterparts that changes would be considered, local officials’ continued skepticism was justified when residents received expropriation notices regardless. This move provoked greater opposition, leading to the emergence of the largest protest alliance, a broad based coalition of labour, political, community and professional groups that banded together under the name the Common Front Against the Highway. The group was shaped by their shared urban planning priorities but also inspired by the working class nature of some of the threatened neighbourhoods and the sense that these areas were deliberately undervalued and targeted in a manner at odds with social justice.

By the end of 1970 west end families had been notified of planned expropriations but government agents were no longer pushing for settlements because the city acknowledged that the ramp was poorly positioned. As per the financing arrangements, Westmount as a municipality was responsible for funding the ramp construction, but municipal authorities instead presented alternative plans to the provincial government and continued to seek equitable

⁷⁰⁰ Charles Lazarus, “Mayor, minister face highway issue,” *The Montréal Star* 2 January 1971. Provincial officials also recalled that the waterfront location, which would not threaten as many homes, had been rejected by the National Harbours Board.

settlements and accommodations for those threatened with expropriation.⁷⁰¹ The approach seemed to work as municipal officials including Westmount Mayor Peter McEntyre (1969-71) secured the meeting they sought with provincial engineers and “traffic experts” to discuss the possible relocation of the ramp. McEntyre remained skeptical of the sincerity of the provincial government, commenting: “We’re convinced the government is insincere in wanting to cause as little dislocation as possible. It’s a question of sites and the experts have told us they want to give further study to our alternatives.” Adjustments to the road plan seemed unlikely since the government had prioritized expressway construction to combat unemployment. *The Star’s* editorial board called it “essentially a make-work project.”⁷⁰²

Opponents contended an extension of the Metro system and the development of a housing policy had both been ignored by the Jean Drapeau administration in its pursuit of “projets de grandeur.”⁷⁰³ Drapeau was widely recognized as favouring large projects and criticized by many for overlooking lower profile infrastructure needs such as housing.⁷⁰⁴ Once again the *Montréal Star’s* editorial board offered a critical assessment, explaining:

It is a traditional view that if one improves the top of a community the bottom automatically rises. This is a view which events in Europe and elsewhere, including Latin America, have shown to lack substance. In 1971 the task of the administration is not to worry about the soul of Montréal so much as its body; to fight to preserve housing as well as to build more; to meet need as it arises and work to fill it. There may be a time

⁷⁰¹ Walter Turner, “Westmount blocks highway ramp,” *The Montréal Star* 26 December 1970.

⁷⁰² “Housing priorities,” (editorial) *The Montréal Star* 29 December 1970. “City, province to discuss site of autoroute,” *The Gazette* 30 December 1970. Charles Lazarus, “Mayor, minister face highway issue,” *The Montréal Star* 2 January 1971. Lazarus characterized opposition to the east-west scheme at this time as ranging “from general condemnation of the expressway syndrome, to a crusade against uprooting residential neighbourhoods.”

⁷⁰³ Charles Lazarus, “Trans-Canada talks likely,” *The Montréal Star* 29 December 1970; “Westmount expects road decision soon,” *The Montréal Star* 29 December 1970.

⁷⁰⁴ “Remember when Montréal had no autoroutes?” *The Montréal Star* 4 December 1970.

when we can and should have both styles, the glittering and the basic. That time has not yet arisen.⁷⁰⁵

Community activists objected to the expressway on a number of counts. One of the most vocal opponents was Co-Chairman of the Housing and Urban Renewal Committee Joseph Baker. He was also a former president of the Province of Québec Association of Architects and Director of the Community Design Workshop at the McGill School of Architecture. The latter paired volunteer professionals and university students with lower income neighbourhoods threatened by urban renewal schemes to advocate on their behalf. The group called for “rehabilitation, not redevelopment,” a new route for the contentious ramp and the clean up of properties that had been expropriated but not yet demolished. In a project labelled Operation St. Antoine, workshop members photographed all of the homes threatened by the expressway and interviewed local families. As Baker explained, “Operation St. Antoine was not one of those negative ‘Stop whatever it is’ kind of endeavours . . . It poured over plans, talked with consulting engineers, and anyone remotely connected with the strange decision to route the access ramp through [local resident] Mrs. Martin’s living room.” He criticized Premier Bourassa for pushing through the Trans-Canada project in fall 1970 simply because no other public projects were ready to begin. Baker condemned autocentric planning, saying, “The time has come to decide whether Highway Men will continue to determine the social or physical parameters for our environment, to decide whether true planning does not imply a careful and sensitive assessment of all criteria and consequences upon which our actions will be based.”⁷⁰⁶

⁷⁰⁵ “The city: its body as well as its soul,” (editorial) *The Montréal Star* 30 December 1970.

⁷⁰⁶ Joseph Baker, “Architect feels ‘real priorities’ ignored in autoroute planning,” *The Montréal Star* 2 January 1971. Baker reported that almost all the families previously displaced from the Selby Street area had to relocate outside of the municipality due to the lack of available housing.

As public opposition to the east-west route grew, provincial and city officials met to discuss the most controversial section of the route from Papineau to Viau Street, where 2,000 houses were slated for expropriation. The officials agreed housing was a priority and arranged low cost housing for the relocation of families from the western section between the Turcot Interchange and the Jacques Cartier Bridge. Executive Committee Chairman Gérard Niding (1970-78) left disappointed, noting, “We didn’t get an opportunity to discuss the project and its effects.”⁷⁰⁷ Still, the city agreed that despite the weaknesses officials saw in the plan, they would not block the Trans-Canada extension.⁷⁰⁸ Shortly thereafter the province advised Westmount Mayor Peter McEntyre that an access ramp that previously required the expropriation of twenty-nine properties had been moved west and now required only three expropriations. William Miller, legal advisor for the Lower Westmount Citizens’ Committee, was subdued, remarking, “We’re not going to dance in the streets over the change, because it’s a very complex matter and we’ll have to examine all the ramifications.”⁷⁰⁹ Miller’s reservations seemed to be validated days later, as residents received expropriation notices despite the province’s promise the requisitions had been temporarily halted and were under review.⁷¹⁰ Westmount’s council subsequently formalized its opposition to the ramp, passing a resolution that was opposed by only Alderman John Birks, who argued council should take a “wider view” of the project and recognize the purpose it would serve.⁷¹¹

⁷⁰⁷ Dan Karon, “City to help relocated families,” *The Gazette* 5 January 1971.

⁷⁰⁸ “City refuses to block expressway,” *The Gazette* 6 January 1971. “Highway gets priority,” *The Montréal Star* 6 January 1971.

⁷⁰⁹ Bob Hayes, “Westmount road change saves homes,” *The Gazette* 9 January 1971.

⁷¹⁰ “Ramp location moved or not?” *The Montréal Star* 12 January 1971.

⁷¹¹ “Westmount again seeks change in ramp site,” *The Montréal Star* 20 January 1971. Bob Hayes, “Westmount continues opposition,” *The Gazette* 20 January 1971.

The province's refusal to re-evaluate the expressway scheme combined with federal officials' refusal to intervene provoked the opposition. While the Westmount community mobilized against the expressway and in particular the access ramp that threatened its neighbourhood, other groups were banding together to oppose the expressway at large. A powerful coalition of fourteen groups emerged in January 1971, a combination of high profile advocacy bodies and local community associations. The group's leadership included the executive secretary of the Montréal Labour Council and Québec Federation of Labour member Guy Dupuis, Montréal Housing and Urban Renewal Committee member and architect Gaétan Biancamano, MNA for Maisonneuve Robert Burns, Front d'Action Politique member Michel Lizé, and vice-president of the Montréal Council of the Confederation of National Trade Unions Michel Bourdon. Other members included representatives from citizens committees from Lower Westmount, Little Burgundy, Maisonneuve, and St. Jacques, the Montréal Architects Society, the Alliance des Professeurs de Montréal, several PQ riding associations, the Front Revolutionnaire pour une Alternative Progressiste (FRAP) and the PQ. As a writer for *The Gazette* observed, "The Common Front includes most anti-autoroute organizations, and its member list reads like a who's who of Montréal labour unions and self-help committees."⁷¹²

The coalition's opposition to the route grew from the group's shared conviction that improved and expanded housing, an extended Metro network, and enhanced water purification

⁷¹² "Call a halt, autoroute foes demand," *The Gazette* 28 January 1971. FRAP had previously established their concerns over the social costs of the project in terms of displacing families and dividing neighbourhoods, arguing officials should use public housing construction instead of expressway building to generate jobs and that the rightful priorities for urban development should be the expansion of the Metro and improving water treatment systems. FRAP Conseil Permanent, Minutes, 9 December 1970; 37P-160/44, Université du Québec à Montréal Archives. The 125,000 member Montréal Labour Council and the Montréal Central Council of the Confederation of National Trade Unions together called the Trans-Canada extension "a senseless piece of opportunism." The groups acknowledged the project would generate 4,000 jobs but said the loss of 20,000 homes at a time when the city needed an estimated 100,000 low income housing units was simply too high a price to pay. "Labour groups to fight highway extension," *The Gazette* 16 January 1971.

plants would all be better make-work projects than the expressway.⁷¹³ The highway, they argued, “is going against the grain of social progress.”⁷¹⁴ Coalition members were also acutely aware of the politics surrounding the expressway project and argued their group’s principal strength was that it could adopt an unequivocal stand against the expressway, whereas “The City of Montréal has to be sort of wishy washy in the face of the ‘Liberal entrepreneurs’,” according to group member Michel Bourdon. This position did not mean the group rejected all political affiliations. In fact it embraced the PQ and in turn the political party helped produce and circulate anti-expressway literature.⁷¹⁵

The housing and relocation debates were also shaped by the fact that primarily working class neighbourhoods were threatened by the extension, many of which had been targeted for urban renewal in the preceding years. Anti-expressway activists often accused pro-expressway officials of undervaluing certain features of these areas, in particular the availability of affordable housing and the sense of community, often referred to as the milieu of a neighbourhood. The coalition denounced the injustice of forcing people out of their homes when equally affordable alternative housing was unavailable elsewhere. Members acknowledged some of the targeted areas, such as the working class and predominantly French speaking neighbourhood of Maisonneuve, had been classified as slums but argued that affordable rental rates and the tight knit community that existed in such areas should be taken into account. Running an expressway

⁷¹³ “14 groups gang up on minister of roads,” *The Montréal Star* 15 January 1971. The Montréal branch of the Society to Overcome Pollution (STOP), founded in 1970, was not a formal member of the Front but supported the group’s calls for expressway funds to be diverted to the planned Metro extension and water treatment plants, arguing automobiles produced 64 percent of all air pollution. Norman Pascoe, “City east-west expressway first planned 46 years ago,” *The Montréal Star* 30 January 1971.

⁷¹⁴ Mark Daly and Ray Doucet, “City urges halt to highway work,” *The Montréal Star* 22 January 1971. Quotation from one of the group leaders, Montréal Housing and Urban Renewal Committee member and architect Gaétan Biancamano,

⁷¹⁵ “Call a halt, autoroute foes demand,” *The Gazette* 28 January 1971.

through these neighbourhoods, activists argued, would precipitate significant irreversible changes. As coalition members explained, “Then we’ll have not only the highway, but shopping centres, gas stations, access ramps -- the area will be uninhabitable.”⁷¹⁶

In Maisonneuve, the average household income was \$4,000, and some families survived on meagre welfare. Resident Mrs. Dirk Jol, who lived on the threatened Davidson Street, described the area:

This is a lovely neighbourhood, the kind where you know all your neighbours and the storekeepers, and there is a feeling of belonging. The houses are good houses, not slum dwellings. They are not so high that you can’t see the sky, and birds still come to feed on your balcony. Most of the people are French-speaking, so it is one of the last French quarters.

If the expressway was built, Jol lamented, “Gone will be a neighbourhood with a unique flavour, and in its place will be a ghetto of low-income people who simply can’t afford to move. The whole social fabric will be broken.”⁷¹⁷

The outcry from communities threatened by the expressway moved some politicians with local affiliations to speak out on their behalf. Federal State Secretary Gérard Pelletier, for example, whose constituency of Hochelaga was threatened by the east-west route, opposed the expressway. Residents in Pelletier’s riding worked through the Comité Locataire de Hochelaga to publicize the threat to their neighbourhood. Locals also registered their opposition with Hochelaga-Maisonneuve City Councillor Pierre Lorange.⁷¹⁸ At the local level, city councillors for Maisonneuve Pierre Lorange, Normand Lussier, and Yvon Payette presented a petition against the extension to the province. It included signatures from three local members of federal

⁷¹⁶ “14 groups gang up on minister of roads,” *The Montréal Star* 15 January 1971.

⁷¹⁷ Beverley Mitchell, “Highway will tear a neighbourhood apart,” *The Montréal Star* 15 January 1971.

⁷¹⁸ Ibid.

parliament and over 300 area merchants and residents. The petition called for an eastern rerouting of the extension, along the waterfront parallel to Notre Dame Street, which supporters advocated because it would displace fewer residents. Lorange argued the existing extension was “completely against the most elementary social and economic interests of the people of the area.” He added: “Mr. Pinard seems to forget that thousands of people in the sectors are attached to their milieu and are not quite ready to let it gradually deteriorate because of the construction of an expressway.”⁷¹⁹

Others, such as Executive Committee Chairman Gérard Niding, suggested an expressway to alleviate traffic was not even necessary. “It would be sad,” Niding said, “to disrupt our territory and to depersonalize the affected sectors to alleviate a problem which is not as grave as we seem to be making it.”⁷²⁰ If the requested meeting with the province was granted, Niding told reporters, he planned to reiterate local requests that Bourassa suspend work on the Trans-Canada extension while alternatives were considered. Niding agreed with the provincial position that the east-west was necessary, but questioned the chosen route. He recalled his surprise when provincial officials announced construction would begin in November because talks between the city and province on the project had collapsed in 1968.⁷²¹

Other local officials were moderate in their criticism, objecting to the route rather than the road itself, or arguing the economic boost the project would bring trumped concerns about

⁷¹⁹ Mark Daly, “Highway petition presented,” *The Montréal Star* 21 January 1971. “New eastern route suggested for Trans-Canada extension,” *The Gazette* 21 January 1971.

⁷²⁰ Mark Daly and Ray Doucet, “City urges halt to highway work,” *The Montréal Star* 22 January 1971. “No more roads?” *The Gazette* 22 January 1971

⁷²¹ Niding was among the many officials targeted by anti-expressway groups to extend his objections about the project to opposing the route outright. Peter S. Leggat, President of the Montréal Council of Social Agencies, to Gérard Niding, Chairman of the Executive Committee of the City of Montréal, Letter, 3 February 1971; MG 2076, C. 3, File 128, MUA. Dan Karon, “Montréal confident of delay,” *The Gazette* 23 January 1971.

need. Lucien Saulnier, the Chair of the Montréal Urban Community (1970-72), argued that both the expressway and a Metro extension were required and urged officials to take the time necessary to review their plans to find the best possible route.⁷²² Initially Saulnier's colleague, Executive Committee Vice-Chairman John Lynch-Staunton (1960-74), appeared to stand by the project despite doubts, explaining, "It may not be essential work as far as easing of traffic is concerned, but it is essential to help solve the unemployment situation here."⁷²³ Days later Lynch-Staunton's position seemed to change, as he remarked, "We don't want the government to cancel the project but we feel that the days of bulldozing such an expressway through the city as was done with the Metropolitan Boulevard are over."⁷²⁴

In late January 1971 rumours emerged that the province was planning a closed session to consider temporarily shelving the controversial section of the extension, although publicly officials remained committed to the expressway.⁷²⁵ At the same time, city officials asked Premier Robert Bourassa to suspend work on the highway and peppered him with a series of questions which they insisted must be answered before work moved forward, asking, "what must be the true concept of this expressway and what role must it play in the modernization of the downtown area?" and "In what way can we go about building this expressway and at the same time preserve the proper urban milieu?" Their concerns about the project were wide ranging, as they pointed to the proven folly of expressways in other cities like Los Angeles. Highways, they added, should help alleviate downtown congestion and not facilitate greater access to the inner

⁷²² Beverley Mitchell, "Highway will tear a neighbourhood apart," *The Montréal Star* 15 January 1971.

⁷²³ Mark Daly, "Metro still city's top priority," *The Montréal Star* 20 January 1971.

⁷²⁴ Dan Karon, "City wants Trans-Canada highway work halted," *The Gazette* 22 January 1971.

⁷²⁵ Charles Lazarus, "Trans-Canada delay possible," *The Montréal Star* 21 January 1971. "No more roads?" *The Gazette* 22 January 1971.

city, as was planned. Finally, officials noted shifting planning trends which favoured the prioritization of public transit and pedestrian accommodations over freeways that threatened the local character, established communities and heritage of the city, and reduced scarce housing.⁷²⁶

The growth of anti-expressway sentiment among community activists and city officials in turn increased pressure on pro-expressway provincial politicians. The Lower Westmount Citizens' Committee notified provincial authorities that they would take legal action against the province if the work was not halted immediately, while city officials waited to see whether the premier would meet the demands to halt the project.⁷²⁷ Provincial officials reportedly felt betrayed by colleagues who were originally on board with the project, but now voiced reservations. Journalists reported provincial officials were considering retooling previously rejected alternatives in light of these developments, speculating that the jobs lost by cancelling or postponing the road might equal the "embarrassment" of the "touchy social issues" raised by protestors.⁷²⁸

While city officials and local residents waited for the province to respond to their ultimatums, citizens groups in Westmount and Hochelaga-Maisonneuve continued to condemn the extension. At a public meeting organized by the Westmount Municipal Association, over 100 attendees backed a resolution against the extension. Provincial Minister of State for Quality of the Environment Dr. Victor Goldbloom (1970-73) assured attendees that the road would not

⁷²⁶ Cabinet of the President of the Executive Committee to Premier Bourassa, Letter, 20 January 1971; MG 2076, C. 1, File 904, MUA.

⁷²⁷ "Niding cites need for highway halt," *The Montréal Star* 25 January 1971.

⁷²⁸ Mark Daly, Charles Lazarus and Joseph Hanafin, "Barriers give city excuse to stall," *The Montréal Star* 23 January 1971. The authors of this article also noted the existence of a city bylaw where requests to erect barriers for construction on highways must go through city, which would give the city an opportunity to stall the project since the province had to file the request. Even in late January 1971, the city did not have the necessary facilities to relocate displaced families. "Fight on highway extension centres on moving families," *The Gazette* 25 January 1971.

create pollution because cars would soon be “nearly pollution-free.”⁷²⁹ City Planner Andrew Melamed, on the other hand, agreed with some critics who argued that the Metro extension should be prioritized over expressways because American cities clearly showed downtown expressways were “disastrous.”⁷³⁰ Others like provincial roads engineer John Connolly continued to support the project, arguing an alternative ramp location was “engineeringly impossible,” though he admitted that possibility had not been studied.⁷³¹ After the Westmount Municipal Association’s meeting, the LWCC sent a telegram to Minister of Finance Edgar Benson, Secretary of State Gérard Pelletier and Treasury Board President and Liberal Westmount MP C.M. Drury demanding that the extension funds be diverted to housing and the Metro system.⁷³² Premier Robert Bourassa, however, insisted work on the expressway would continue despite the public opposition.⁷³³

A few weeks later, the LWCC received its response from C.M. Drury. Drury declined to intervene in the expressway dispute, arguing that federal intervention in the matter would be inappropriate since better informed provincial and municipal authorities had previously approved the project. He explained that the federal government aimed to stimulate the economy through job creation, and accordingly, \$70,000,000 of \$150,000,000 federal funding for capital projects was granted to Québec because of high unemployment in the province. The east-west

⁷²⁹ “Highway protest continues,” *The Gazette* 29 March 1971. Goldbloom promised WAC he would pass on their concerns Mark Daly, “Goldbloom ready to mediate on Westmount autoroute fight,” *The Montréal Star* 29 March 1971. “Goldbloom defends autoroute,” *The Gazette* 6 April 1971. “Citizens’ groups protest Trans-Canada routing,” *The Gazette* 26 January 1971. “Car said doomed as city vehicle,” *The Gazette* 11 November 1971.

⁷³⁰ Tony Burman, “Citizens protest highway extension,” *The Montréal Star* 26 January 1971.

⁷³¹ Hubert Bauch, “Citizens’ groups protest Trans-Canada routing,” *The Gazette* 26 January 1971.

⁷³² “Citizens wire ramp protest,” *The Montréal Star* 27 January 1971.

⁷³³ “Bourassa firm: Trans-Canada to go ahead,” *The Gazette* 28 January 1971.

expressway had already been approved as a project that was consistent with the funding mandate.⁷³⁴ Interfering with provincial authorities' choice of project would be unconstitutional, he argued, adding paradoxically, "In no instance is the federal government involving itself in the choice of projects, except to approve or disapprove what the Provinces recommend." Drury noted that he "felt concern" for families displaced by the route, but added, "I also feel concern for the Lower Westmount community which has been seriously disturbed and inconvenienced in order that a more efficient mass transit system be put at the disposal of the City of Montréal."⁷³⁵

As residents in threatened neighbourhoods continued to fight the expressway and growing numbers of local officials expressed concerns over the plans, *Star* columnist Norman Pascoe joined the chorus of critics. He argued that unchecked technological advances perpetuated roads projects for economic gain and without any consideration of the impact on the environment and the resultant loss of housing. According to Pascoe, planners and their supporters lacked empathy and underestimated the impact of relocation on displaced residents:

Designers of these projects generally overlook the psychological impact on people forced out of homes and neighbourhoods where they have lived for years, sometimes for generations, in familiar surroundings. The young may adjust but older people are disturbed and dispirited. People who have never undergone their experience are callous in their ignorance and indifference. The attitude seems to be: 'It's too bad, but they'll just have to find somewhere else to live'.⁷³⁶

⁷³⁴ Drury further explained, "The Federal Government applied two criteria to qualify the projects for the funds: that they be expected to involve construction that provincial governments would not otherwise undertaken [sic] before March, 1972 (when the loan fund expires); and that they be expected to contribute directly to additional employment." C.M. Drury, President of the Treasury Board, to Fred Leclair, President of the Lower Westmount Citizens' Committee, Letter, 12 February 1971; MG 2076, C. 3, File 128, MUA.

⁷³⁵ Ibid.

⁷³⁶ Norman Pascoe, "City east-west expressway first planned 46 years ago," *The Montréal Star* 30 January 1971.

“The government is flagrant in its disregard of public opinion”

In February 1971, the provincial government held a news conference to reveal discussions between the city and province over a possible route modification. Provincial officials said that the two parties were close to an agreement, but told reporters that no announcement would be made for two to three months, and in the meantime, construction would continue in the western section where no route changes were being considered. At the conference, Bourassa insisted that the provincial government was never opposed to a route change, only suggestions to stop work completely.⁷³⁷

At the same time, provincial officials advised the LWCC that only three buildings, comprising eleven homes, would be destroyed for the planned access ramp, and promised expropriations would be kept to a minimum. The committee, however, insisted the province's figures underestimated the destruction by forty dwellings, and maintained that the ramp should be cancelled. It noted over 2,000 families in the east end had already been displaced, and criticized Bourassa's unsympathetic stance, noting, “He is asking the evicted leave their homes quietly, so that the social order may be upheld.”⁷³⁸

Only a few days after the press conference provincial officials released plans for modifications to the eastern section of route, leaving the controversial western portion already under construction untouched, including the contentious Greene Avenue access which they labelled non-negotiable.⁷³⁹ A two and a half mile stretch of the expressway through the east end

⁷³⁷ “Trans-Canada route may be changed,” *The Montréal Star* 3 February 1971.

⁷³⁸ Mark Daly, “Westmount ramp battle continues,” *The Montréal Star* 3 February 1971.

⁷³⁹ Charles Lazarus, “Highway route change approved,” *The Montréal Star* 4 February 1971. Dan Karon, “Work on Trans-Canada getting into high gear,” *The Gazette* 6 February 1971. Charles Lazarus, “Highway ‘waste’ without Greene ramp,” *The Montréal Star* 6 February 1971.

of the city was rerouted through a sparsely populated area north of Notre Dame Street so that 500 fewer families would be displaced and only fifty instead of ninety commercial units would be moved. The changes meant thirty families who had been evicted in anticipation of expropriations in the east end were granted a temporary reprieve until May 1972 as work on the new route was not expected to begin until 1974.⁷⁴⁰

Some local officials accepted this solution. MUC Executive Committee Chair Lucien Saulnier was satisfied that the province had addressed the route problems, and noted that he had only opposed the idea of the expressway as an alternative to the Metro.⁷⁴¹ Saulnier pointed to widespread change whereby city planners and administrators wanted to keep cars out of cities and emphasized public transit as one way to help achieve that goal. With this in mind, Saulnier argued that the Trans-Canada section that traversed the city centre should have access ramps but no exits to avoid exacerbating congestion.⁷⁴² Saulnier tried to strike this type of awkward and seemingly contradictory balance throughout the expressway controversy. He simultaneously offered measured approval for the route and support for protestors. He told attendees at one community meeting: “I have not heard of a unanimous decision to leave cars at home” and that

⁷⁴⁰ Ralph Surette, “Minister delays evictions,” *The Montréal Star* 20 February 1971. Opponents of the expropriations continued to criticize the scheme despite the changes, making the same argument as those in Westmount and other working class communities as they insisted the houses slated for destruction were not slum dwellings. Dr. Camille Laurin, house leader of the Parti Québécois and MNA for Bourget, where the houses were located, said, “These people are distressed at the idea of leaving a milieu which they had chosen and where many have been established for a long time.” Laurin added that older residents in particular feared they would not be able to find comparable housing.

⁷⁴¹ Evelyn Dumas, “Attention to Metro pleases Saulnier,” *The Montréal Star* 4 February 1971.

⁷⁴² Evelyn Dumas, “Saulnier against city exits on highway,” *The Montréal Star* 25 February 1971.

he believed the expressway was inevitable, but maintained that the type of road required should still be questioned.⁷⁴³

The provincial compromise plan with adjustments to the eastern section of the route but no changes to the more controversial parts through Westmount did not appease community activists. The disappointment angered local anti-expressway leaders, leading to new action against the road as they reiterated their demands for direct communication with provincial authorities. The newly formed Westmount Action Committee (WAC) launched a multi-pronged attack, hiring a lawyer “to take legal action” against the government, distributing form letters that residents could send to pro-expressway politicians including the premier and minister of roads, and soliciting support from other like-minded community groups, including the Montréal Council of Social Agencies (MCSA).⁷⁴⁴ Leading activists in groups like WAC were often young professionals who mobilized in defence of threatened communities. WAC president David Curruthers was a twenty-nine year old father of two who lived in Westmount, described by journalist Adrian Waller as “one of the earliest anti-highway campaigners, a junior executive in tweed and horn-rimmed glasses who once lectured [history] at the University of Western

⁷⁴³ “MUC chief applauds anti-highway protest,” *The Gazette* 30 March 1971. Mark Daly, “Fight the ramp -- but no shotguns,” *The Montréal Star* 30 March 1971. Saulnier was right about the absence of any wide-spread support for banning automobiles within the city, but there was some advocates of the idea. J.A. Paterson, for example, wrote to the *The Montréal Star* with his idea to prohibit cars from the city centre, creating parking lots at Metro stations on the outskirts of the core, and turning inner city parking lots into parks. J.A. Paterson, “Rigid civic control of auto traffic needed if we are going to survive,” [letter to the editor] *The Montréal Star* 3 May 1971. MUC Chairman Lucien Saulnier later noted he originally favoured a “sealed” route with no downtown accesses but acknowledged it would be very difficult to engineer an underground highway, another compromise position. “Hiding a highway has its problems,” *The Montréal Star* 8 September 1971.

⁷⁴⁴ “Road foes continue struggle,” *The Montréal Star* 23 March 1971. Minister of Lands and Forests Kevin Drummond still refused to take a stand against expressway or speak publicly. David Carruthers, Chairman of the Westmount Action Committee, to Peter S. Legate, President of the Montréal Council of Social Agencies, Letter, 2 March 1971; MG 2076, C. 48, File 904, MUA. Carruthers asked Legate to solicit financial contributions from the Council’s member groups.

Ontario.” Although his home was not targeted, Curruthers resolved to fight for his neighbourhood.⁷⁴⁵

Like many activist groups, WAC offered its own technical evaluation detailing objections. The group was well aware of other anti-expressway protests both in Canada and the U.S., and acknowledged that American disputes in cities like San Francisco, Boston and New York were defined by “explosive” racial tensions as expressways threatened inner city, racially segregated neighbourhoods. By contrast, the group felt that the landmark Canadian expressway controversy in Toronto was defined by class tensions, noting, “Opposition to the Spadina Expressway in Toronto has taken the form of a fight between the well-to-do suburbanites and the residents of the neighbourhoods through which the former wish to drive as quickly as possible.”⁷⁴⁶

WAC systematically rejected arguments in favour of the expressway, maintaining that accommodating automobiles would only aid their proliferation, and that the existing Décarie Expressway, Champlain Bridge, Bonaventure Expressway, and the Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine Bridge-Tunnel already provided adequate access to industrial areas. The group insisted that after being shelved for four years, the route was being resurrected to fulfill the province’s job creation mandate, not on the scheme’s merits.⁷⁴⁷ The committee further argued that expressway construction as a means of slum clearance was outdated and destructive. They explained:

Part of the justification for the east-west autoroute was to permit the demolition of older housing. This approach is typical of urban planning twenty years ago when slum

⁷⁴⁵ Adrian Waller, “The Trans-Canada argument goes on and so does road,” *The Gazette* 23 April 1971.

⁷⁴⁶ David Carruthers, Chairman of the Westmount Action Committee, to Peter S. Legate, President of the Montréal Council of Social Agencies, Letter, 2 March 1971, and attachment, “A Technical Evaluation of the East-West Expressway,” 18 February 1971, 1; MG 2076, C. 48, File 904, MUA.

⁷⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 5.

clearance, i.e. the eviction of the poor from the only cheap housing available, was popular with the middle and upper classes who were embarrassed by the sight of poverty as they passed through the poorer neighbourhoods. In the light of past experience we now know that the disruption of community life and the forced dislocation of lower-income households (particularly the elderly) has worsened the living conditions of hundreds of thousands of families.⁷⁴⁸

As expressway opponents attempted to channel the power of their collective opposition, differences in strategies emerged. The Westmount Action Committee and the Common Front Against the Highway continued to work together. At a public meeting one attendee urged others to form a blockade against the bulldozers instead of pursuing legal action. The group's invited guest speaker Alan Powell, Chair of the leading Stop Spadina Save Our City Coordinating Committee in Toronto, told them, "If that's your way of stopping this thing, then do it, man," and urged the protestors to persevere, noting the Toronto movement also began as a small group. Ansel Melamed, a city planner who advocated inter-urban transportation, suggested class tensions were part of the debates "since those most likely to use the highway live out of town in nice little suburbs and don't give a damn about the problems it creates for those who live in the city core."⁷⁴⁹ Others like leading Front member Michel Bourdon argued expressway opponents should focus on the legal battle, seeking an injunction to stop the work.⁷⁵⁰ Fellow Front member and PQ representative for Maisonneuve Robert Burns also directed his fire at the province: "It's revolting. The government is flagrant in its disregard of public opinion on this project." Lower Westmount Citizens' Committee president Fernand Leclaire agreed with Bourdon and Burns but

⁷⁴⁸ Ibid, 4.

⁷⁴⁹ Len Shippey, "Highway protest dispatched," *The Montréal Star* 13 March 1971. The Lower Westmount Citizens' Association and the Westmount Action Committee together also appealed directly to city residents not involved with the existing activists groups to support their fight, arguing politicians were unresponsive to concerns over the ramp. Marc Daly, "Westmount asks citizens to join protest," *The Montréal Star* 23 March 1971.

⁷⁵⁰ René Laurent, "Autoroute battle may hit Assembly," *The Gazette* 15 March 1971.

suggested the activists' work seemed to be paying off, noting, "True progress is measured in human advancement. This project has absolutely no such advantages for the island's population." He added, "Uniting ourselves into an action group has changed this [citizens complaints about not being heard] somewhat. Officials are starting to become more sympathetic to our suggestions."⁷⁵¹

"Many people have changed opinion about the necessity of the highway"

Community opposition reached unprecedented levels following the announcement of the provincial compromise. In early March Westmount officials refused to issue the required permit to provincial authorities for construction of the access ramp, although a lawyer advised them the permit could not be withheld indefinitely.⁷⁵² Regardless, community officials defied the province and pledged to "continue to occupy dwellings, until something is done about this farce."⁷⁵³ Minister of Roads Pinard argued the prior acceptance of the expressway by the community included the now contentious access points and estimated that he had only received "about three or four" letters opposing the ramp.⁷⁵⁴ Pinard advised Westmount Mayor Peter McEntyre that despite the municipality withholding the construction permit, the Greene Avenue

⁷⁵¹ Ibid.

⁷⁵² "Westmount refuses 'permit' for new road," *The Gazette* 2 March 1971. Later Baker said the group would seek an amendment of the Highway Act to require municipal approval for projects. "Save our trees, highway critics plead," *The Montréal Star* 2 April 1971.

⁷⁵³ Mark Daly, "Goldbloom ready to mediate on Westmount autoroute fight," *The Montréal Star* 29 March 1971. Westmount's committee was the most active and vocal, but other community groups also registered their opposition to the city's expressways, including the NDG Community Council which held a public meeting where "two gas-mask attired girls holding a huge banner which urged the highway work stopped" flanked the stage. "MUC chief applauds anti-highway protest," *The Gazette* 30 March 1971. Mark Daly, "Fight the ramp -- but no shotguns," *The Montréal Star* 30 March 1971.

⁷⁵⁴ Walter Turner, "Westmount still refuses highway ramp permit," *The Montréal Star* 17 March 1971. Joseph Hanafin, "No right refusing permit," *The Montréal Star* 18 March 1971.

ramp was non-negotiable and would be built. In a letter to McEntyre, Pinard wrote, “in order to give a better and more efficient service to the collectivity, we have, regretfully, to ignore your opposition to the Greene ramp project.”⁷⁵⁵ The province’s commitment to the access was not well received in the Westmount community, as one WAC member threatened to defend his home armed with a shotgun.⁷⁵⁶ The day after Pinard’s letter to McEntyre was released the Trans-Canada construction site in Westmount was vandalized -- windshields on machines were smashed, tires slashed, and gas tanks had a substance “resembling sugar” poured into them, despite increased police patrols and watchmen on site.⁷⁵⁷

The controversy that consumed the expressway project also spread to the National Assembly as provincial politicians debated the plan. Pinard maintained that all families would benefit from the expressway but Claude Charron, a PQ member for St. Jacques, rejected the minister’s assertion. Pinard told his colleagues, “A resident of the east end will be able to travel anywhere in the city by using the new autoroute to get to work in much less time than before . . .” but Charron interjected, “Provided he has a job to go to!” PQ member for Maisonneuve Robert Burns added, “And a car!” Pinard responded, “I don’t know too many families that don’t have a car, even in the east end,” to which Charron retorted, “I’ll show you plenty if you’ll come with me. Some of them don’t even have thirty-five cents for the Metro.”⁷⁵⁸

In addition to speaking about the impact of the expressway on the neighbourhood it threatened, several opposition members questioned the route’s funding. Union Nationale leader

⁷⁵⁵ “Westmount loses, ramp will be built,” *The Gazette* 30 March 1971. *The Montréal Star* 30 March 1971.

⁷⁵⁶ Mark Daly, “Fight the ramp -- but no shotguns,” *The Montréal Star* 30 March 1971.

⁷⁵⁷ “Highway site is hit by vandals,” *The Gazette* 1 April 1971.

⁷⁵⁸ “Assembly exchange,” *The Gazette* 1 April 1971.

Fernand Lafontaine blamed Pinard's administration for allowing the east-west project to be delayed repeatedly since 1966, when Lafontaine recalled he, in his role at the time as minister of roads, secured a promise of federal funding for the Trans-Canada designated route. These delays, a few opposition members argued, led to the loss of federal funding that had been provided for Trans-Canada routes in every other province.⁷⁵⁹

Pinard was not deterred by his colleagues' attacks. The minister spoke at length about the benefits of the route, arguing it would foster development by opening up access and that it would -- paradoxically -- alleviate congestion on downtown streets by removing through traffic and bring more traffic downtown. Pinard rejected protestors' claims about pollution, arguing industry, not traffic, was the main pollution producer, and that any efforts to curb auto pollution must come from the American auto manufacturers. He also addressed the criticism over expropriations, noting there was no opposition to the 2,000 expropriations required for the Décarie, and only seventy of the 600 expropriations required for the Turcot Interchange met with resistance, all of which were in the Westmount neighbourhood. Ultimately, he maintained, the displacement of residents was unfortunate but necessary as benefits far outweighed the costs.⁷⁶⁰

Pinard attacked local expressway protestors and the politicians who supported them. He lambasted "professional agitators" whom he accused of coming to Montréal from Toronto after halting the Spadina Expressway. He told reporters: "Now they [Toronto activists] are feeding the contestation in lower Westmount. We know . . . we have information." Westmount Action

⁷⁵⁹ Fernand Lafontaine in Québec Assemblée National, *Journal des Débats*, 31 March 1971, Vol. II, Tome I, 710-760; BANQ. This account may obscure the reality that the E-W was a replacement for original Trans-Canada designated link (Décarie), and accordingly, funding may have been unavailable because the earmarked funds had already been spent on original Trans-Canada designated link.

⁷⁶⁰ Bernard Pinard in Québec Assemblée National, *Journal des Débats*, 31 March 1971, Vol. II, Tome I, 710-760; BANQ.

Committee Chair David Carruthers called Pinard's accusation "fantasy," insisting Toronto activists were not fueling protestors in Montréal, explaining that activists from the two cities were only "exchang[ing] views."⁷⁶¹ The minister also criticized anti-expressway PQ members as well as federal Liberal Minister Gérard Pelletier, sniping, "I know more about autoroute construction than he does, although he may be better at writing books than I am."⁷⁶² The dissension culminated in a filibuster by the PQ that almost prevented the adoption of a new budget which designated \$8,000,000 for work on the east-west expressway.⁷⁶³

Pinards' suspicions about the involvement of outside agitators may have been aroused, at least in part, by the way in which expressway opponents chastised the provincial government for refusing to facilitate a public review. While a public review process for urban renewal expropriations existed, there was no equivalent for roads projects. The Montréal Council of Social Agencies made it clear that they only organized the upcoming hearings because provincial officials' refused to make such accommodations. To emphasize their point, council members pointed to the Spadina Expressway controversy in Ontario, where the Ontario Municipal Board held public hearings as part of a review. MCSA members argued the need for public hearings and the creation of clear and permanent procedural guidelines to establish the role of such hearings in planning decisions spoke to the need to install an appropriate system of checks and balances on public power:

Their [sic] can be no doubt that the responsibility to hold Public hearings or to establish a special parliamentary commission that would assure adequate public scrutiny of projects that entail such vast expenditures and social consequences, lies squarely with the

⁷⁶¹ Bill Carroll, "Highway protestors deny Toronto agitators helping," *The Gazette* 2 April 1971.

⁷⁶² Richard Cleroux, "Toronto 'professionals' stir autoroute trouble -- Pinard," *The Gazette* 1 April 1971.

⁷⁶³ "PQ filibuster flips Liberals," *The Montréal Star* 1 April 1971.

Government . . . Only in this way, they [the Boards of the Committees on Housing and Urban Renewal of the Montréal Metropolitan Region] believe, can the people of this province be assured that the power of the public domain will not again be exercised without due restraint.⁷⁶⁴

Other activist groups also increased pressure on the provincial government during this time. The Common Front Against the Highway, which had grown into a coalition of more than fifty downtown groups, responded to the province's inflexibility by hiring lawyer Claude St. Arnaud to seek an injunction against the province. The group argued that Westmount officials never agreed to the east-west route and accused the province of steamrolling opposition. They told reporters that they did not expect the move to be successful, but wanted to "register [their] opposition in the strongest form."⁷⁶⁵

Meanwhile a provincial spokesman tried to defuse the situation by stressing that the province was open to "any new proposals which might decrease any ill side effects the Greene Avenue ramp may have." *Star* journalist Joseph Hanafin noted this was a "softer" response from the province's original position. Hanafin also reported there had been rumours that at least two provincial cabinet ministers opposed the highway but could not speak publicly for fear of breaking cabinet solidarity. He suspected that those who sympathized with the protestors may have been working to persuade their colleagues for some time.⁷⁶⁶

⁷⁶⁴ Joseph Baker and Serge Carreau, Co-Presidents of the Committee on Housing and Urban Renewal of the Montréal Metropolitan Region, to Premier Robert Bourassa, Letter, 30 March 1971; MG 2076, C. 3, File 128, MUA. Instead of expressways, the Council urged the Premier to fund "projects of greater social priority," including mass transit, sewage filtration, housing construction and rehabilitation.

⁷⁶⁵ "Extension war hits new peak," *The Montréal Star* 2 April 1971. Adrian Waller, "The Trans-Canada argument goes on and so does road," *The Gazette* 23 April 1971.

⁷⁶⁶ Joseph Hanafin, "Pinard talks hint easing of Trans-Canada stand," *The Montréal Star* 2 April 1971. An adjustment to the plan involving a change in the eastern section running along Notre Dame Street instead of Reuen Street was subsequently announced, but the Greene Avenue ramp remained although officials noted further changes may be possible. Mark Wilson, "East end autoroute changed," *The Montréal Star* 6 April 1971. "Trans-Canada route change still possible," *The Gazette* 6 April 1971.

One provincial politician had not changed his mind. Pinard denounced the media for not covering the government side of the controversy, arguing reporters who were critical of the project simply did not understand it. Frustrated by the previous week's five hour session in the National Assembly during which he defended the east-west route against the PQ, Pinard argued reporters' apparent inability to understand the project meant that his administration had to inform the public of plans directly to ensure accurate information was disseminated.⁷⁶⁷

Local media outlets were not pleased with Pinard's accusations. *The Gazette's* editorial board shot back at Pinard, blaming the province for the strained relationship between local residents and the government. The editors acknowledged it would not be fair for the Greene Avenue area or any other group to dictate planning decisions but stressed that the residents deserved a detailed explanation. They were also careful to note that opponents who recently destroyed machinery at the Westmount site detracted from the valid concerns of the majority of protestors:

Concerns about pollution, traffic congestion, demolition of valued or needed buildings, unwise expenditure of public funds, and the unsightliness of expressways is legitimate enough; and every one of these problems has been an issue in the debate about whether the limited-access highway from the Turcot interchange to the Lafontaine tunnel, long planned, should ever be built. The person who is seriously interested in their solution, however, is just not the type who will go out and wreck equipment.

They added that Mayor Drapeau and MUC Chair Saulnier were both "plainly cool toward the whole expressway project" and preferred a route closer to the waterfront to minimize expropriations, concluding that the protests "have made Montréal and provincial authorities realize that the public here no longer equates road-building automatically with progress."⁷⁶⁸

⁷⁶⁷ "Viger park to be preserved," *The Gazette* 3 April 1971.

⁷⁶⁸ "Expressway dispute," (editorial) *The Gazette* 3 April 1971.

Journalists were now even more interested in investigating the expressway controversy. In mid April 1971 journalist Joseph Hanafin reported that undisclosed sources had suggested the east-west expressway was pushed forward when Premier Bourassa sought projects to distract the public from the Front de Libération du Québec (FLQ) crisis and instructed his ministers to reconsider previously abandoned files. According to Hanafin's sources, the only project that was ready to commence was the Trans-Canada extension although the government would have preferred work begin on the Trans-Québécoise highway network instead. Hanafin wrote: "It's becoming more and more evident here many people have changed opinion about the necessity of the highway or at least of the priority given its construction over, say, much-needed home building."⁷⁶⁹ *Gazette* columnist Brian Stewart offered his perspective on the debates, noting that city politicians seemed afraid to raise strong objections to the expressway and that City Planning Director Aimé Desautels, who opposed the extension, was excluded from talks between Drapeau and Pinard. "What we've got," Stewart observed, "is an interesting gap between the civic servants who still oppose the expressway for several reasons, and the administration which now seems ready to live with it, for reasons not readily apparent."⁷⁷⁰

Whatever political forces were at play, the growing threat of expropriations and, in some cases, the reality of those requisitions, continued to cultivate anti-expressway sentiment. While 900 families had already been evicted in 1967 for the Trans-Canada extension, 250 were targeted in Lower Westmount and 1,800 more were at risk between Sanguinet Street and the Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine Bridge-Tunnel. These numbers created a substantial pool of objectors. Opponents argued expressways did not create nearly enough jobs to negate the hardship to those

⁷⁶⁹ Joseph Hanafin, "Highway: A diversion for fall crisis," *The Montréal Star* 14 April 1971.

⁷⁷⁰ Brian Stewart, "Trans-Canada highway debate," *The Gazette* 19 April 1971.

facing expropriation and that the routes would exacerbate, not reduce, congestion.⁷⁷¹ Some facing expropriation did begin to sound defeated. One resident explained, “It’s so easy to break down a person’s spirit with this kind of thing.” Another expropriated resident, Shelia Baxter, attended city meetings about relocation where officials had promised to help residents find new accommodations, but was not impressed. “It was phoney,” she said, adding, “All they had there was two broads going through the ads in *The Gazette*. In the end, we got our own place.”⁷⁷²

Other protestors expressed their opposition not only by lobbying local and provincial officials and holding public meetings, but also by staging events designed to draw attention and supporters to their cause. The Lower Westmount Citizens’ Committee, for example, staged a family friendly parade complete with children and dogs where participants circulated a petition, toted placards, and sold buttons and balloons with anti-expressway slogans.⁷⁷³ Others held more assertive events, such as the No-Highway Committee of Dawson College. The group gathered students at Viger Park, a site threatened by the expressway for a rally described by one journalist: “Round and round Viger Park trampled some 200 students . . . Students sang to guitars, chanting ‘save our trees’.”⁷⁷⁴

Frustrated by the sustained opposition, Pinard continued to blame “professional protestors” from Toronto. He called the expropriations unfortunate but noted the Décarie construction required 2,000 west end families to move, remarking, “There was no fuss then. Those people believed more in the development of their area and future advantages rather than in

⁷⁷¹ Adrian Waller, “The Trans-Canada argument goes on and so does road,” *The Gazette* 23 April 1971.

⁷⁷² “This is what the people say,” *The Gazette* 23 April 1971.

⁷⁷³ “Westmount ‘drums up’ small storm on highway,” *The Montréal Star* 19 April 1971.

⁷⁷⁴ “Save our trees, highway critics plead,” *The Montréal Star* 2 April 1971.

immediate inconveniences.”⁷⁷⁵ Pinard was not the only government official who thought protestors did not fully understand the advantages of the route. Another unnamed official commented: “although the protestors may be sincere, they still don’t realize that the Trans-Canada’s functions are completely different from the Spadina Expressway idea in Toronto or any other expressway, for that matter.” Montréal, the official continued, was an island with a mountain blocking traffic flow, which limited the possibilities for viable routes.⁷⁷⁶

The Montréal Council of Social Agencies called two day hearings on the expressways for April 23 and 24. The group was an umbrella organization for English language non-Catholic social agencies, and as such, was involved in a broad range of urban advocacy issues. The Council argued the lack of provincial response to the public questions and concerns over the expressway left it with no choice but to take the initiative in creating a public forum to discuss the implications of the plans, noting that during a similar dispute in Ontario the provincial advisory body the Municipal Board held public hearings.⁷⁷⁷ After inviting politicians, officials and citizen groups to the hearings, thirty-five briefs were submitted, thirty-three of which expressed opposition to the expressway.⁷⁷⁸

The hearings attracted numerous presenters, all of whom spoke at length on the ills of urban expressways. Opponents included the PQ at large as well as local deputies from St. Anne,

⁷⁷⁵ “Pinard says pros are protesting,” *The Gazette* 23 April 1971.

⁷⁷⁶ Charles Lazarus, “Highway planners create a very moving model,” *The Montréal Star* 24 April 1971.

⁷⁷⁷ Madeleine Joubert, Director of the Canadian Institute of Adult Education; Clement Gauthier, Member of the Executive Board of Social Development for the City of Montréal; Pierre Meunier, Secretary of the Young Bar Association of Montréal (Commissioners of the Montréal Council of Social Agencies), Unaddressed form letter, 2 April 1971; MG 2076, C. 3, File 128, MUA.

⁷⁷⁸ Montréal Council of Social Agencies, *Resume of the Final Report of the Public Hearings Commission on the East-West Expressway in Montréal* (November 1971). Humanities and Social Sciences Library, McLennan Building, McGill University. Four commissioners led the hearings: Madeleine Joubert, President of the Institut Canadien d’Education des Adultes, Ben Carniol, member of the Montréal Council of Social Agencies, Clement Gauthier, member of the Conseil de Development social du Montréal metropolitain, and lawyer Pierre Meunier.

Bourget, Maisonneuve, Saint-Jacques and Sainte-Marie, the Housing Committee of the Centre-South District, the Common Front Against the Highway, the CSN local (the Daoust employees' union), the Cooperative Kitchen of the Centre-South District, the Association of Tenants and Landowners of Maisonneuve, the Society for the Elimination of Pollution, and the Montréal Council of the Confederation of National Trade Unions.⁷⁷⁹

Westmount activists Marc Zannis and Robert Davis also submitted a lengthy brief on behalf of the Lower Westmount Citizens' Committee criticizing every element of the expressway plans. Davis was a thirty-eight year old social worker and father of two who lived near the construction zone, and Zannis was a twenty-seven year old professional housing consultant who did not live near the planned highway.⁷⁸⁰ They argued Lower Westmount was a community under siege since 1969, having been considered as the site for a number of projects, including the highway, extensive urban renewal, a Hydro-Substation, and a metro station. The neighbourhood, they insisted, did not consist of "dilapidated housing" but rather "solid, low-cost housing" inhabited by lower income families.⁷⁸¹

The pair linked these threats to the Westmount neighbourhood to a recent broader shift in the direction of urban development that they warned could change the city forever. Zannis and Davis explained:

⁷⁷⁹ Briefs, c. April 1971; MG 2076, C. 1, File 904, MUA. Montréal Council of the Confederation of National Trade Unions vice-president Michel Bourdon reiterated his previous assertion that citizens were not consulted, arguing hearings should be mandatory before construction begins on such projects. Evelyn Dumas, "Citizens not consulted on highway says Front," *The Montréal Star* 24 April 1971.

⁷⁸⁰ "The fight led by two men," *The Gazette* 23 April 1971.

⁷⁸¹ Marc Zannis and Robert Davis, on behalf of the Lower Westmount Citizens' Committee, "Presentation: To the Public Hearing on the question of the construction of the East-West Autoroute (Trans-Canada Highway) on Montréal Island," c. April 1971, 1; MG 2076, C. 48, File 904, MUA. Zannis's earlier anti-expressway activism included participating on a panel of doctors and other experts organized by anti-expressway activists to discuss the environmental impact of E-W extension. "The Highway and the Urban Environment," Meeting Poster, c. March 1971; MG 2076, C. 48, File 904, MUA.

In recent months, there has been talk of destruction of large open areas and historic buildings: the Sulpician property, Windsor Station, Van Horne's Mansion, the Montréal Musieum [sic] of Fine Arts, etc. A change has been noted in the urban theory of Montréal, away from the open public spaces serving as an attraction for investment. (This was to be the case in the early 1960's in the area facing Place des Arts, if the CBC site moves elsewhere. Now a \$100 million development is proposed.) We are moving from the era of the open plaza and outside staircases to the era of the shopping centre, parking lots, and distaste for the old. Together with the destruction of historic structures and other buildings of architectural interest, the city is in the process of defoliating its landscape by destroying parks and potential parks. In the centre of Montréal, the expressway is merely a prelude to something more serious and more irreversible. Both Windsor Station and the Laurentien Hotel are to go. These will be replaced by a super-tower for the CPR and a massive shopping centre, unrivaled even by the Fairview in the suburbs. The expressway phenomenon has only just started. We are now about to launch a new-era of Los Angelosing the city, to coin Marshall MacLuhan, by plunging the autoroute into the heart of Montréal. Perhaps, we can match Buffalo, N.Y. where a building by Frank Lloyd Wright was demolished for a parking lot. But in Montréal, with the densest residential population in North America, the problem is more serious. After the east-west autroute [sic], there is the Cavendish-de Liesse Autoroute, the construction of Montee St. Leonard, and the most destructive Papineau North-South autoroute. We must surely be mad, if we allow Montréal to destroy itself in becoming a Megalopolis in a Laurentien desert.⁷⁸²

Like many expressway opponents, Zannis and Davis were most concerned with the shortage of affordable housing in the city, and how the expropriations required for the new expressway would exacerbate the problem. They acknowledged that the expropriation process had improved since the Selby Street expropriations in 1965, but argued the government's approach was still "inhumane." They explained: "Fifty dollars a room does not compensate a resident who has lived in a community all his life, nor does it compensate young children and teenagers for changing schools, or adults for loss of familiar friends, shops, public facilities."⁷⁸³

⁷⁸² Ibid, 1-2. Zannis and Davis also noted the traffic surveys were conducted before the construction of the Décarie and Bonaventure Expressways (4).

⁷⁸³ Ibid, 11-12.

Zannis and Davis also acknowledged the widespread opposition to the expressway and downplayed supporters as a group of industry forces who stood to benefit from the project and politicians who had championed the plans from the beginning. “Only one group has officially come out in favour of the autoroute,” they noted, “a trucking association.” Politicians who supported the scheme included the minister of roads, deputy minister of roads, Premier Bourassa, Claire-Kirkland Casgrain, Gerald Shanks, George Springate, and other roads officials.⁷⁸⁴ The activists claimed that officials were really pushing the expressway because it was a make-work project immediately available to help combat unemployment, which was considered key to maintaining social stability after the October Crisis of 1970:

The autoroute is apparently going ahead over the heads of the citizens. The reasons for its construction are partly due to historic fact, and partly due to a panic growing out of the October crisis . . . Perhaps the east-west expressway should be renamed in honour of James Cross. If that reason of ‘fear’ is the best the Government can offer, the citizens have justified reason to ask work to be stopped.⁷⁸⁵

After the hearings the council issued a summary of opponents’ many objections. The most pressing problem in the province was housing, not “making it easier for cars to run.” They evoked a familiar false dichotomy, arguing the government’s emphasis on building highways showed they favoured catering to automobiles, while expanding public transit facilities would demonstrate they wanted to cater to people. Expressways, protestors argued, were not progress: “Downtown expressways are not a sign of progress, because they destroy communities. It will be a sign of progress when the government will decide to stop the construction of the expressway

⁷⁸⁴ Ibid, 14-16.

⁷⁸⁵ Ibid, 16-17.

in the same way as the Ontario government did.”⁷⁸⁶ Opponents also challenged the government’s claims that the project would create jobs, arguing not nearly as many jobs as promised would be created, and that the temporary construction jobs could not compare to the permanent jobs that would be lost in the commercial areas destroyed by the expressway.⁷⁸⁷ Housing shortages in the city were another concern. Presenters contended approximately 100,000 low income-family housing units were needed in the city, while another 100,000 were in need of improvements to meet minimum standards. The expressway project, they argued, would result in the destruction of many more houses in working class neighbourhoods in Maisonneuve. “Who finally has to pay for all these anti-social decisions?” they asked, adding, “This social problem is much [more] fundamental than an investment to make it possible for cars to save five minutes driving east to west.”⁷⁸⁸

Hearing attendees also voiced concerns about pollution, arguing that more expressways would mean more cars and more pollution.⁷⁸⁹ They asked, “What will life be like for all the families living along side a new autoroute with all these cars passing at high speed?” Instead of expressways, the council advocated the construction of new Metro lines.⁷⁹⁰ Government estimates of \$105,000,000 for the route were also substantially lower than the council’s “real cost” estimate of \$452,700,000, not including the loss of taxes on municipal land.⁷⁹¹ Objectors

⁷⁸⁶ Montréal Council of Social Agencies, *Resume of the Final Report of the Public Hearings Commission on the East-West Expressway in Montréal* (November 1971), 4. Humanities and Social Sciences Library, McLennan Building, McGill University.

⁷⁸⁷ Ibid, 4-5.

⁷⁸⁸ Ibid, 5.

⁷⁸⁹ Ibid, 5.

⁷⁹⁰ Ibid, 6-7.

⁷⁹¹ Ibid, 8-9.

had a number of broader concerns about the impact of the expressway, arguing important industrial employers in Maisonneuve would be displaced, leaving many workers unemployed while the Notre-Dame Street route would prevent any expansion of the harbour. They were further concerned with the lack of consultation between the city and province, suggesting the province had foisted the project on the city without regard for the affected communities and that public opposition had been ignored.⁷⁹²

Finally, the commissioners of the Montréal Council of Social Agencies put together a series of recommendations based on the presentations at the hearings. They called for an immediate freeze on the project and demanded that citizens be consulted about “any major decision on this type of project which [will] have serious economic, physical, social and cultural impact,” that a permanent public consultation process be devised for all significant planning decisions, and that all displaced residents be fully compensated and given sufficient time to relocate.⁷⁹³

“We’ve got to be more human now as compared to ten years ago”

While some activists continued to criticize expressways at large and the east-west route in particular, Westmount protestors became increasingly focused on a smaller feature of the disputed project: an access ramp that threatened their neighbourhood. A compromise agreement between Westmount objectors and provincial officials subsequently marked the beginning of the end of resistance in that area. The Greene Avenue ramp compromise was struck at the same time that news of the cancellation of the Spadina Expressway in Toronto broke. As the Westmount

⁷⁹² Ibid, 9-10.

⁷⁹³ Ibid, 13-14.

resistance wound down, the Spadina cancellation encouraged those still in the path of the expressway beyond Westmount to continue challenging the road.

The last stages of expressway protest in Westmount saw activists pushing for alternative designs to the proposed Greene Avenue ramp in an effort to reduce the number of homes that would be lost. The Lower Westmount Citizens' Committee commissioned Queen's Engineering Professor Kenneth Rose to create an alternative ramp plan that would not require any homes to be destroyed. Rose noted some alternatives had been ruled out by corporate users of the railway yards including Imperial Tobacco and Canadian Pacific Rail, but roads department officials promised to consider the alternative designs.⁷⁹⁴ Westmount officials soon approved an alternate plan for the Greene Avenue ramp that would convert the street into a one way road so that the access ramp could be built directly on the street, thereby saving twenty-five houses from destruction. Local protestors were described as being "elated" with the plan.⁷⁹⁵ Within days, provincial authorities accepted the ramp compromise. Even this agreement was marked by discord, though, as McEntyre said the province had previously rejected an identical proposal from the municipality while Pinard argued it was the province that had put forth the plan before and the municipality that had rejected it.⁷⁹⁶

⁷⁹⁴ Evelyn Dumas, "Westmount submits alternate highway plan," *The Montréal Star* 26 April 1971. *The Gazette* 7 May 1971.

⁷⁹⁵ "Greene Ave. idea is approved," *The Gazette* 8 May 1971. "Protestors march six happy miles," *The Gazette* 10 May 1971. Westmount officials received confirmation from the province that no homes on the east side of Greene Avenue would be destroyed one month later. "Westmount homes rescued," *The Montréal Star* 8 June 1971. Residents later found that homes saved by the move were left "in the shadow of the expressway," with many vacant buildings nearby and problems with vandalism and arson. Bob Hayes, "Living in the shadow of the expressway . . ." *The Gazette* 22 June 1972.

⁷⁹⁶ Dan Pottier, "Greene Ave. ramp controversy settled," *The Montréal Star* c. 11-14 May 1971. Mark Daly, "Westmount seeks Metro warning," *The Montréal Star* 23 June 1971.

While the Greene Avenue ramp changes satisfied many in Westmount, opposition to the east-west route as a whole persisted. Together the Common Front Against the Highway and PQ staged a march followed by a rally in late May 1971 to protest the route.⁷⁹⁷ In what was described as “a noisy separatist-orientated motorcade,” an estimated 600 protestors -- “young and old” -- paraded with vehicles including separatist Reggis Chartrand’s “Patriotes” truck painted in blue, white and green, and other cars sporting Patriote and Québec flags. PQ economist and future Premier Jacques Parizeau (1994-96) observed that francophones and anglophones had never been united for a cause like they were with the expressway, and promised reporters the fight was not over despite the apparent lack of progress.⁷⁹⁸

When news of the cancellation of Toronto’s Spadina Expressway broke shortly thereafter, it fired protestors and attracted extensive media attention. Many newspaper editors in Montréal seized the opportunity to draw comparisons between the two cities transportation systems and applaud or condemn local officials for their handling of the controversy. *Le Devoir*’s editorial board praised the cancellation of the route, comparing Ontario Premier Bill Davis to MUC Executive Committee Chairman Lucien Saulnier, as both expressed misgivings about the expressways in their respective cities. The fate of the Spadina Expressway, they concluded, should prompt Québec officials to reconsider their support for the east-west expressway.⁷⁹⁹ *The Gazette*’s editors adopted a significantly different position, praising Davis’s decision but insisting that the Toronto situation was different from Montréal. Comparing Montréal to Toronto, the editors argued the east-west route would complete the expressway rectangle around the city,

⁷⁹⁷ “Autoroute protest set,” *The Montréal Star* 23 May 1971.

⁷⁹⁸ “Highway protest ‘omen’,” *The Montréal Star* 25 May 1971. Leon Harris, “Motorcade protest staged,” *The Gazette* 25 May 1971.

⁷⁹⁹ “L’autoroute Spadina au rancart,” (editorial) *Le Devoir* 7 June 1971.

while Toronto already had a complete loop without the Spadina section. They also credited city officials with recognizing the importance of public transit: “Mayor Drapeau and MUC Chairman Saulnier saw the light some time ago. Not only do they want more subways; they have also become environmentalists. The expressway . . . is not their baby.”⁸⁰⁰ The extension between the Turcot Interchange and the Bonaventure Expressway, they later added, would not result in further losses, but the route east of the Bonaventure should be changed. The editors concluded that the Trans-Canada should be the last expressway for Montréal, and called for more public transit, saying, “the priority given the Metro extensions is ridiculously low.”⁸⁰¹

While many in Montréal applauded the Spadina cancellation, provincial officials insisted the situation in Toronto was not comparable to that in Montréal and consequently, that the cancellation had no bearing on Montréal’s east-west project. The province remained committed to the east-west expressway as Minister of Roads Pinard once again reiterated that the Trans-Canada extension would be neither cancelled nor postponed.⁸⁰² Pinard told reporters simply, “Montréal is not Toronto,” adding that protests in Toronto “have been better organized.”⁸⁰³

Pinard’s steadfast insistence on the route discouraged some opponents, as journalists and protestors alike saw signs of anti-expressway fatigue. In July 1971 the Québec Roads

⁸⁰⁰ “Spadina’s example,” (editorial) *The Gazette* 7 June 1971.

⁸⁰¹ “Expressways,” (editorial) *The Gazette* 15 June 1971.

⁸⁰² City planner Andrew Melamed supported Davis’s cancellation of the Spadina route: Melamed, “What if Montréal discouraged autos by investing road money in rapid transit?” *The Montréal Star* 17 June 1971.

⁸⁰³ “No expressway halt foreseen by Pinard,” *The Gazette* 15 June 1971. Pinard also referred to Westmount, where opposition was often strongest and most determined, as “suburban,” though it was clearly a downtown neighbourhood. The minister favoured the Notre Dame route, while the PQ was against the route as it traversed four areas it represented, Maisonneuve, Saint Jacques, Sainte Marie, Bourget; Joseph Hanafin, “Highway in city go-go -- Pinard,” *The Montréal Star* 15 June 1971. By June 9 1971, a roads department official said the Trans-Canada would be completed in time for the 1976 Olympics, adding the completion of the highway was a priority particularly because real estate development deals were pending. Charles Lazarus, “Trans-Canada Highway ‘will beat deadline’,” *The Montréal Star* 9 June 1971.

Department opened a housing bank for the estimated 8,000 people displaced by the expressway. Assistant Deputy Minister of Roads John Connolly told reporters: “By law we’re not obliged to find them new homes, but it’s a poor area and we want to help. We’ve got to be more human now as compared to ten years ago.” At the same time opponents of the route were increasingly resigned to the road. *Gazette* Journalist Gerry Flaherty said protestors had “fallen strangely silent,” noting fifty attended the opening of the housing bank, but that their calls for an end to the expressway “appear[ed] to lack significant support.”⁸⁰⁴ Star journalist Robert Plaskin agreed with his colleague’s assessment, writing that the Trans-Canada extension fight was effectively over.⁸⁰⁵ Later in October 1971 the province announced new housing for 1,300 displaced residents had been located, and another 400 properties would be purchased by the province outright.⁸⁰⁶ Activists also felt the tide had changed, as Michel Bourdon complained, “We can’t even get the news media behind us,” adding, “Our volunteer highway engineers and architects have maps and aerial photos which indicate the highway is a butchery of lower Montréal.”⁸⁰⁷ A roads department office that opened the following month in Masionneuve provoked hostility, as critics claimed it was nothing more than a public relations ploy. Although officials said the office was intended to facilitate ongoing dialogue between the government and residents,

⁸⁰⁴ Gerry Flaherty, “Highway expropriation victims aided,” *The Gazette* 15 July 1971. Roads department officials were careful to note that the Notre Dame alignment of the Trans-Canada extension meant only 1,600 dwellings would be destroyed instead of 2,250.

⁸⁰⁵ Robert Plaskin, “Those city planners and their ingenuity,” *The Montréal Star* 4 August 1971. Plaskin noted the impact of the highway could be mitigated with landscaping, adding that the route’s design should be better than that of the Décarie and the elevated section of Metro Boulevard.

⁸⁰⁶ “Housing located for 1,300 families forced out by road,” *The Gazette* 9 October 1971.

⁸⁰⁷ Gerry Flaherty, “Highway expropriation victims aided,” *The Gazette* 15 July 1971.

Bourdon insisted: “No French-speaking member of the government has ever entered into any debate with the citizens of the area about the autoroute.”⁸⁰⁸

Expressway opponents’ concerns over expropriations remained despite construction moving forward. Pinard reiterated that the government would help families move despite PQ accusations to the contrary. The minister defended his administration, telling reporters, “It was only very recently that transportation specialists realized that a proportionate balance between the construction of roads and the rational organization of public transit systems was needed.” Insisting Westmount families had not been pressured by expropriators, the minister added that cancelling the project at such a late date would only result in a dead end road.⁸⁰⁹

The strangest development at this time was the presentation of an award by federal officials to Westmount protestors applauding their citizen activism. In December 1971 the Vincent Massey Award was presented to Westmount activists by Robert Andras, the Minister of State for Urban Affairs, during a ceremony at the National Arts Centre. The award celebrated the citizen activists and community for resisting the “intrusions of a freeway and the threat of high-rise building density” and supporting the democratic process.⁸¹⁰

Meanwhile, there were numerous delays with the construction of the Trans-Canada extension. While the portion of the route between the Décarie and Guy was scheduled to open in early November, other sections of the route remained unsettled as late as fall 1972. Engineers

⁸⁰⁸ “Autoroute office ‘a ploy,’ critics claim,” *The Montréal Star* 4 August 1971.

⁸⁰⁹ Richard Lévesque, “1,600 families hit by highway,” *The Montréal Star* 10 December 1971. “Lower Westmount families not pressured, says Pinard,” *The Gazette* 20 December 1971. At the same time rumours emerged that Pinard was involved in a deal where a relative and former coworker bought land near the Trans-Canada that a farmer was told he could not develop, but Pinard denied the accusations. “Highway land deal denied by Pinard,” *The Montréal Star* 14 December 1971.

⁸¹⁰ Paul Waters, “A consolation prize for highway protestors,” *The Gazette* 9 December 1971.

hoped the section to Sanguinet would be open by late 1973, but were not certain because approval of the section between Sanguinet and the Louis Hippolyte-Lafontaine Bridge-Tunnel was still pending. At the same time, the city entered talks with federal authorities to add an interchange that would link the Trans-Canada extension with the Jacques Cartier Bridge, a connection city authorities originally opposed.⁸¹¹ The design was at least pleasing to some like *Star* writer Charles Lazarus, who noted that, “The expressway design is neat and clean, with massive T-shaped concrete forms built on the caisson principle, providing support for the elevated roadways.”⁸¹²

The Trans-Canada extension was opened on 3 November 1972, and weeks later the route was credited with relieving one third of traffic from the Bonaventure.⁸¹³ Minister of Roads Pinard told reporters the route would encourage downtown development and declared that the housing bank established to help relocate expropriated residents was “a success,” although some families still had yet to be resettled. The minister also announced the creation of a new watchdog group consisting of ecologists, urbanists, and sociologists to aid in efforts to minimize the “negative effects” of highways, including noise, pollution, and the displacement of residents. Pinard explained the group demonstrated the government’s new awareness of the impact of

⁸¹¹ Charles Lazarus, “Additional interchange under study,” *The Montréal Star* 9 September 1972.

⁸¹² Charles Lazarus, “First two miles of new super highway will be opened to traffic next month,” *The Montréal Star* 21 October 1972. The highway construction was on schedule and due to open 1 November 1972 in May but later encountered delays through the summer. Bob Hayes, “First part of highway to be opened Nov. 1,” *The Gazette* 22 May 1972. Patrick Finn, “A summer of digging, blasting and concrete-laying,” *The Montréal Star* 3 June 1972.

⁸¹³ Charles Lazarus, “New expressway speeds rush-hour traffic,” *The Montréal Star* 18 November 1972.

highways on communities, while journalist René Laurent called it a concession to the protestors who had plagued the project.⁸¹⁴

Just as anti-expressway protestors knew it would, the extension had a significant impact on the communities it traversed. In the Little Burgundy area, merchants reported their businesses were suffering and residents were irritated by pollution generated by the construction. Neighbourhood mothers also feared for the safety of their children walking to school in a construction zone.⁸¹⁵ Area resident Patricia Arnold claimed that the expressway was routed through the “slums” because it made the road easier for other city residents to accept, even though it destroyed the community.⁸¹⁶ Other neighbourhoods in the area suffered as well, including the St. Antoine and Peel region.⁸¹⁷ After the first part of the extension opened, resident Roger Bird reported that he and his neighbours agreed that the expressway was not as bad as they had feared. He added, however, that his street was originally designated as an access road, and he felt guilty knowing his area escaped what would inevitably be visited upon another nearby community.⁸¹⁸

In July 1973, officials announced construction delays on the tunnel section of the Trans-Canada extension meant the final completion date would be postponed from December 1973

⁸¹⁴ René Laurent, “Highway link opens with vow to protect cities,” *The Gazette* 3 November 1972. In early 1973 provincial officials once again declared the Trans-Canada expropriations a success, with only 20 families left to relocate. As part of the relocation program, the government granted 70 percent advances to property owners and helped other families with moving expenses. “20 families left in path of extension to highway,” *The Montréal Star* 14 February 1973.

⁸¹⁵ “Progress strangling Little Burgundy area,” *The Montréal Star* 20 November 1971.

⁸¹⁶ Patricia Arnold, “Highway extension brings hardship, heartache,” *The Gazette* 11 December 1971.

⁸¹⁷ “Highway bulldozers uprooting Montréalers’ lifestyle,” *The Gazette* 5 February 1972.

⁸¹⁸ Roger Bird, “The joy of living in the city,” *The Montréal Star* 9 December 1972.

until June 1974.⁸¹⁹ By January 1974, they announced that while the eastern section of the expressway -- as well as the already completed western section -- would be finished for the 1976 Olympics, the final downtown section between Sanguinet and the Louis-Hippolyte Lafontaine Bridge-Tunnel would not be completed until after the event.⁸²⁰ While the east-west expressway remained unfinished, anti-expressway protestors found their fortunes suddenly changed with the 1976 provincial election of the PQ. The new government cancelled the expressway citing funding shortages. The highway came to an abrupt end and was downgraded to an arterial route prior to the Jacques-Cartier Bridge, thus saving several francophone districts on the north end of the Island of Montréal from the road.⁸²¹ For a political party that had been an official member of the Common Front Against the Highway, the decision to cancel the east-west expressway was hardly surprising.

In Montréal, the force of a united intergovernmental front seemed insurmountable despite sustained citizen protests against the east-west expressway. A last minute change in government at the provincial level, however, delivered a victory to protestors that many had decided was probably out of reach. While much of the city's ambitious expressway building program preceded the anti-expressway fervour of the 1960s and 1970s, like in other cities opponents were eventually able to raise enough awareness about the social and environmental costs of the roads

⁸¹⁹ Bob Hayes, "City centre highway completion delayed to '74," *The Gazette* 6 July 1973. "Road extension to be delayed," *The Montréal Star* 7 July 1973.

⁸²⁰ Charles Lazarus, "Final section of the Trans-Canada likely to wait until after Olympics," *The Montréal Star* 19 January 1974.

⁸²¹ For more on the PQ election and the city of Montréal, refer to Andrew Sancton, "Montréal," 58-93, in *City Politics in Canada*, edited by Warren Magnusson and Andrew Sancton (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 1983, and Andrew Sancton, *Governing the Island of Montréal: Language Differences and Metropolitan Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press), 1985, especially, "The Impact of the Parti Québécois," 81-90. The book also includes a map of the 1976 provincial election results on the island, clearly marking the francophone districts won by the PQ and saved from the east-west expressway, 83. For a more detailed analysis of the voting patterns that resulted in the PQ's election: Maurice Pinard and Richard Hamilton, "The Parti Québécois Comes to Power: An Analysis of the 1976 Québec Election," *Canadian Journal of Political Science* 11, 4 (1978), 739-775.

to affect change. Protestors faced the challenge of strong government support fuelled by aspirations to make Montréal a world class city and growing anxiety about cultural tensions creating social unrest. Ultimately, though, opponents who repeatedly warned about the potentially devastating impact of inner city expressways found allies in power who agreed that any way the cost of expressways was measured, it was just too high.

Chapter 6: Halifax, Nova Scotia: “What kind of city do we want as citizens?”

In Halifax, the introduction of an expressway called Harbour Drive in the early 1960s encountered mixed reviews from local officials and politicians. Halifax’s expressway plan called for a sweeping route that would descend through neighbourhoods north of the city and encircle the peninsula, traversing the city’s waterfront. As local authorities debated the merits of the plan, public interest grew. Officials wondered whether a large-scale expressway was really necessary for Halifax and raised questions about how the route would be funded, acknowledging that the city’s resources were not nearly sufficient. Despite the fact that pro-expressway city officials attempts to secure the necessary federal funding had been rejected, they continued to treat the expressway as an eventual reality for the city. This motivated critics to rally opponents around their shared concerns about the social and environmental impact of the route in hopes of forcing expressway supporters to abandon the route completely.

The first wave of opposition focussed on the southern portion of the route that would run along the downtown waterfront and required the expropriation of heritage blocks. Although officials defended the plans, the proposal eventually underwent significant revisions that downgraded the expressway component of the waterfront section, south of the Cogswell Interchange, to an arterial route. The compromise did not appease opponents and a second wave of opposition targeting the remaining northern section of the expressway exceeded the first. Fuelled by the emergence of dedicated activist groups and culminating in boisterous public hearings, the second wave of protests concentrated on the impact of the road on disadvantaged communities north of the city centre. Objectors also voiced concerns that the downgraded version was merely a gateway to the full original route and challenged the direction of the city’s

development at large. The hearings marked a turning point, as opponents' appeals about the toll the expressway would take on the city and the political risks inherent in supporting such a contentious project triggered a turn away from the Harbour Drive vision until it was quietly shelved only a few years after the height of the controversy.

Halifax

Long the largest city in Atlantic Canada, Halifax's challenge to transportation planners was not only its situation on a peninsula but also its proximity to the neighbouring city of Dartmouth, to which it was connected by the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge in 1955. The downtown core was and remains bordered mainly by less affluent largely working class neighbourhoods to the north and more affluent middle and upper class communities to the south.⁸²² The city struggled in the postwar period as Montréal challenged it as a shipping centre and Québec and Ontario created industrial competition; historians have repeatedly stressed the importance of federal investment in Halifax in the face of these challenges.⁸²³ Federal support also helped officials buoy the old commercial heart of the city with renewal projects in the post-World War II era of growing suburban centres.⁸²⁴

During the expressway debates, the city did not possess a metropolitan or regional level of government but was governed by an elected mayor and council of aldermen representing

⁸²² For a detailed and nuanced exploration of the north end's impoverished communities, David Hood, *Down But Not Out: Community and the Upper Streets in Halifax, 1890-1914* (Black Point, Nova Scotia: Fernwood, 2010).

⁸²³ Jay White, "The Homes Front: The Accommodation Crisis in Halifax, 1941-51," *Urban History Review* 20, 3 (February 1992), 117-127. Judith Fingard, David A. Sutherland and Janet Vey Guildford, *Halifax: The First 250 Years* (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Formac Pub., 1999), 160-165.

⁸²⁴ Judith Fingard, David A. Sutherland and Janet Vey Guildford, *Halifax: The First 250 Years* (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Formac Pub., 1999), 165-169.

different wards, including five municipalities annexed in 1969: Jollimore, Purcell's Cove, Spryfield, Armdale, Kline Heights, Fairview, Rockingham, and Kearney Lake.⁸²⁵ These annexations contributed to the growth of metropolitan Halifax's population, from 96,636 in 1941, to 138,427 in 1951, to 193,353 in 1961, to 222,627 in 1971.⁸²⁶

The Harbour Drive plans were part of a widespread redevelopment and revitalization program for the city in the 1960s and 1970s. The most significant controversy over redevelopment in this era involved the relocation of the residents of Africville, a black community located on the northern outskirts of the city. The destruction of this community has dominated the literature on Halifax in this era. Scholars agree that the people of Africville were victims of a racist urban renewal scheme that classified the area with an admittedly poor standard of living as a slum without regard for the community established there. Furthermore while the stated goal of desegregation was admirable, it was imposed without community consultation, and as such was typical of renewal schemes imposed nation-wide in this era.⁸²⁷ The razing of Africville to free land for industrial development and a highway interchange linked to the nearby A. Murray MacKay Bridge remains highly controversial.

⁸²⁵ Earlier experiments with municipal governing structures, in particular the creation of a Board of Control to replace aldermen and the subsequent reinstatement of the aldermanic system, are covered in Henry Roper, "The Halifax Board of Control: The Failure of Municipal Reform, 1906-1919," *Acadiensis* 14, 2 (Spring 1985), 46-65 and Henry Roper, "The Strange Political Career of A.C. Hawkins, Mayor of Halifax, 1918-1919," *Collections of the Royal Nova Scotia Historical Society* 41 (1982), 141-164.

⁸²⁶ Judith Fingard, David A. Sutherland and Janet Vey Guildford, "Table Three [Population]," in *Halifax: The First 250 Years* (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Formac Pub., 1999), 7.

⁸²⁷ James W. St.G. Walker, "Allegories and Orientations in African-Canadian Historiography: The Spirit of Africville," *Dalhousie Review* 77, 2 (Summer 1997), 155-180. Daniel McNeil, "Afro(Americo)centricity in Black (American) Nova Scotia," *Canadian Review of American Studies* 35, 1 (2005), 57-85. Tina Loo, "Africville and the Dynamics of State Power in Postwar Canada," *Acadiensis* 39, 2 (Summer/Autumn 2010), 23-47. Jennifer J. Nelson, "'Pathers or Thieves': Racialized Knowledge and the Regulation of Africville," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 45, 1 (Winter 2011), 121-142.

Officials also targeted the downtown core for renewal, destroying many heritage properties to make way for new developments like the Scotia Square complex. Attempts to secure funding from the Department of Regional Economic Expansion (DREE) for renewal projects once again demonstrated the importance of federal support in sustaining the region. Historians' accounts of downtown renewal have focused on the buildings lost and saved, linking both fates to public opposition that triggered a shift in approach as subsequent efforts focused on restoration and revitalization. Observers have credited citizen activists for rejecting the postwar embrace of urban experts and rallying others around preservation efforts.⁸²⁸ This advocacy is credited with saving buildings that contribute to the distinct regional architecture including those housing the now landmark Maritime Museum of the Atlantic and the Art Gallery of Nova Scotia, as well as a prominent court house.⁸²⁹ The city's waterfront was also subject to broader rejuvenation, where several other heritage properties were restored and a popular public walkway was installed. Much of the redevelopment in this era was also guided by the city's building height bylaw, designed to preserve the view from Citadel Hill.

“The present situation is obviously unsatisfactory in every way”

Halifax's geography required a modified network with only one expressway ring and attendant accesses. The route known as Harbour Drive was first discussed in the city's 1945 master plan. The plan envisioned a highway running from Water and George Streets north-west to Gottingen at Cunard Street, then proceeding to the intersection of Robie and North Streets,

⁸²⁸ Fingard, Sutherland and Guildford, *Halifax*, 169-178.

⁸²⁹ Arthur E. Betts, “Places of Worship on the Halifax Scotia Square Site,” *Nova Scotia Historical Quarterly* 19, 3 (1979), 215-223. On the regionally distinct nature of Halifax's architecture, Allen Penney, “Halifax and Nova Scotian Architecture,” *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* 19 (1981), 105-112.

with the intention for “the ultimate construction of an elevated highway between Water and Gottingen Streets.”⁸³⁰ Almost twenty years later in 1963, the route was envisioned as an arterial road running through the heart of the city. At the time, the road was considered an essential element in council’s efforts to strengthen the Central Business District and implement urban renewal programs in the core.⁸³¹

Prior to the release of the formal Harbour Drive plans, public transit was also on the city’s agenda. The Nova Scotia Light and Power Co. Ltd. had been seeking a public buyout of the modest transit system it operated for years. Consultants Urwick, Currie Ltd. endorsed such a move, saying, “The present situation is obviously unsatisfactory in every way.”⁸³² The main problems were unreliable service in the downtown core and a lack of service for outlying areas. Suburban expansion was blamed for exacerbating the problem, as roads provided easy access to suburban business centres, drawing business out of the downtown while simultaneously creating new areas that demanded transit service. A good mass transit system, according to the consultants, was the key to preserving downtown Halifax, especially the central business

⁸³⁰ Civic Planning Commission, *The Master Plan for the City of Halifax* (November 1945), 14. Halifax Regional Municipal Archives (HRMA), Corporate Library.

⁸³¹ In a resolution council said, “And whereas the viability of the Central Business District and the implementation of the aforesaid urban renewal schemes are almost completely dependent upon the construction of an improved traffic artery of the downtown area with improved connections to the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge and Cogswell Street, such improved traffic artery to be known as Harbour Drive.” Halifax City Council Minutes, 26 November 1964, 636; HRMA 102-1A (1964).

⁸³² “Montréal firm will make study of transit here,” *The Mail-Star* 1 June 1962.

district.⁸³³ City council unanimously endorsed the report, which called for full city ownership of the transit system and eventual expansion to suburban areas.⁸³⁴

The full plans for Harbour Drive emerged two years later, as DeLeuw Cather and Company were commissioned in June 1965 to create a functional plan for the section of Harbour Drive “from the foot of Prince Street, at it’s junction with Water Street, to the intersection of Devonshire Avenue with Barrington Street.”⁸³⁵ Released in November, the consultants’ plan was true to city officials’ original vision of Harbour Drive as a limited access high speed artery winding around the city. De Leuw, Cather and Company designed a four lane, fifty mile an hour “controlled access expressway” with a \$9,500,000 price tag, not including expropriation costs.⁸³⁶ The route encircled the peninsula, ensuring easy access between the central business district and the suburban outskirts.⁸³⁷ The fully realized expressway would be the “ultimate stage” in improvements. Sections of the expressway were to be constructed in stages as access points were finalized and the route’s capacity was gradually expanded with additional lanes. Included in the plans was the Cogswell Interchange, a major, multi-level junction that would direct traffic into the newly redesigned artery and it’s attendant accesses. Consultants also suggested “serious

⁸³³ “Urwick, Currie Limited lists recommendations,” *The Mail-Star* 30 October 1962.

⁸³⁴ “Expanded transit service endorsed,” *The Mail-Star* 31 October 1962. The public takeover did not take effect until 1970, with the introduction of a new fleet of 86 diesel buses. Peter Meerburg, “Capital city will go roaring into 1970,” *The Mail-Star* 26 December 1969. At the time, consultants assessing the implementation of the new system advised officials that civic support was essential to the success of transit, and could be boosted through better public relations and cultivating a new image for transit in the city. Kates, Peat, Marwick & Company, *Public Transit: Halifax: A Study of the Basic Components of Public Transit in the City of Halifax and their Improvement* (June 1970). Halifax Public Library (HPL), Reference Collection.

⁸³⁵ DeLeuw, Cather & Company of Canada Limited, *A Functional Planning Report for Harbour Drive* (November 1965), 4-5. HRMA, Corporate Library.

⁸³⁶ Expropriation and demolition costs for the historical buildings along the waterfront section were later quoted at \$2,020,200. A.D. Margison and Associates Limited, *Harbour Drive: Cogswell Street Interchange: Development Specification; Project No. 2237* (July 1967), 4. HRMA, Corporate Library.

⁸³⁷ City of Halifax, *Harbour Drive Series: Report 1: Harbour Drive General* (Halifax, August 1966), 5. HRMA, Corporate Library.

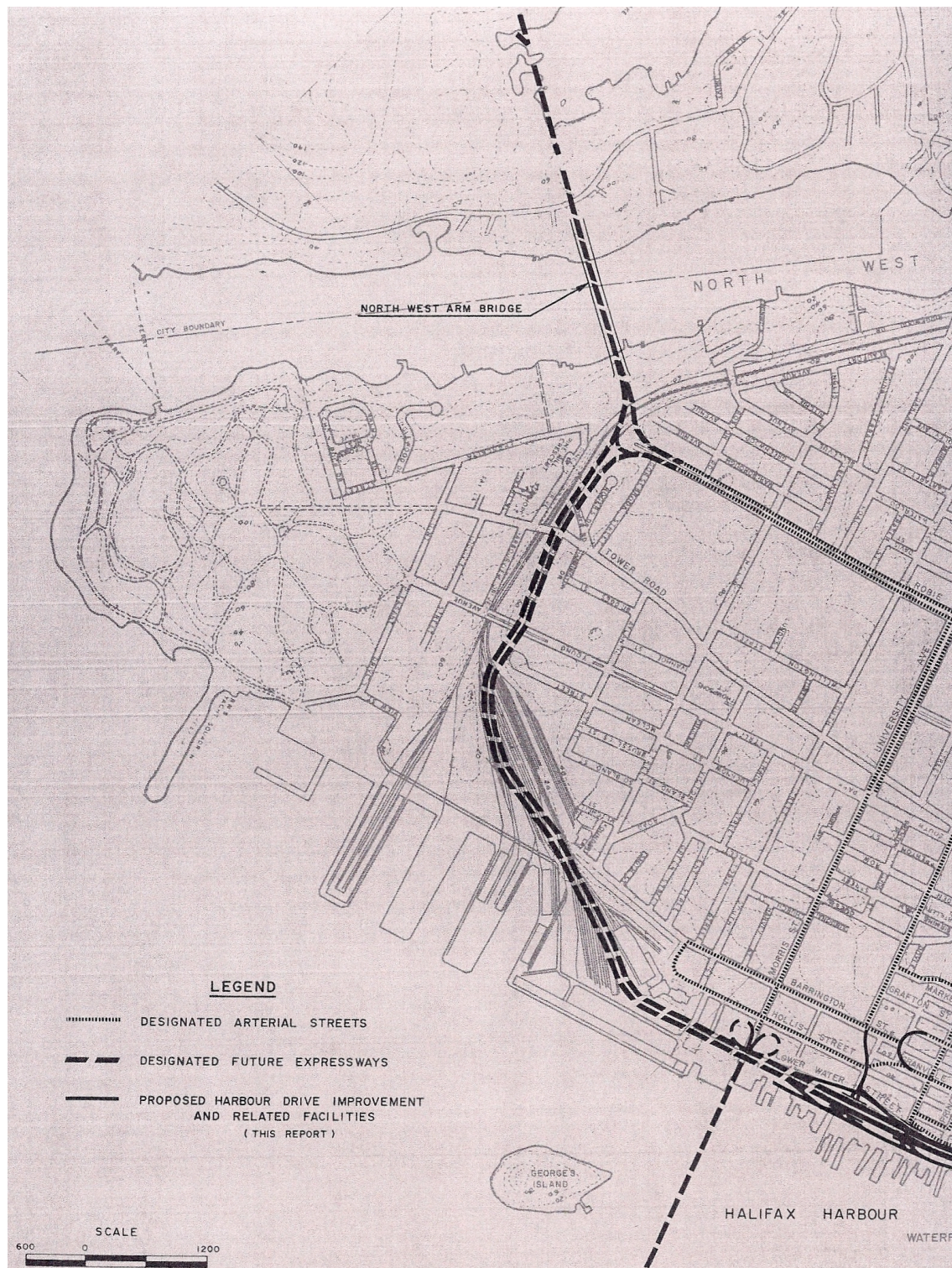


Image 1: "City of Halifax, Harbour Drive, Operational Plan, DeLeuw Cather & Company of Canada Limited (Part 1 of 3)" DeLeuw, Cather & Company of Canada Limited, A Functional Planning Report for Harbour Drive (November 1965). Halifax Regional Municipal Archives, Corporate Library.

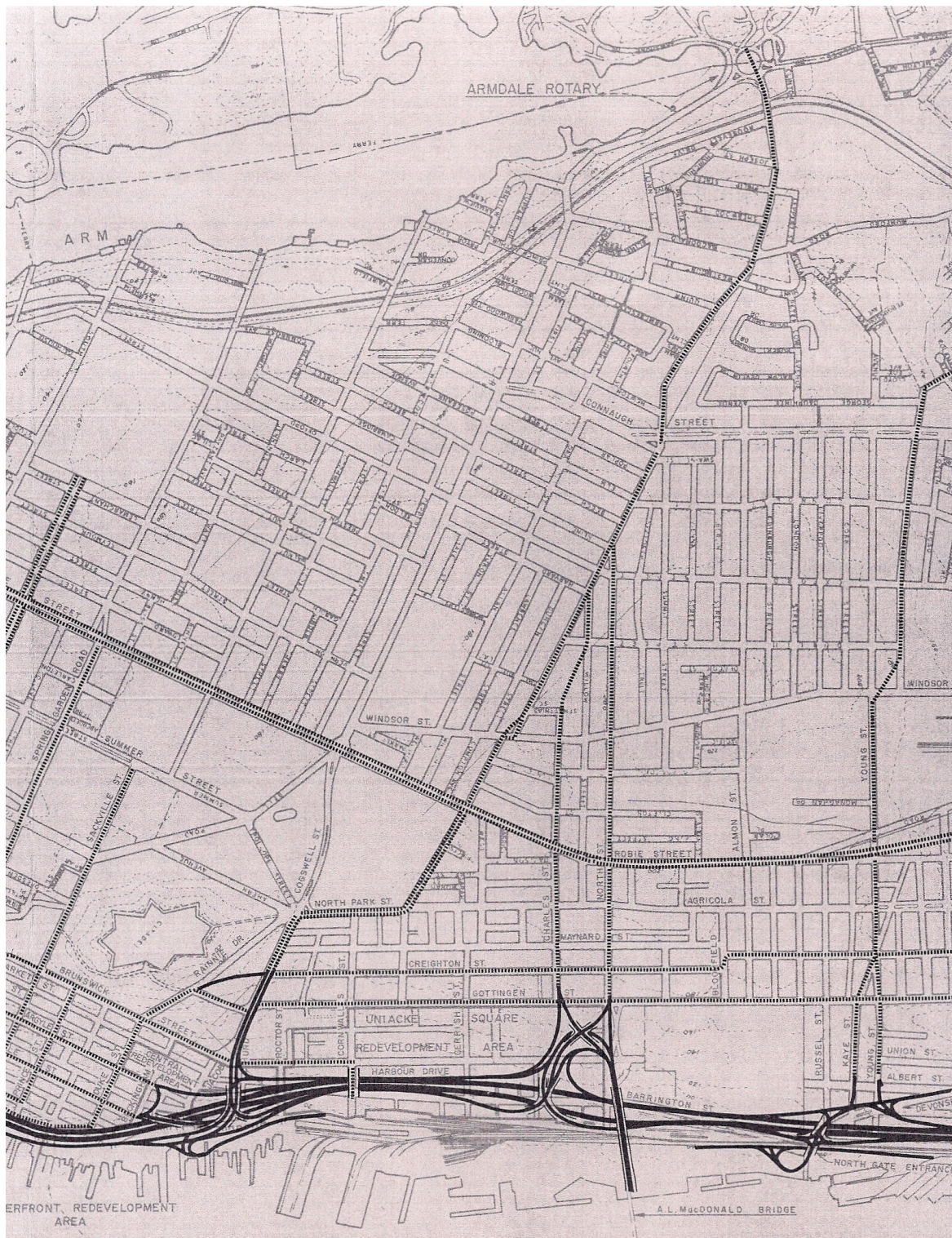


Image 1: "City of Halifax, Harbour Drive, Operational Plan, DeLeuw Cather & Company of Canada Limited (Part 2 of 3)" DeLeuw, Cather & Company of Canada Limited, A Functional Planning Report for Harbour Drive (November 1965). Halifax Regional Municipal Archives, Corporate Library.

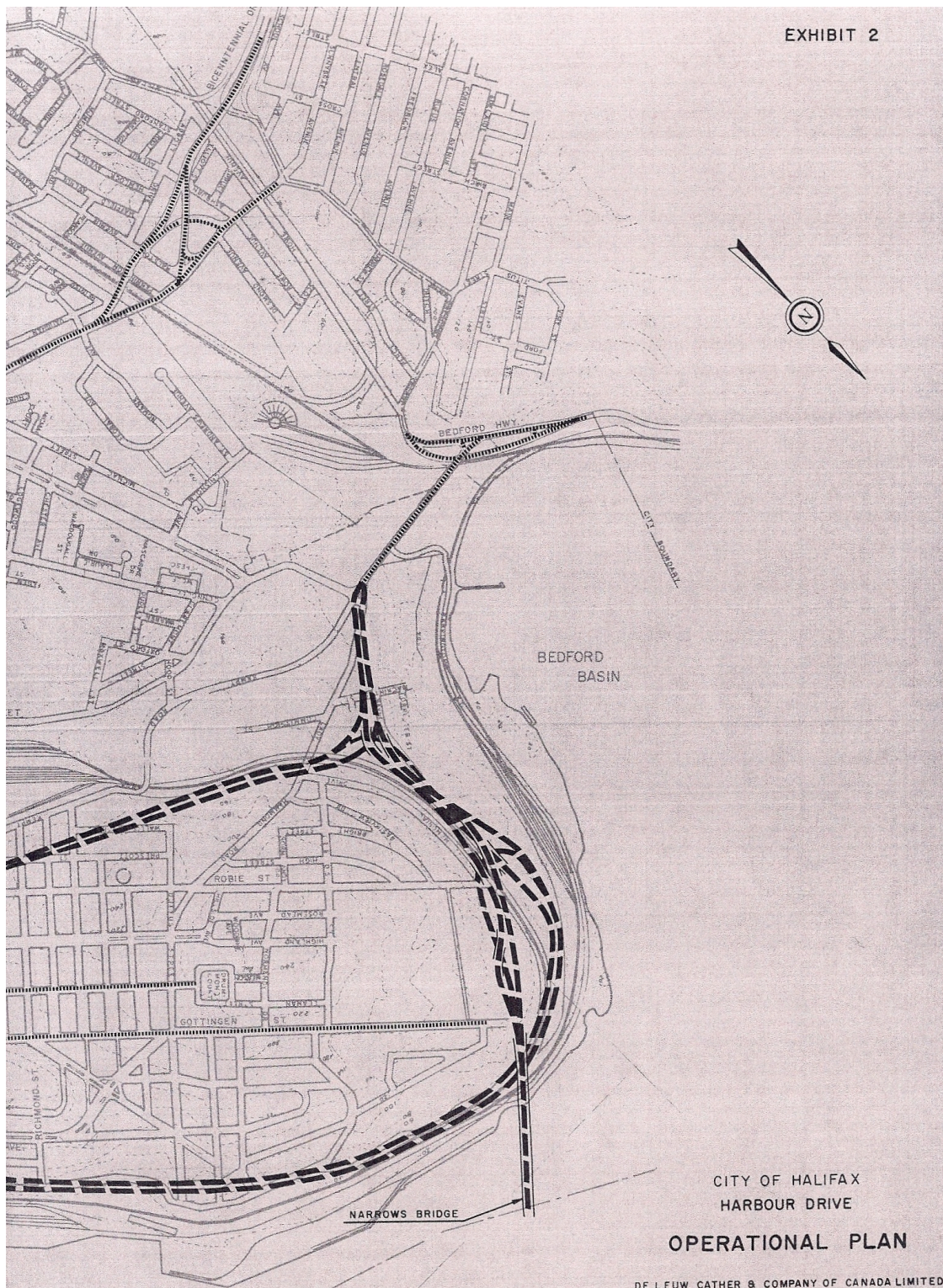


Image 1: "City of Halifax, Harbour Drive, Operational Plan, DeLeuw Cather & Company of Canada Limited (Part 3 of 3)" DeLeuw, Cather & Company of Canada Limited, A Functional Planning Report for Harbour Drive (November 1965). Halifax Regional Municipal Archives, Corporate Library.

consideration” be given to building a twin to the existing Angus L. Macdonald Bridge, which linked Halifax and Dartmouth.⁸³⁸ The loss of some downtown heritage properties was justified by the expressway’s value in linking with important regional roads and “the high quality of traffic service the Drive is expected to render.”⁸³⁹ In terms of public transit, only diesel buses use the expressway with stops permitted solely at designated interchanges.

The route was designed paradoxically, to blend into the downtown landscape yet also stand out as an exemplar of modern design. The section that traversed the central business district included pedestrian overpasses that bridged a depressed section “to avoid a barrier between the related activities of the district core and the civic centre on the waterfront.” Plans were also included for “new buildings providing for more orderly and convenient arrangements” on the east side of the route, again demonstrating the popularity of clean, modern lines.⁸⁴⁰ As the consultants explained, “Aesthetic qualities are achieved through geometric arrangements, architectural features of the structures, and in landscaping.” Depressed sections and specially designed landscaping would create “smooth, flowing lines” with “pleasing results.”⁸⁴¹

“People will prefer to use their cars for convenience and will continue to do so until driving conditions become impossible”

Expressway schemes in theory and in reality were two different things. While some politicians and officials welcomed these plans, others were unsettled by the potential impact and

⁸³⁸ “Suggests serious consideration of twin for existing Harbour Bridge,” “Approach essential to assure future expansion,” “Alternative Harbour Drive alignments were considered,” *The Mail-Star* 7 December 1965.

⁸³⁹ De Leuw, Cather & Company of Canada Limited, Consulting Engineers, *A Functional Planning Report for Harbour Drive* (Halifax, November 1965), 5-8.

⁸⁴⁰ Ibid, 34-35.

⁸⁴¹ Ibid, 45-46. DeLeuw, Cather & Company of Canada Limited, *Geometric Design Study: Harbour Drive, Halifax, Nova Scotia* (Preliminary Draft), (c. 1966), 71-75. HRMA, Corporate Library.

costs. Response to the Harbour Drive scheme immediately following the release of the plans was mixed. Halifax Mayor Charles A. Vaughan (1957-60; 1963-66) questioned the need for an expressway, noting the plan would require additional parking facilities, the expropriation of substantial downtown property for the route and accommodations for increased traffic drawn in by the road. Vaughan noted that until a final decision, the uncertainty would likely deter developers from investing in the downtown. The expressway scheme, he said, “far exceed[ed]” the scope of similar plans in Toronto and Montréal, raising questions about the need for such a large scale project in a smaller urban centre.⁸⁴² A decidedly more optimistic forecast came from *The Mail-Star*’s editorial board which applauded the promised alleviation of congestion, improved access to shipyards and docks, and supposed redevelopment.⁸⁴³

Many city councillors seemed to share the mayor’s misgivings. After consultants made a special presentation to council, opinions on the scheme were so divergent and unsettled that council directed city staff to submit responses to the report in writing so that councillors could review their own positions prior to their next meeting. The staff report reminded councillors that the expressway was originally designed to encircle the peninsula, connecting the city with the suburban communities situated on its borders. Officials stressed that the route was designed to minimize expropriations. Indeed, the road would run through areas designated for urban renewal demolitions.⁸⁴⁴ They acknowledged that the city did not suffer from the congestion that led other metropolitan centres to implement similar expressway schemes, clarifying that the plan simply prepared for the possible eventual construction of the route by obtaining the necessary rights of

⁸⁴² Harry Chapman, “20-year plan is broken down into 3 phases,” *The Mail-Star* 7 December 1965.

⁸⁴³ “Call for three phase plan spread over 20 year period,” *The Mail-Star* 7 December 1965.

⁸⁴⁴ City of Halifax, *Harbour Drive Series: Report 1: Harbour Drive General* (Halifax, August 1966), 5-6. HRMA, Corporate Library.

way.⁸⁴⁵ Acquiring the necessary land as soon as possible would also avoid having to pay inflated prices in the future. The city staff reminded councillors that Harbour Drive plans needed to be finalized to secure a massive downtown redevelopment project known as Scotia Square, as well as a public housing project.⁸⁴⁶ The most significant challenge, staff members noted, was that the city could not afford the expressway and no outside funding was available at the time. They were hopeful that support would be forthcoming from the provincial government, the Bridge Commission, the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) or the Atlantic Development Board in the future.⁸⁴⁷ Finally, they touched on public transit, arguing that even projected population figures could not support a transit system that could compete with private automobiles. “People will prefer to use their cars for convenience,” they observed, “and will continue to do so until driving conditions become impossible.”⁸⁴⁸

“A much better city”

By summer 1967, city councillors had largely turned against Harbour Drive as new, alarming details emerged. In September 1967, aldermen passed a resolution against the

⁸⁴⁵ Ibid, 7-10, 15-16. The four problem areas in the city were the north gate of the H.M.C. dockyard, the approaches to the Angus L. Macdonald Bridge, Cornwallis Street and the Cogswell Street interchange.

⁸⁴⁶ Ibid, 3, 16-17. An agreement between the city and CMHC required officials to submit the Harbour Drive functional designs months prior to the second stage of construction. W.B. Hardman appealed to City Council on behalf of Halifax Developments Limited, stressing the importance of Harbour Drive to Scotia Square. Outlining the company’s construction schedule, he told councillors, “We are giving you this timing to emphasize that Harbour Drive and Scotia Square must be completed simultaneously.” Halifax City Council Minutes, 2 March 1967, 242-245; HRMA 102-1A (1967). CMHC was involved in cost sharing with the city for the scheme because some of the required land fell under a previously struck informal agreement. No final decisions were made because the details of the route had yet to be confirmed. City of Halifax, *Harbour Drive Series: Report 2: Cogswell Street Interchange* (Halifax, 1966), 13. HRMA, Corporate Library. Harbour Drive was considered part of the city’s urban renewal efforts, which would benefit agencies like CMHC by raising property values. De Leuw, Cather & Company of Canada Limited, Consulting Engineers, *A Functional Planning Report for Harbour Drive* (Halifax, November 1965), 41-42.

⁸⁴⁷ Ibid, 11-14.

⁸⁴⁸ Ibid, 15-17.

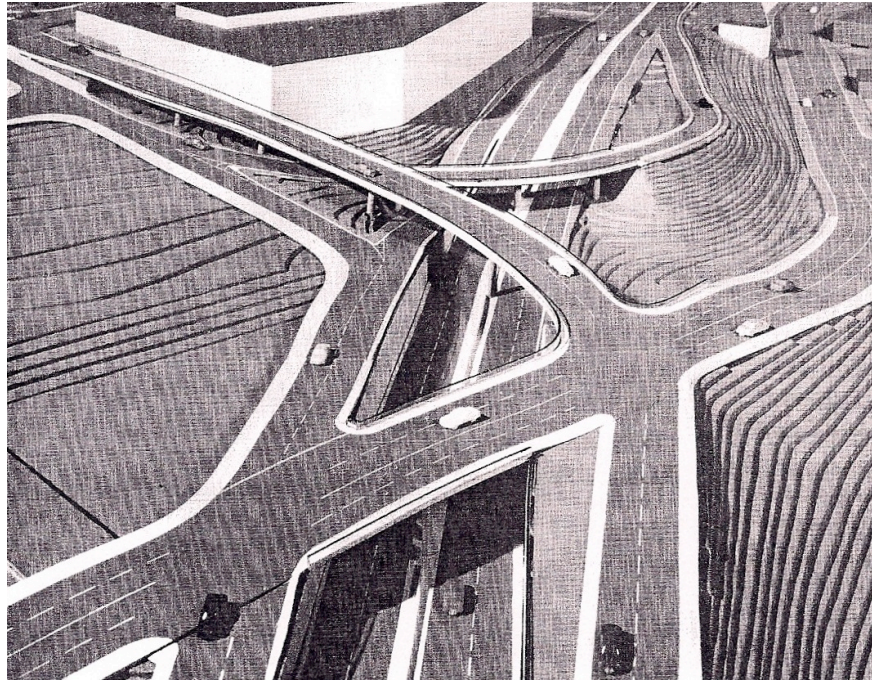


Image 2: "Photograph of Model Interchange [1]," A.D. Margison and Associates Limited, Harbour Drive: Cogswell Street Interchange: Development Specification; Project No. 2237 (1967). Halifax Regional Municipality Archives.

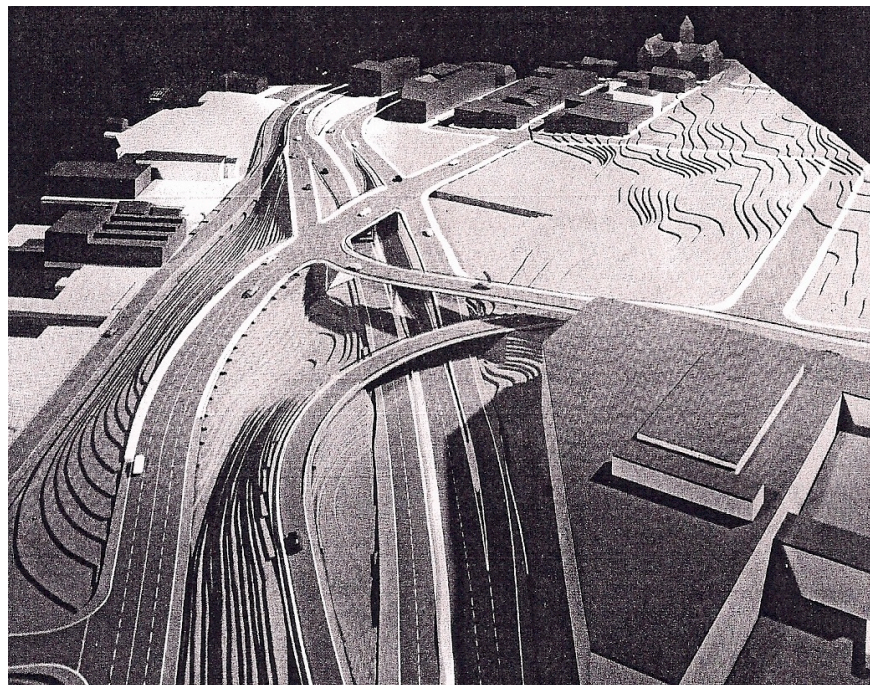


Image 3: "Photograph of Model Interchange [2]," A.D. Margison and Associates Limited, Harbour Drive: Cogswell Street Interchange: Development Specification; Project No. 2237 (1967). Halifax Regional Municipality Archives.

“superhighway.” According to *The Mail-Star* journalist Dave Bazay, politicians “hit [the] panic button” when they received “futuristic” sketches of the route from city staff and realized the threat the project posed to “valuable commercial properties” including the downtown site of a new courthouse. Originally thought to be only seventy feet wide, the expressway subsequently appeared to stretch to 165 feet. Alderman Walter Fitzgerald declared he was “shocked” by the new reported width, while Alderman Black said, “By the time you get the 165 feet there won’t be anything left to service from the road but the fish.” Another council member, Alderman Hedley Ivany declared he was against city centre highways all together. The debates concluded with acting city manager Arnold Ward agreeing to limit the route to a maximum seventy foot width, thus keeping the project alive.⁸⁴⁹

The threat to the city’s heritage properties aroused the first wave of wider public opposition to the expressway. While successive versions of the road plan reduced the number of threatened properties, activists insisted that all the buildings should be spared in recognition of intrinsic historical value. For these early expressway opponents, these buildings constituted an irreplaceable and vital element in the city’s unique maritime character. Expressway advocates viewed the threatened historic blocks differently; for them, regardless of the properties’ historical qualities, the buildings stood in the way of a much-needed expressway. The importance of building a modern, dynamic city on par with other North American urban centres far outweighed arguments for preservation.

Despite concerns for heritage properties and doubts about the expressway, in March 1968 council approved the waterfront link to the Cogswell Interchange. The move necessitated the

⁸⁴⁹ Dave Bazay, “City aldermen press stand for arm bridge,” *The Mail-Star* 29 September 1967.

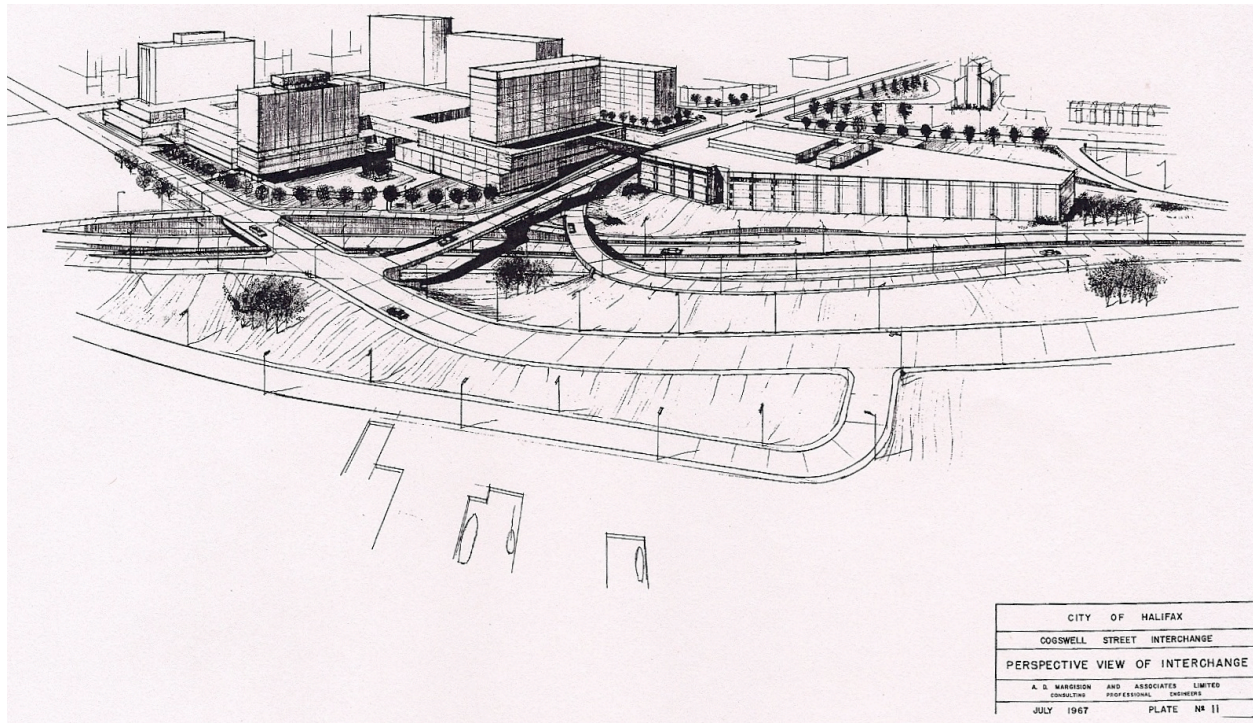


Image 4: "Perspective View of Interchange," A.D. Margison and Associates Limited, Harbour Drive: Cogswell Street Interchange: Development Specification; Project No. 2237 (1967). Halifax Regional Municipality Archives.

construction of the expressway and the destruction of high profile buildings, most dating from the 1860s.⁸⁵⁰ The decision also meant a portion of the new courthouse site would have to be reclaimed. The move followed protracted debates as aldermen discussed the possibility of minor adjustments of alignment and width, at one point considering removing the fronts of a few buildings temporarily to accommodate construction.

During the debates, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee on the Preservation of Historic Buildings Louis Collins testified to their historic value but noted they could become part

⁸⁵⁰ The buildings that would be expropriated and destroyed included the Collins bank (1825), Simon warehouse (1860s), wooden warehouse (1860s), Jerusalem warehouse (1841), Pickford and Black building (1860s).

of “a waterfront esplanade development.”⁸⁵¹ G. Murray, representing the Committee of Concern and the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia (HTNS), supported Collins’s assessment, urging restoration so that the buildings might “provide Halifax with both a reflection of its early Maritime heritage and a productive enterprise in a renewed city.” Alderman Connolly, remarking on the human cost of destroying the buildings, told his colleagues that fifty-three families would be affected by the loss of their places of business. Most aldermen, however, were concerned about securing federal funding for the expressway. They debated whether different variations of the route would affect the project’s eligibility for financing through the CMHC.⁸⁵² Ultimately they decided on a scheme where the waterfront link required twenty feet of frontage from each property, which effectively meant the destruction of the heritage buildings. Mayor Allan O’Brien (1966-71) and Louis Collins also considered seeking federal heritage designation for the remaining buildings, a move which O’Brien explained would create a “national attraction.” The expressway would be routed around the buildings so visitors from across Canada could drive the route, admiring a multi-million dollar redevelopment project on one side and heritage buildings on the other.⁸⁵³ These discussions did not settle the matter. Council later called for another

⁸⁵¹ The Civic Advisory Committee on Historic Buildings detailed their position in several documents: G.J. Hutton and A.F. Duffus, “Committee Report -- Waterfront Historic Buildings,” 19 March 1969, Civic Advisory Commission on Heritage, MG 30 Series N, vol. 2, no. 4, Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management (NSARM). A conditions assessment was also conducted years prior: Peter John Stokes, “Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada Agenda Paper: Consulting Restoration Architect, Merchants’ Bank, Sail Loft and Enos Collins’ Warehouse, Water Street, Halifax, N.S.,” November 1962, File: Waterfront 1962-1980, MG 30 Series E vol. 8 no. 28, Nova Scotia Provincial Archives.

⁸⁵² Halifax City Council Minutes, 14 March 1968, 15 March 1968, 19 March 1968, 216-262; HRMA 102-1A (1968). For the Collins testimony, 14 March 1968, 231-232; Murray testimony, including acquisition and restoration estimates, 14 March 1968, 232-236; Connolly comment, 19 March 1968, 248-249. Connolly later opposed restoring the buildings, Halifax City Council Minutes, 31 July 1969, 395; HRMA 102-1A (1969). Alderman hoped that a plan that included restoration of the threatened buildings would qualify for CMHC funding.

⁸⁵³ Peter Meerburg, “Harbour Drive to bury history,” *The Mail-Star* 29 March 1968.

ultimately inconclusive report on the feasibility of saving, restoring, and leasing the threatened buildings as commercial spaces.⁸⁵⁴

Much of the pressure to move ahead with Harbour Drive came from Halifax Developments Limited, which orchestrated the massive Scotia Square project. The development, situated directly beside the planned expressway, was secured by assurances from council that the road would be completed in time for the opening of the complex. The elimination of two popular city streets removed to make way for Scotia Square necessitated the creation of the Cogswell Interchange, an important component of the Harbour Drive scheme. Inspired by the Place Bonaventure “trade mart” in Montréal, the \$40,000,000 project involved nineteen acres of land in the Central Redevelopment Area in the city’s core. After five years and two phases, the final complex would include 450 residential apartment units, 300,000 square feet of retail space, 500,000 square feet of office space in three buildings, a 280 room hotel with conference facilities, a bank and post office, and parking facilities for 1,800 cars complete with gas stations and service centres.⁸⁵⁵

The developers, not surprisingly, maintained Harbour Drive was not only integral to the location and success of their project, but necessary for the whole city.⁸⁵⁶ Mayor Charles A. Vaughan voiced his approval in the early stages, arguing it would make Halifax “a much better

⁸⁵⁴ Halifax City Council Minutes, 31 July 1969, 689-698; HRMA 102-1A (1969). Paul Wendt Limited, Consulting Engineers, *Halifax Waterfront Historic Buildings: Engineering Study and Report* (Dartmouth, Nova Scotia: 1969). HRMA, Corporate Library. The study included the Simon’s Building, the Halifax Bank and Warehouse, the Privateer Warehouse, the Sail Loft, the Collins Store and the Pickford & Black Building, all located on Lower Water Street.

⁸⁵⁵ Halifax Developments Limited, *Scotia Square: South Office Tower/Scotia Square: Downtown Halifax: City within a City* (1969). HRMA, Corporate Library.

⁸⁵⁶ Ibid.



Image 5: Map of Harbour Drive and Cogswell Interchange Connector, A.D. Margison & Associates, "Evaluation of Alternative Proposals for the Connection of Upper Water Street to the Cogswell Street Interchange," July 1969. Halifax Regional Municipality Archives.

city.”⁸⁵⁷ The developers characterized their project as transformative for the city. At the opening ceremony of the first stage of construction, the president of the development group told attendees that the project would level slums and create a legacy for future generations.⁸⁵⁸ Developer Charles E. McCulloch evoked legendary Nova Scotia politician Joseph Howe in his address, telling the crowd, “He told us to preserve our monuments -- but I am sure it was not his intention we perpetuate our slums. I think we of the present generation have an obligation, indeed a

⁸⁵⁷ “Scotia Plan to complement character,” *The Mail-Star* 2 March 1966.

⁸⁵⁸ Rob Smith, “Scotia Square -- ‘First step to end congestion’,” *The Mail-Star* 17 January 1968.

golden opportunity to leave a heritage so our children's children, when they speak of us, will be able to pay us the supreme compliment, 'They built well'.'⁸⁵⁹

By 1971, the auto-oriented design of Scotia Square already seemed out of touch with evolving city planning principles. Assessing the downtown, the city's planners upheld the most pedestrian friendly areas as worthy models for future development. They stressed the importance of maintaining and expanding public access to the waterfront by establishing and promoting pedestrian routes; they highlighted the harbour, Citadel Hill, and the public gardens as the city's best aesthetic features.⁸⁶⁰ Additionally, they singled out the Spring Garden Road area as a burgeoning commercial strip with an undesirable mix of heavy pedestrian and vehicular traffic, a characterization that underscored the move away from autocentric planning. Vehicular traffic was regarded as a nuisance that disrupted the atmosphere of the area "divid[ing] the street physically, and detract[ing] from the otherwise pleasing character and scale of development." Planners noted the manner in which the low elevation of buildings on the south side of street "permits the sun to bathe the north side of the street" should be maintained, adding, "The most attractive [buildings] are the converted houses rather than the structures created for commercial activity."⁸⁶¹ Furthermore, they argued in a forceful statement that captured new thinking that the city at large should not be planned primarily to accommodate automobiles:

It [downtown] is a nebulous, large agglomeration of buildings, streets, and various uses, very little of which is presently orientated to interest people. Like many cities, it is currently being redeveloped; the concept is admirable, but implementation has not been satisfactory in terms of location of new buildings, their height, appearance, parking, and pedestrian facilities . . . The potential exists for an attractive downtown. What is required

⁸⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁶⁰ City of Halifax, Local Planning and Design Division, *Metro Center Study* (January 1971), Sections 4.6-4.8, 7.2-7.3. HRMA, Corporate Library.

⁸⁶¹ Ibid, Section 7.6.2.

now is an improvement programme for all future years to realize the visual potential. Many attractive buildings exist; some are historic, which provides additional reason for improvement.⁸⁶²

Private cars, planners concluded, “will need restraint.”⁸⁶³

Planners’ ideas about how to plan were changing, as evidenced by the 1971 master plan for the city. In a draft circulated by the planning department among officials, planners were surprisingly candid in their criticism. The master plan summarized numerous reports that had been generated throughout the year, but they urged that it should not be adopted. They explained their position in an editorial footnote which hinted at growing tensions between officials and politicians:

The master plan is passé, a thick document should not be labouriously developed strictly by staff and then simply dumped into the lap of a review body -- be it city council or planning board. However, there have been such persistent entreaties and expectations about the plan that an overall document must be brought forward -- so that once this activity is consummated, the laborious process of formulating and adopting planning policies can begin.⁸⁶⁴

While planners’ goals for downtown development evolved, city council had yet to make a firm commitment to Harbour Drive. The indecision frustrated officials, particularly since many studies assumed the expressway as a central link in the region’s transportation infrastructure. City Manager C. McC. Henderson acknowledged the difficulty of deciding in favour of or against the route, admitting, “there are few facts now available to support either viewpoint,” but urged council to take action, telling it:

⁸⁶² Ibid, Section 7.6.4.

⁸⁶³ Ibid, Section 8.6.2. Parking restrictions, including street parking and lot sizes, were included in the plan as well as improvements to public transit.

⁸⁶⁴ City of Halifax, Planning Department, *The Master Plan!* [Draft] (December 1971), Introduction, footnote 1. HRMA, Corporate Library.

Transportation problems cannot be solved by piecemeal experiments. What is needed is to treat the road system as a system with transit and auto components. There is a need to spell out benefits, costs and alternatives. The minimum need is for an agreed-upon concept of the future urban pattern and a comprehensive regional transportation study. Without this investment, the possibilities for error and waste are multiplied many times over.⁸⁶⁵

Furthermore, Henderson observed that despite not formally committing to the expressway, other planning decisions -- including the construction of the Cogswell Interchange, building a small preliminary section of the road, committing to a linked bridge, and ensuring new buildings downtown did not block the road's path -- all assumed the project would go through.⁸⁶⁶ This combination of dithering and pursuit of piecemeal implementation was common in many cities. Councils hesitated to make a firm, public decision on expressway projects despite the fact that other planning decisions clearly indicated the commitment had already been made.

Finally, Henderson addressed the challenge of funding the massive project, blaming rising costs for delaying work.⁸⁶⁷ He also spoke about the possibility of funding the expressway in part through the federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion but noted local political support for such a move had been mixed in the past. The city manager reported that the Harbour Drive project qualified for federal and provincial funding under the program, but that the mayor had told city council after a visit to Ottawa that the expressway project was "the last priority" after infrastructure like sewers, schools, and housing. Since the city could not afford its share of the expressway bill, the mayor preferred any available funds be spent on sewers and schools.

⁸⁶⁵ "Harbour Drive -- Commitments, Advantages and Disadvantages (30 March 1971)," Halifax City Council Minutes, 7 April 1971, 1-5; HRMA 102-1B (1971). Henderson included a disclaimer about traffic studies, noting "A word of caution: the transportation study process has some distinct limitations" (footnote 1, page 5).

⁸⁶⁶ "Harbour Drive and Waterfront Historic Buildings (13 April 1971)," Halifax City Council Minutes, 15 April 1971, 1-2; HRMA 102-1B (1971).

⁸⁶⁷ "History of Harbour Drive -- Halifax, N.S." Halifax City Council Minutes, 15 April 1971, 12; HRMA 102-1B.

Henderson recalled: “The mayor felt that it was impossible to tear down lower income housing for an expressway and then not provide sewers to service open land necessary for housing construction, and that even bus bays should come ahead of expressways.”⁸⁶⁸ The discussion of possible DREE funding pointed to a unique feature of the Halifax debates, as DREE was not a potential player in any other cities’ expressway schemes.

“People should not take a back seat to cars”

By September 1971 public opposition to Harbour Drive was beginning to take shape. During a regular council session a handful of citizens and leaders from interested community groups presented their concerns. The Halifax Landmarks Commission, the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, the Neighbourhood Centre, A.M. Smith and Company, and the MOVEMENT for Citizen Voice and Action (MOVE) were all represented. Opponents cited the potential loss of heritage buildings and public access to the harbour, as well as the lack of consultation with economically disadvantaged residents who might be displaced by the road in communities northwest of the downtown core. Inner city expressways, they argued, exacerbated traffic congestion and had not been proven to ensure the vitality of central business districts.⁸⁶⁹ Over the next year and a half, these early opponents of the expressway would find widespread support among other engaged citizens who shared their concerns.

Early reservations fuelled debates among officials and in turn attracted attention from engaged citizens. Local residents, alarmed about the impact of the expressway schemes on their cities, became increasingly concerned about the direction of urban development. In most cases,

⁸⁶⁸ Ibid, 13.

⁸⁶⁹ Halifax City Council Minutes, 1 September 1971, 537-540; HRMA 102-1A (1971).

these individuals banded together remarkably quickly to form anti-expressway protest groups. Some also opted to channel their efforts through existing activist groups and in many cases dedicated anti-expressway protestors formed both working and formal coalitions with like-minded citizens who operated under a broader urban reform mandate. Protestors objected to postwar autocentric planning and challenged pro-expressway authorities with an alternate vision for cities that prioritized the safeguarding of the urban environment through the preservation of communities, the prevention of environmental degradation, and the promotion of public transit.

Anti-expressway protestors' activism in Halifax was channeled mainly through four groups: MOVE, the Action Ecology Centre (AEC) at Dalhousie University, the Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, and the Civic Advisory Committee on Historic Buildings. Although the city had created the Civic Advisory Committee to inform policy decisions impacting heritage properties, the group evolved and became a strong, early opponent of renewal and redevelopment schemes, which often put it at odds with elected and appointed officials. While the Civic Advisory Committee had been engaged in an on-going dialogue with city officials about the threatened waterfront heritage properties for some years, the other groups really mobilized only in advance of November 1972 public hearings on Harbour Drive. Opponents' objections to the route fell into three categories: the threat the southern portion posed to the waterfront heritage properties downtown, the destructive impact the northern section would have on disadvantaged neighbourhoods outside the city's core, and wider ranging opposition to expressways on principle.

The Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia, the Action Ecology Centre and MOVE all made efforts to mobilize opposition to the expressway. The HTNS mailed pamphlets to members

characteristic of anti-expressway material across the country. The package included a reprint of an article about dial-a-bus services, a cartoon lampooning expressways, a map of the route, and a list of suggested questions about the road's impact to ask during hearings.⁸⁷⁰ As a group concerned primarily with transit and land use planning the AEC also adopted a strong anti-expressway stance. Prior to the hearings, the group released *A Time for Transit: A Handbook of Transportation Alternatives*. The group blamed developers and the auto industry for pushing the expressway agenda and argued officials should adopt a regional approach to transportation planning that prioritized public transit and reforming autocentric land use both in and outside the city.⁸⁷¹

MOVE was the most vocal activist group involved in the Harbour Drive debates. Members worked primarily on a local level but petitioned senior levels of government when advantageous. Their boldest move in this regard was writing to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion Jean Marchand (1969-72) asking him not to grant the city's requests totaling \$14,000,000 to fund the expressway. MOVE cited exorbitant costs and the city's failure to explore the social and environmental impact of the route as well as potential alternatives.⁸⁷²

As part of its efforts to encourage concerned citizens to attend the hearings, the group engaged in ridicule. They dubbed Harbour Drive "Hubbub Drive" and blasted local officials for their failure to grasp what was obvious to most, namely that expressways were outdated. The

⁸⁷⁰ Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia pamphlets (c. 1972); Clippings file Halifax, N.S. - Streets G-Z; Harbour Drive. HPL, Reference Collection.

⁸⁷¹ Urban Team of the Action Ecology Centre, *A Time for Transit: A Handbook of Transportation Alternatives* (Halifax: Action Ecology Centre, c. 1973). HPL, Reference Collection.

⁸⁷² Alan Ruffman to Jean Marchand, c. October 1972, reprinted in *Move Magazine* Vol. 1, No. 1, 27 October 1972, 6-7; Movement for Citizens Voice and Action (MOVE) Fonds, MS-11-1, Box 13, University Archives & Special Collections, Dalhousie University (UASCD).

road was the product of outdated thinking and would exacerbate not alleviate congestion, MOVE insisted, adding that construction estimates did not include maintenance costs. The group also criticized the possible loss of housing in the north end at a time when the city's public housing waiting list had 1,800 names. "People should not take a back seat to cars," MOVE lectured. Instead, members promoted public transit and recommended that people should be discouraged from bringing cars downtown.⁸⁷³

MOVE also debuted its eponymous magazine prior to the hearings; the first issue elaborated on the Harbour Drive battle. The group organized its objections into three areas of concern: the impact on the city's traffic systems, the social costs, and alternatives. MOVE members asked how the influx of cars brought into the city by Harbour Drive would be handled by existing streets and parking facilities. Activists on this occasion and many more feared the freeway would flood the city with more traffic, not alleviate congestion as promised.

Another concern MOVE shared with urban activists across the country was a distrust of official estimates of the cost. The real cost, they insisted, would be much higher. MOVE members noted officials often omitted maintenance and expropriation costs from estimates. They also failed to account for the loss of prime developable downtown property, as the large swaths of land occupied by the expressway would be closed to commercial development and, accordingly, would not generate property tax income. Activists were also concerned that city policies contributed to the decline of the downtown core, a self fulfilling prophecy fed by years of chronic indecision over the Harbour Drive project. Business owners who ordinarily might

⁸⁷³ Bob Cotie, "Hubbub Drive," *We People* (October 1972), 28-30. HPL, Reference Collection.

have improved or expanded their properties, they reported, were discouraged by rumours of expropriation while others relocated to Lakeside or Dartmouth preemptively.

MOVE also attacked the social cost of the scheme. It estimated sixty to 100 families would be displaced by the northern portion of the project and countless others would see their neighbourhoods irreversibly altered. The activists argued the homes on the east side of Barrington Street, north of Cogswell Street, in particular were not slums but part of well rounded and established communities. The city's social services, they added, were already hard pressed with long waiting lists for affordable housing and lacked the resources to address the crisis the freeway would create. They used Africville as an example of the devastating impact relocation could have on a community, noting a recent study of the area that detailed the damaging impact of relocation on communities. As the study explained:

. . . when a neighbourhood is uprooted and the residents are relocated in unfamiliar non-neighbourhood surroundings, the need for social assistance among the residents increased as people are separated from places of employment in the former neighbourhood; and young people, deprived of adequate and familiar facilities such as playgrounds, drop-in-centres, and other gathering places, are more likely to turn to vandalism, drug use and petty thievery in their surroundings that was the case within the folkways of their old neighbourhood.⁸⁷⁴

Finally MOVE activists claimed city officials had ignored valid alternatives. The freeway idea originated in the mid 1940s, they argued, and was outdated: "In the 1970's we have radically changed our ideas of what a city is all about. The downtown area is now thought of as a place to live, work and enjoy ourselves on a twenty-four hour basis. Does the dumper expressway idea, basically unchanged over twenty-seven years, still have any relevance for the kind of city we now want to live in." Opponents also argued that improved traffic management

⁸⁷⁴ "What kind of city do we want?" in *Move Magazine* Vol. 1, No. 1, 27 October 1972, 8-10; Movement for Citizens Voice and Action (MOVE) Fonds, MS-11-1, Box 13, UASCD.

could alleviate congestion and the transit systems could be expanded.⁸⁷⁵ As activists made their arguments against the expressway, the stage was set for a public showdown.

City officials felt the heat from these growing protests. In anticipation of the expressway hearings, Mayor Walter Fitzgerald (1971-74; 1994-96) reminded residents, “The Harbour Drive of 1972 is different from the Harbour Drive of 1968,” arguing that the battle to keep the expressway out of the downtown core had already been won by heritage advocates.⁸⁷⁶ The issue at hand, he insisted, was the northern portion of the route. The mayor reiterated his position in a radio interview, stressing there would be no Harbour Drive south of the Cogswell Interchange, through the central business district, adding that the land originally purchased for the route had already been sold for other developments. The mayor also downplayed the possible displacement of residents by the northern section of the expressway, estimating only fifteen families would be relocated. When questioned on the number, Fitzgerald said modifications to the original route had actually allowed for more new housing developments, adding that the homes already destroyed were “old dilapidated [sic] buildings and slums.”⁸⁷⁷

Unmoved by Fitzgerald’s assurances about the limited impact of the route in the north, opponents also remained skeptical about the mayor’s assertion that the southern portion of the expressway had really been shelved. The November 1972 hearings attracted 400 attendees, the majority of whom opposed the scheme. Speakers attacked the presumption that the automobile should shape cities and criticized the lack of public participation in the planning process. While the waterfront expressway through the city had been abandoned, the modified scheme called for

⁸⁷⁵ Ibid, 8-10.

⁸⁷⁶ “Harbour Drive North project: Public meeting is planned,” *The Mail-Star* 3 October 1972.

⁸⁷⁷ Walter Fitzgerald, Radio interview with Don Tremaine, 12 September 1972, MG 1 vol. 2437, no. 5c, NSARM.

the widening of Barrington Street -- from four to six lanes, from the Cogswell Interchange to the Fairview Overpass -- in addition to the original expressway design north of the interchange. Most speakers acknowledged the need for improvements to downtown roads but still rejected the expressway plan. Many who did not trust the government's assurances that the southern portion of Harbour Drive would not be resurrected as an expressway reiterated heritage advocates' earlier concerns. More of the attendees focused on the northern section of the route that threatened disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Protestors argued that those communities had no voice in the debates and that planners had grossly understated the destructive impact that an expressway would have on the area. They insisted the threatened communities were not blighted slums that needed to be removed but instead were cohesive, established neighbourhoods in need of social support that would be condemned to decline if an expressway was built.

Heritage Trust of Nova Scotia representative Ian McGee voiced fears that Harbour Drive would eventually expand south, endangering heritage properties. Anthony Cook spoke on behalf of the Nova Scotia Association of Architects, and criticized the expressway studies for not considering the plan's economic and social impact on the region. Cook further argued that the automobile's popularity was due to the neglect of public transit. According to him, encouraging autocentric development would only stick Halifax with the "affliction" plaguing North American cities. Professor Andrew Harvey agreed, presenting a survey conducted by local colleges that revealed the public prioritized transit ahead of roads, asking, "for whom is this expressway being built?"⁸⁷⁸ Opponents such as NDP candidate and Family Service Bureau Director Marty Dolin

⁸⁷⁸ Dan McSweeney, "Opponents of Harbour Drive North call for 'rethinking' on plans," *The Mail-Star* 3 November 1972. Later that month the *Scotian Journalist* reported an unofficial public opinion ballot revealed similar results. When asked to choose between Barrington with small improvements, Harbour Drive as an expressway, and Harbour Drive as a non-limited access new roadbed, most voters instead favoured public transit. "Harbour Drive Ballot: What kind of roadway do you want between Downtown Halifax and the Narrows Bridge?" *Scotian Journalist* 23 November 1972.

cited a letter from Minister of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion Jean Marchand that seemed to reveal the effectiveness of MOVE's earlier appeal, as Marchand stated no money would be contributed until a study of the social and economic impact of the expressway was conducted. Dolin argued council's plans were outdated, adding that any future DREE funds should be used for public transit.⁸⁷⁹ Others at the hearing, like north end resident Gertrude Knight, voiced concerns over the fate of her north end neighbourhood.⁸⁸⁰ Alan Ruffman, a leader in MOVE's Harbour Drive North Committee, argued city council's indecision had paralyzed land development and accused councillors of executing "a 'planned deterioration' of neighbourhoods" by allowing city owned buildings in the path of the expressway to fall into disrepair.⁸⁸¹ Ruffman's group blasted the city for ad hoc planning, calling their approach an "unsynchronized, piece-meal method of implementing plans" and blamed city staff for not presenting alternatives to the expressway to city council.⁸⁸² Lou Collins, Chairman of the Historic Landmarks Commission, echoed Ruffman's complaints about indecision as well as other protestors' fears the project would expand south. Collins urged council to hold more public debates to help answer the question "what kind of city do we want as citizens?"⁸⁸³

⁸⁷⁹ Dan McSweeney, "Opponents of Harbour Drive North call for 'rethinking' on plans," *The Mail-Star* 3 November 1972.

⁸⁸⁰ Knight also circulated pamphlets requesting community support for her north end neighbourhood's opposition to Harbour Drive. The hand out included a list of problems associated with the expressway. Handout, MG 1 vol. 2437 no. 5b, NSARM.

⁸⁸¹ Dan McSweeney, "Opponents of Harbour Drive North call for 'rethinking' on plans," *The Mail-Star* 3 November 1972. Later there was more evidence of this "planned deterioration" as *The 4th Estate* reported the city owned old Surf Club building on Barrington was "allowed to deteriorate," when the city failed to replace the furnace and the building was subsequently deserted. "Another perfectly good building has been sacrificed," Ruffman said, "not by incompetence, but by the very competent design of city staff. Mary McGeer, "Making room for Harbour Drive: Old Surf Club to be demolished as city staff carries on," *The 4th Estate* 7 June 1973.

⁸⁸² Brenda Teasdale, "Harbour Drive North: Is it worth it? Or are we being forced into it?" *Scotian Journalist* 2 November 1972.

⁸⁸³ Dan McSweeney, "Opponents of Harbour Drive North call for 'rethinking' on plans," *The Mail-Star* 3 November 1972.

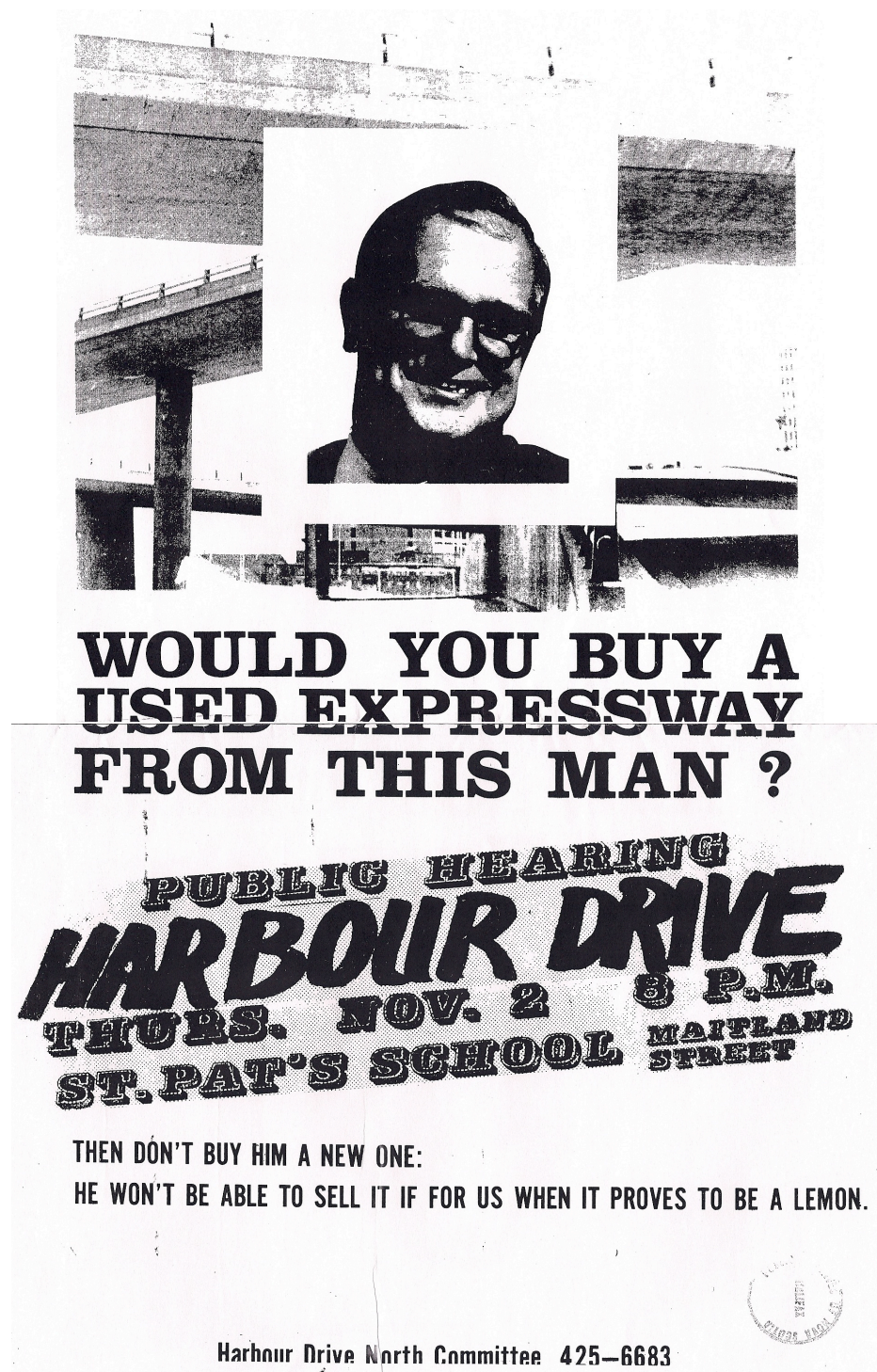


Image 6: Harbour Drive North Committee Promotional Poster, 1972, Call number: MG 1, vol. 2437, no. 5e, Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management. Courtesy of the Nova Scotia Archives.

Harbour Drive North Committee 425-6683

HALIFAX CITY FREEWAY DREAM

MENU

TODAY'S SPECIAL
from City Hall



with MEATBALLS
only: \$10,000,000 *
(or maybe \$40,000,000)
(not counting indirect
costs, of course)
* subject to increase without
notice while paying.

PUBLIC HEARING
HARBOUR DRIVE
THURS. NOV. 2 8 P.M.
ST. PAT'S SCHOOL MAITLAND STREET

PLEASE NOTE: The City Management/Government refuses responsibility:
- for accurate and complete cost estimates;
- for loss of, or damages to: life, limb, personal property, environmental quality, small businesses, the Central Business District, surrounding neighborhoods, tax revenue, quality of life, . . .
- for good city and regional transportation planning practice, for examining real alternatives, for leaving serious questions un-examined and unanswered.

Image 7: Harbour Drive North Committee Promotional Poster, 1972, Call number: MG 1, vol. 2437, no. 5a, Nova Scotia Archives and Records Management. Courtesy of the Nova Scotia Archives.

MOVE's Harbour Drive North Committee member and Dalhousie Public Affairs Professor Kell Antoft also presented a brief to council, urging it to explore public transit alternatives and stressing the need for a comprehensive regional transportation plan. Antoft questioned whether the publicly owned rail line that encircled the peninsula could be used for rapid transit. "Surely," he argued, "there [is] better criteria than the demands of the motor car by which our future urban landscape [can] be guided." In response to Mayor Fitzgerald's claim that Harbour Drive would not deplete the city's revenues because it would be funded through DREE, Antoft urged council to use any available funding for projects city residents supported, adding, "Let us not be seduced by these magic Ottawa dollars."⁸⁸⁴

Antoft also referred to a proposal he drafted with Dalhousie colleague and architecture and planning professor Dimitri Procos for a regional transportation system for Halifax. They urged authorities to engage in "comprehensive intergovernmental planning" whereby land use would be coordinated between municipal, provincial and federal authorities. Federal authorities, they noted, were unusually involved in Halifax due to federal land ownership in the city through the DREE, as well as infrastructure projects including service provisions, transportation and schools. Citing "the billion dollar Metro Centre project to be built on top of the downtown Toronto Canadian National Railway (CNR) railyards," Antoft and Procos asked whether similar development projects might be possible for the CNR lands in Halifax along the Northwest Arm.⁸⁸⁵ Antoft and Procos envisioned a regional transportation system whereby a commuter

⁸⁸⁴ Kell Antoft, "Harbour Drive," Submission to Halifax City Council, 2 November 1972, 1-4; Kell Antoft Fonds, MS-2-743, Box 39, File 4, UASCD. MOVE's Harbour Drive North Committee also distributed posters advertising the hearings. Promotional poster, November 1972, File: Harbour Drive North, MG 1 vol. 2437 no. 5a-e, NSARM.

⁸⁸⁵ Kell Antoft and Dimitri Procos, "Intermet Halifax: Proposed Paper: A Transportation System for Halifax Metro -- A Case Study of Intergovernmental Land Use Coordination," c. 1971, 1-3; Kell Antoft Fonds, MS-2-743, Box 39, File 4, UASCD.

train system would run on CNR lines with terminals placed throughout the metropolitan region. Express buses would be fed by a network of mini buses, available on demand, to bring commuters to the main rail lines, while parking lots would also be situated at bus depots in areas not serviced by the main lines. Furthermore, user fees would be imposed on automobile owners within the metropolitan area to supplement the city's road maintenance funds. Dedicated bicycle lanes would be established throughout the city.⁸⁸⁶

Greg Murray of the Halifax Board of Trade was one of the few attendees who supported the expressway. Murray argued Barrington Street had to be improved and that the project would alleviate heavy north end traffic. The social consequences of the scheme, he said, had been "somewhat overstated" when in reality, the project would actually help clear out an already "badly blighted" area. Where the northern section of the road was routed through industrial areas, it would not disrupt the neighbouring communities since residents in nearby houses and apartment buildings would have no need to cross the artery.⁸⁸⁷

While some councillors, including Alderwoman Margaret Stanbury and Aldermen Nick Meagher and James L. Connolly, allied with activists in their opposition to the expressway, Mayor Walter Fitzgerald remained cool to opponents. Fitzgerald refused to make any promises about improving public participation in city planning, saying only that he would "give serious

⁸⁸⁶ Ibid, 5-8. The challenges inherent in forming a regional transportation planning body were later made clear by Edwin C. Harris, the Chairman of the Halifax Transit Corporation. Harris told the Canadian Urban Transit Association in 1977 that regional transit was important for the area but Dartmouth was wary of regional schemes because officials feared being outvoted by Halifax, which was twice as large. County government was traditionally dominated by rural interests, according to Harris, and attempts at creating a regional entity fell flat after WWII when a proposal for a second tier regional government was not pursued. In 1962 the province created the Halifax-Dartmouth Regional Authority, but it only coordinated prisons, not traffic. Edwin C. Harris, "Regional transit important," *The Mail-Star* 24 June 1977.

⁸⁸⁷ Dan McSweeney, "Opponents of Harbour Drive North call for 'rethinking' on plans," *The Mail-Star* 3 November 1972. "Harbour Drive North: The Board speaks out," *Commercial News: Halifax Board of Trade* vol. 51, no. 11; 3-5, 36. HPL, Reference Collection.

consideration” to the protestors’ demands. His unwillingness to commit to such a change angered opponents who argued citizen participation in it’s current limited form was meaningless because aldermen, many of whom seemed to have already made their decisions, ultimately cast the deciding votes.⁸⁸⁸

City manager Cyril Henderson closed the hearings by reiterating the city’s position. He insisted that the Harbour Drive North plan built on existing arteries, did not threaten homes, and was situated on the boundary between residential and industrial areas. “The downtown is the heart of our City,” Henderson said, continuing, “If it is to live, it must be provided with an artery through which its life blood -- the people of the City -- can freely flow. Restricted arteries -- arterio-sclerosis -- bring about heart attacks and a patient dies. The City is just as vulnerable as a human being.”⁸⁸⁹

A “deep and unfortunate lack of trust”

Soon after the hearings, official city plans confirmed the mayor’s earlier assurances that the southern portion of Harbour Drive that originally threatened heritage buildings along the waterfront was no longer on the agenda. Instead, schemes revealed a number of scaled down alternatives, mostly involving street widening. While the northern section of Harbour Drive was still planned as originally conceived, new features including an emphasis on public transit and pedestrian accommodations emerged.

⁸⁸⁸ Pat Verge, “The Harbour Drive fight has been great, but now how about some real politics?” *The 4th Estate* 9 November 1972, 5.

⁸⁸⁹ “Harbour Drive North: The Board speaks out,” *Commercial News: Halifax Board of Trade* Vol. 51, No. 11. 3-5, 36. HPL, Reference Collection.

A December 1972 traffic study included a scaled down version of the harbour front route while emphasizing the importance of transit improvements. Officials estimated the recommended network of freeway, expressway and arterial “elements” would cost \$181,000,000 over twenty years, while improvements to the transit system would total \$22,500,000 and an expanded ferry service would cost \$2,860,000.⁸⁹⁰ Subsequent reports again highlighted the importance of balancing private automobiles and public transit in the city. A successful transit system, city manager Henderson reminded council, required commitment and cooperation.⁸⁹¹ At the same time a waterfront development study reinforced these changing priorities and even challenged council to further its plans. Consultants advised planners to preserve heritage buildings and enhance public access to the waterfront by requiring low rise commercial developments with links to an enclosed pedestrian path system.⁸⁹² They even opposed the downgraded plans to convert Water Street into a five or six lane arterial route.⁸⁹³

These initial signs of a slow evolution in planning policy did not appease MOVE. The group remained vocal in its opposition to the remaining components of Harbour Drive, issuing press releases voicing frustration over the lack of response from city officials to its concerns. MOVE chastised officials for not keeping their promise to follow up on the many questions raised at the November 1972 hearings, underscoring the point by compiling several pages of

⁸⁹⁰ Canadian-British Consultants Limited in association with Wilbur Smith and Associates, *Transportation Study: Halifax - Dartmouth Metropolitan Area* (December 1972). HPL, Reference Library.

⁸⁹¹ C. McC. Henderson, City Manager and Committee, *Halifax Public Transit Proposal & Future Transportation* (c. March-April 1973). HPL, Reference Collection.

⁸⁹² The fully enclosed, climate controlled pedestrian system was supposed to run along a portion of the waterfront over to Scotia Square, modeled after Montréal’s “underground city.” Arcop Associates, Commissioned by the Metropolitan Area Planning Committee to aid the City of Halifax Downtown Planning Committee, *Halifax Waterfront: Development Planning Study* (December 1972). HPL, Reference Library.

⁸⁹³ Ibid.

questions from various presenters at the hearings that had yet to be answered. Officials, activists argued, had already made their decision before the hearings were held. The city's position was therefore "a flagrant slap in the face to the public" and the lack of response had fostered a "deep and unfortunate lack of trust."⁸⁹⁴ They also used their submission to hearings on a new city plan to ridicule the city's public consultation processes. Noting they were "completely skeptical and pessimistic" about the hearings given the previous experience, the committee nonetheless posed a series of rhetorical questions to hammer home its message:

Has council already frozen its opinion on the Municipal Development Plan? And will questions asked at this Hearing get any more careful attention than did those asked at the earlier Hearing? Will the City ever get around to answering the questions that Harbour Drive raises or is it content to build it then attempt to answer and solve the resulting problems?⁸⁹⁵

City planning and transportation policy continued to evolve through the mid 1970s, with efforts to incorporate greater citizen participation in planning processes in addition to working towards a more balanced transportation policy. At the same time, new planning principles were introduced that ruled out not only expressways, but any kind of road upgrades in the city centre. In 1975 the Municipal Development Planning Committee solicited suggestions for incorporating public participation in local government from its Subcommittee on Citizens' Participation. The subcommittee made recommendations as to the appropriate timing and forums for releasing

⁸⁹⁴ MOVE Harbour Drive North Committee Press Release, 18 January 1973, Movement for Citizens Voice and Action (MOVE) Fonds, MS-11-1, Box 34, UASCD. In addition to the cover page notice, the press release included a copy of the committee's submission to the public hearing on the Halifax Municipal Development Plan, the list of 22 questions raised by speakers at the Harbour Drive hearings, a map of the route, and a reprint of the *MOVE Magazine* article, "What kind of city do we want?" in the form of an open letter to Council and Halifax residents.

⁸⁹⁵ "Submission of Harbour Drive North Committee to the Public Hearing on Draft Halifax Municipal Development Plan," 10 January 1973, Movement for Citizens Voice and Action (MOVE) Fonds, MS-11-1, Box 34, UASCD.

information to the public, methods of consultation and participatory neighbourhood planning.⁸⁹⁶

The same year, council approved the formation of a traffic management board, whose first task was to study the city's transportation challenges. The board's priorities were to reduce auto volumes, improve transit use, and make the city's streets more efficient. The key stipulations were that the board had to work within two new planning policies adopted by council: first, that no major road construction, including new roads or widening existing routes, would occur downtown, and second, that public transit would be emphasized.⁸⁹⁷ The board recommended a new network of one way streets for the city with one just realignment accompanied by an expanded public transit system supported by a system of dedicated bus lanes. The recommended road improvements were quoted at \$1,140,000, while the transit changes were estimated to cost \$20,000.⁸⁹⁸ This new direction represented a remarkable turnaround in a city where an urban expressway was being championed by officials only three years earlier.

“Concrete ramps and retaining walls are out of character with traditional downtown streetscapes”

Ultimately, the only part of the Harbour Drive plan that was constructed was the Cogswell Interchange. It remains to this day a cumbersome monument to the folly of poor transportation planning. The interchange required 6.5 hectares of downtown property and the destruction of 134 buildings when originally constructed. The impracticality of the feature,

⁸⁹⁶ K. Scott Wood for the Citizens' Working Group, Letter and Draft Proposal, 1 October 1975, MDP Committee, 102-44 B.22, HRMA. A workshop held in November generated more discussion and suggestions for the proposal: Discussion summary and notes, 15 November 1975, MDP Committee, 102-44 B.22, HRMA.

⁸⁹⁷ IBI Group in association with Canadian British Consultants Limited, *Downtown Transportation Study: Final Report* (August 1976), Section I - Background, Section II - The Issues. HPL, Reference Collection.

⁸⁹⁸ Ibid, Introduction, 1-4.

given that the planned connected expressway was never constructed, high maintenance costs, and the potential for redeveloping lucrative downtown land all fuel discussions about demolishing the structure.⁸⁹⁹ In 2001 *The Chronicle Herald* reported the interchange only survived the Harbour Drive protests because it was already under construction when public opposition gained strength. Business Commission Executive Director Kate Carmichael called the interchange “a physical and psychological barrier” that divided the downtown, while Urban Planning and Design Professor Beverly Sadalack, who co-authored a study calling for its demolition, said, “Halifax is such a human-scale city, and (the interchange) stands out in contrast.”⁹⁰⁰ Another assessment validated many of protestors’ fears from years earlier, noting:

Its concrete ramps and retaining walls are out of character with traditional downtown streetscapes. The interchange is occupying valuable land that could be more effectively developed to augment the downtown and increase the municipal tax base. It creates a barrier between the Central Business District and the Gottingen Street Commercial Area, which was once an important complement. It is now also obstructing important waterfront developments such as the Sheraton Hotel, the two Purdys Towers, and the new Casino.⁹⁰¹

In April 2011, members of the Action Ecology Centre celebrated the fortieth anniversary of the defeat of Harbour Drive with demonstrations at the Cogswell Interchange, as officials called for proposals to dismantle the interchange and redevelop the area.

The controversy over Harbour Drive marked a turning point in Halifax’s development, as the lukewarm reception from local politicians and lack of federal support created an opening for

⁸⁹⁹ David Redwood, “Envisioning life after the interchange,” *The Daily News* 22 February 2001; Amy Pugsley Fraser, “Cogswell stadium strikes chord,” *The Chronicle Herald* 25 June 2007; Rachel Mendleson, “Cogswell changes won’t come quickly: manager,” *The Daily News* 28 November 2007; Bruce Erskine, “Big plans for Cogswell,” *The Chronicle Herald* 19 June 2008; “An interchange of ideas,” *The Mail-Star* 9 February 2009; Paul McLeod, “Facelift for Cogswell,” *Metro* (Halifax Edition) 11 February 2009; Amy Pugsley Fraser, “Cogswell interchange will need \$500,000 before replacement,” *The Mail-Star* 11 February 2009.

⁹⁰⁰ “Wanted: Ideas for future of Cogswell Street interchange,” *The Chronicle Herald* 21 February 2001.

⁹⁰¹ Vaughan Engineering, *Cogswell Street Interchange Study* (March 2001). HRMA, Corporate Library.

spirited debates that then inspired full fledged opposition. In this case, the defeat of the expressway can be attributed to hesitant politicians and engaged citizens. Individuals from both groups feared damage to the city's waterfront, particularly the loss of heritage buildings, and the surely devastating impact to neighbourhoods north of the downtown core.

The strong opposition officials encountered changed their plans, giving them a clear indication of the lack of political and public support for an inner city expressway. Planners adjusted subsequent proposals to reflect evolving planning values, saving the area from a waterfront expressway that would forever change the face of the city. While opponents in other cities fought the pervasive conviction that expressways represented a necessary concession to the auto king, Halifax's size and the modest scale of the traffic problem undermined claims that expressways were an essential component of progressive planning. Later efforts to make the waterfront a destination for residents and tourists alike demonstrated the legacy of the expressway debates. Public access to the waterfront was improved through pedestrian friendly pathways and heritage buildings were refurbished to house shops and restaurants.

Central to the lack of political and public support for Harbour Drive was the question of whether Halifax even needed an expressway. These doubts made the significant financial, social, and environmental costs of the road even more difficult to justify. Compared to other Canadian cities the modest population and limited congestion during rush hours did not seem to require an expressway remedy. Halifax was a smaller urban centre with limited suburban growth: demand on the city's transportation arteries simply did not compare to that in Toronto and Montréal. To some officials striving to make their city modern, Halifax was facing the same access and mobility challenges as larger cities on a smaller scale, and so the solution was to apply the most

current and popular transportation planning schemes. For planning officials a scaled down version of the expressway networks proposed for other Canadian centres would help ensure that Halifax kept pace with national development trends and possibly allow it to recover its status as a major Canadian city. In the minds of detractors, however, an expressway seemed like a strangely large solution to a relatively small problem.

Conclusion

In the years immediately following WWII, city planners and politicians aware of aging facilities and hopeful for growth commissioned master plans for their cities. The centerpiece of each plan was city-wide transportation infrastructure, with inner city expressways ensuring connectivity within, and to, the city. These plans typically downplayed the value of public transit, or at most, regarded it as a supplementary option to complement the essential lifelines, the expressways. From the late 1940s through to the early and even mid 1960s in some cities, planners' and politicians' schemes for autocentric design and development went largely unchallenged, or even unnoticed. Planners who had guided postwar cities' growth with little input from urban residents seemed poised to oversee a landmark transformation of urban form and function.

In the 1960s, growing concerns about the development patterns and future vitality of cities interrupted that trajectory. Citizen activists mobilized to advocate reform in the face of seemingly impenetrable and unassailable municipal governments and bureaucracies. Protesters rallied against autocratic urban renewal schemes, planning and design, pollution, and the destruction of urban green spaces. In response to the widespread opposition, renewal schemes were reoriented towards preservation and restoration instead of demolition. The victories that activists accumulated in battles over inner city expressways and other projects like housing developments galvanized and emboldened the movement, while defeats fuelled their resolve to make municipal governments more representative of and responsive to their constituents.

Unsatisfied with casting a vote only once every few years, they wanted greater involvement and

influence in the political process that shaped their cities and a political culture and structure that would welcome and facilitate that level of citizen involvement.

While protesters were genuinely concerned with the potential proliferation of expressways in their cities, these battles were about more than singular transportation arteries. Expressway disputes were an instrumental part of a wider struggle to define urban modernity, a struggle that challenged the basis of politicians and civil servants power by questioning their legitimacy as elected leaders and uniquely qualified experts, respectively. Ideas about what the modern city would look like, how it would operate, and who should have the power to make those determinations varied within each group, but all who were involved recognized the expressway disputes as a potentially definitive flash point in Canadian urban history.

The subsequent emergence of reform groups that sought to change the direction of city development by challenging the autocratic municipal bureaucracies was the direct legacy of expressway and other development battles. Reformers who learned their first lessons in municipal politics in the streets graduated into more official channels, claiming influential positions in administrations as councillors and even mayors in the late 1960s and 1970s. While many expressway schemes were abandoned, however, autocentric planning continued. In addition, despite repeated calls for reforms to accommodate greater citizen participation in municipal politics and urban planning and some experiments with different governing structures, the form and function of municipal governments did not change significantly.

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There were many factors that contributed to the turn against expressways in the late 1960s. While the change in public mood seemed sudden to many, it was the product of a

generational shift in both attitudes and values. For one generation, the automobile remained a liberating technological innovation, the advent and popularization of which occurred within their lifetime. It represented an unprecedented level of personal freedom and mobility. For the next generation, the automobile was in many ways little more than a household appliance, not a previously unimaginable advance but a commonplace convenience, a standard feature of daily life. Many members of this younger generation were unhappy with transportation systems that catered increasingly to the automobile, often to the detriment of public transit and non-motorized alternatives, and argued that autocentric city planning hurt the city in other ways as well.

This generational divide was also evident in the changing role of experts. Professionals like planners, engineers and architects who had enjoyed an exclusive status as the gatekeepers of scientific truth were increasingly challenged by citizen activists. Where older generations generally accepted experts' edicts, increasingly the younger generations did not. They rejected the notion that only a small group had special access to the solutions to urban problems. In many cases, the experts were not only questioned but became the subjects of ridicule, scorn and suspicion. The dethroning of the urban experts shaped the debates by allowing citizens on both sides to offer their own analyses and solutions.

Ironically, many of the protestors who took the lead in this respect were experts in their own fields, highly trained academics and professionals. They resolved this obvious contradiction by claiming to be disciples of the new thinking of the era, creating a divide among planners that mirrored the growing divisions among other expert consultants and even politicians. While some of the older generation maintained autocentric planning was the way forward, others adopted protestors' skepticism about accommodating cars regardless of the consequences. At a time

when “people power” dominated and even controlled public debates, specialists shunned their expert statuses in favour of the more noble -- and influential -- calling of being a voice for the people. They would alternate between exerting their expert statuses when speaking to the people or institutions who respected expertise and denigrating others with that same status in an effort to claim legitimacy as leaders of the people. In a movement that sought more accessible, responsive and interactive city governance, there was no room for the exclusivity that preserved the status of experts as unchallenged guides for elected politicians.

There were further internal divisions among civil servants, hired consultants and politicians. Civil servants and hired consultants had little in common with elected officials, and the two groups frequently butted heads. Politicians were often accused by both electors and civil servants of railroading and being uncommunicative with the general public, suggesting a significant lack of respect and regard for their constituents. They were also charged with handicapping consultants by giving them very limited study terms in order to ensure the recommendations would support existing policy. At the same time politicians were accused of being out of touch with the “real world,” a charge that suggests ignorance rather than malice. Experts were also accused of being out of touch, and were the subjects of public distrust and suspicion. Often politicians were seen as victims of over zealous experts who were supposed to follow, not create, policy. Hired consultants were especially suspect, regarded as outsiders who lacked familiarity with and appreciation for the local community. The expressway controversies brought these latent tensions in civic government to the surface.

Locally, intergovernmental relations were complicated by the persistent tension between metropolitan and city authorities. City officials often viewed metro’s efforts at regional planning

as hostile to the autonomy and well being of the old city centre. They resented metro officials' power over their area and were frustrated by the amalgamated system under which regional priorities were imposed on the urban core. The perpetual squabbling between local administrations also hindered communication with their provincial counterparts. Where provincial authorities were open to expressway proposals, city and metro officials' inability to reach a consensus sunk the plans.

In addition to vocal citizen activists and divided officials, questions about the financial cost of expressways complicated the proceedings. Detractors urged that any decisions about funding had to be made in light of concerns over the social and environmental cost of the roads. The financial toll, they insisted, was only part of the real cost. The financial considerations inherent in moving roads plans forward was further complicated by significant variations in funding formulas from province to province. In some areas, provincial funding was denied completely, while in others, provincial authorities were prepared to be generous. The contrast between the availability of financing for the six subject cities demonstrates how different local authorities had different expectations of provincial and federal support, and relatedly, how these relative expectations affected the fate of expressway plans in each city. The variations between available funding also underscores the central importance of tallying not just the financial, but also the social and environmental costs of the schemes. The comparisons demonstrate that decisions about funding -- whether made when expressway plans were first introduced or at the height of the controversies -- were inextricably linked to concerns about social, environmental and political costs as well as the city planning priorities established in light of those considerations.

Province	Highway Funding Policy
Ontario	The provincial and metropolitan governments would each pay for 50% of the Spadina Expressway. Although metro was granted approval to secure the final loan needed to complete the route by the Ontario Municipal Board, expressway opponents appealed the decision to the provincial cabinet, where it was overturned, effectively cancelling the expressway. Result: the Spadina Expressway was partially constructed, ending at Eglinton Avenue.
British Columbia	The province refused to fund inner city expressways, arguing the routes would not solve Vancouver's transportation problems and that highways should not run through cities. The premier subsequently told city officials that the province would pay for 1/3 of a waterfront freeway if an equal federation contribution could be secured. The offer was made immediately after federal authorities refused to fund the waterfront route through CMHC or approve a Trans-Canada designation. Provincial authorities later opened the possibility of making an undefined contribution strictly to the third crossing project (not any attached freeways, including the waterfront route) if the federal government agreed to an unspecified funding commitment, but later withdrew the offer after federal authorities shelved the crossing project. Result: neither freeways nor the third crossing were built in Vancouver, but the existing Georgia Viaduct was replaced.
Alberta	The province typically covered 50% of the cost of highways with a bypass function. The city pushed for full provincial funding for the expressway network of the Metropolitan Edmonton Transportation Study, pledging to cover the full cost of secondary roads in exchange. The province later revised the contribution to 75% of the cost of METS expressways but the city remained unsatisfied with anything short of full funding. Result: none of the METS expressways were constructed.
Manitoba	The province refused to fund the Winnipeg Area Transportation Study expressways, arguing neither the need for the routes nor the utility of expressways had been proven. Result: none of the WATS expressways were constructed.
Québec	The funding breakdown for the east-west route included a river crossing and a north-south route, all calculated together. The city paid approximately 23% (to a maximum of \$40,000,000), the federal government paid approximately 20% (\$30,000,000) and the province paid the remainder (approximately \$100,000,000), all on the approval of the National Harbours Board. The 1976 provincial election of the Parti Québécois brought the cancellation of the east-west route. Result: the east-west was not fully constructed, and is downgraded to an arterial route prior to the Jacques-Cartier Bridge.

Province	Highway Funding Policy
Nova Scotia	City officials expected Harbour Drive would be principally or fully paid for through the federal Department of Regional Economic Expansion, but were disappointed when federal authorities refused to fund the road, citing sewers, schools and housing as priorities for the region. With the refusal of federal funding, the province also declined to make a contribution. Result: Harbour Drive was not built, but the Cogswell Interchange which was designed as a distributor to connect the existing Angus L. MacDonald Bridge and Harbour Drive was installed.

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Expressway opponents' vision of the ideal city was different from that which many pro-expressway officials, business interests and suburban communities championed. Protestors were not against the transformation of the city into a modern and progressive metropolis, rather they insisted modernity and progress should not be unilaterally defined. Protestors saw the ideal city as one in which people came before cars. They established a false dichotomy whereby cars were portrayed as tyrannical machines. In this equation, the human operator was absent. Instead, in autocentric cities people merely struggled to survive the oppression. A variation on this theme acknowledged the human operators behind the wheel but depicted motorists as passive actors or even victims whose dependence on automobiles was created and perpetuated by unscrupulous pro-auto forces. In this case, motorists were chained to their automobiles because it was required by the urban landscape. Protestors argued that as soon as other modes of transportation -- mainly extensive, efficient public transit -- were made available, people would abandon the expensive and high maintenance private car in large numbers. Freeways, they maintained, were not progressive. The ideal city was pedestrian friendly and boasted full transit networks, protected green spaces, and reduced pollution.

Although expressways were not defeated solely by being swept up in the citizen activism of the era, that reality does not negate the significance of the protests. The opposition opened the process to discussion and debate. While a number of officials and politicians had expressed doubts about expressways when the plans were initially introduced, it was the public opposition that prompted those with reservations and others without to carefully reconsider the plans. The presence of early objectors fostered and fed doubts. They raised the public profile of the issue, shaping the controversies, and dictating the terms of reference for the conversation.

Middle class professionals were central to protest groups as they mobilized against advocates who wanted inner city expressways to accommodate and encourage what they regarded as inevitable and desirable growth. Protestors were fuelled by broadly based environmental concerns which dovetailed with their efforts to engage actively with their local governments in city planning. They rallied against what they saw as non-responsive politicians, the undue influence of corporations and developers in city planning, and civic officials who were increasingly playing the role of active political agents instead of dispassionate civil servants. Importantly, activists also recognized the need to move beyond grassroots action to working within established legal and government channels to fight expressways.

In city after city many of the leading activists were academics. Highly trained professionals such as engineers, architects and sociologists also joined the fight against expressways. Organization was key to the protestors' success, as they formed well staffed and coordinated groups, and networked with activists across the country. The leaders understood that they had to work carefully and plan strategically, garnering enough attention and support to bolster their cause, but not alienating potentially powerful allies in official ranks. Not everyone

agreed on the strategy of striking a balance: some pushed for aggressive tactics while others advocated a more diplomatic approach. Whatever their method, these groups were focused on clear goals. Critics who argued that protestors opposed expressways for sport, to be mere contrarians, were wrong. The potential social and environmental impact of inner urban expressways brought together activists who were interested in improving housing, revitalizing heritage properties and preserving parks. In this respect, anti-expressway activism provided a common focal point that united activists, thereby facilitating the development of a broader reform vision for Canadian cities.

Anti-expressway protestors, indeed objectors involved in many urban development disputes in this era, were often accused of simply defending their own interests, tagged with the “not in my backyard” or NIMBY label. This label was never used as a compliment but rather as a way to question objectors’ motives. The implication was that expressway and other development opponents did not object to the projects on principle, but simply because they would negatively impact their home territory, their neighbourhood, their community. What is peculiar about the NIMBY accusation is that it scolds people for being concerned with developments that may affect their home region; the reality is that it makes perfect sense for citizens to become engaged with issues that they feel affect them. If the argument is to simply move the objectionable project to another community or neighbourhood, then criticism of that position is reasonable. But to suggest protestors only opposed expressways because they threatened their immediate surroundings is both unfair and inaccurate.

The exception was in Montréal, where construction on the opposed expressway continued throughout the debates before later being cancelled. In this case, the actual construction of part

of the disputed route affected the nature of the debates. The early issues were much the same as in other cities, with concerns about heritage blocks, waterfront vistas, urban quality of life and community preservation. As expropriations were conducted and construction began, debates in some communities devolved into the kind of self-interested and narrow-minded arguments traditionally associated with the NIMBY attitude. Some opponents' concerns exemplified this attitude as their concerns were limited to how the expressway would affect their neighbourhood and arguments devolved into wrangling over whose back yard would be lost to the road.

Some expressway protestors in other cities were undoubtedly initially drawn into the debates because of the threat the roads posed to their own neighbourhoods, and in some cases, their literal back yards. But the other way in which the NIMBY sentiment might accurately be applied to expressway protests requires a much broader conception of the phrase. For many urban dwellers, the whole city is their backyard. Often city residents have no back yards, or very small ones. As a result, the parks, recreation centres, social hotspots, shopping districts and other shared leisure spaces of the city form a communal backyard of sorts. For urban residents, the city is an extension of their home, and as such, they regard the growth and development of the city at large as impacting their quality of life for better or for worse. They have a direct interest in the health and welfare of their cities. Only if the conception of NIMBY is broadened to accommodate this reality of city living can the label accurately describe most anti-expressway protestors. With this revised meaning, it loses its negative connotations and becomes an accurate descriptor of an engaged citizenry.

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The spirit of protest and dissent that permeated this era was clearly evident in expressway debates. Expressway advocates were depicted by their opponents as ruthless capitalists and conspiratorial developers who demonstrated a blatant disregard for cities' heritage, working class communities and green spaces. Expressway opponents were also demonized in similarly dramatic terms. As far as roads advocates were concerned, protestors were all variations of leftist caricatures, depicted as hippies, ivory-tower academics or even communists. Regardless of their particular categorization, expressway opponents were united by their apparent propensity to automatically object to all plans while never offering alternative solutions. The irony was that these seemingly very different characterizations of pro and anti-expressway forces resulted in identical condemnations. Both sides argued their opponents were completely out of touch with the "real world." Academic protest leaders and pro-expressway experts were accused of being cloistered, divorced from the realities and challenges of urban living. Both were accused of operating according to their own agendas, of attempting to impose their collective will on the city. These criticisms culminated in the most damning charge of all, that both expressway supporters and opponents were undemocratic. On one side, supporters were charged with ignoring the opposition while on the other, protestors were accused of obscuring and attempting to override the silent majority who supported expressways.

Other rhetorical devices employed frequently during the expressway debates regarded the city at large. Competing visions of modernity, and by extension progress, drove the debates. Pro-expressway forces envisioned a sleek, streamlined and uncluttered urban environment. No congestion, no jostling for position on the roads or sidewalks. A calm, controlled and orderly city where efficient transportation systems provided the necessary support to the residents and

visitors who propelled the economy. Anti-expressway forces dreamed of a different kind of city, one they regarded as a more humane environment. Calling on the familiar people versus cars dichotomy, people would be prioritized above all else. This vision of a livable city included residential, commercial and recreational spaces co-existing. This urban centre was a bustling destination that derived its vitality from the people who lived, played and worked there.

Egalitarian mass transit systems were the preferred mode of transportation, heritage blocks were restored instead of demolished, and development was carefully controlled to protect and nurture existing communities.

Another way both sides used rhetoric to further their arguments was to depict the city as a living entity. The point of departure for this imagery was that the city was ailing, a play on the widespread concern that cities in many developed countries in the 1960s were in crisis. For expressway proponents, the cure for the ailing city was expressways as an integral component of renewal schemes. Roads were the lifeblood of cities, ensuring healthy circulation of people and goods. In this scenario, the patient would be brought back to health by unclogging the arteries that were essential to the city's vitality. The living city imagery also worked for expressway opponents, but in a different way. All embraced the notion of the living city, although some rejected the diagnosis of ill health, arguing the dire report was a fabrication manufactured by pro-auto interests. Those who accepted the premise of the ailing patient argued the remedy was improved public transit, not expressways. In either case, whether or not protestors accepted that the city was ailing, they described the damage expressways would inflict in bodily terms. The roads were knives or even daggers, they would carve up the city, disemboweling it or spearing its

heart. In this conception, expressways were instruments of torture or a fatal condition that would result in a slow and painful death.

One way to address reservations about expressways was to experiment with the language used to describe the routes. For their part, expressway planners and proponents in some cities sometimes favoured freeway or even parkway -- however inaccurate and inappropriate the latter was -- over expressway. In reality, expressways and freeways shared the same essential features as high-speed, limited access routes. Where expressway was the most common label employed in Canada, freeway was the standard terminology in the United States. Roads advocates in Canada may have used the freeway label to encourage undecided Canadians to associate the plans with modern American metropolises, but as the debates wore on the desirability of those American examples was less certain. The other attraction to the use of freeway over expressway may have been one of two very literal interpretations, that the word was consistent with the notion of automobiles as the key to untold freedom, or that the routes were literally toll-free. While the expressway and freeway labels were often treated as interchangeable, parkway was very seldom used, likely because none of the planned routes -- whether traversing green spaces or not -- could be described by even the most creative minds as lower speed scenic routes ideal for pleasure cruises.

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This exploration of expressway controversies in six cities across Canada reveals a clear pattern. The narrative arc may be reduced to the most basic components -- plans were introduced, officials debated, protestors objected, and plans were defeated. The closer examination reveals the importance of the components of the controversies that are lost in this

bare-bones sketch. While remaining emblematic of the times, expressway debates revealed the importance of factors that are often downplayed or overlooked entirely in accounts of urban development battles of the era. In popular histories and public memory, the reasons behind the abandonment or cancellation of projects like expressways has often been oversimplified.

In an era marked by high levels of citizen engagement and public protests, evolving ideals and new values were articulated largely through grassroots activism. This dramatic explosion of “people power” in the late 1960s and early 1970s has dominated many accounts and overshadowed some of the other factors at play. The scale and scope of the public debates over expressways was due in large part to the energy and persistence of citizen activists, but the actual defeat of the plans -- whether through perpetual postponement, abandonment or cancellation -- was due to a more complex combination of factors. Officials’ early concerns about the cost of expressways and doubts about whether the roads were the right solution to inner urban transportation challenges left an opening for more ardent opponents to develop their critiques and mobilize supporters.

In this way, concerns about the non-financial costs of expressways came to dominate the debates, and inform government decisions about funding. Many officials seemed genuinely moved by the social and environmental tolls expressways would take while others were undoubtedly more interested in the potential political cost to themselves and their administrations. Indeed, the mounting unpopularity of expressways added yet another dimension to the high cost of the roads, and the potential political toll was in many ways more immediate, more personal, and perhaps even more important to elected officials than the social, environmental and financial impact. In this way, the widespread protests raised the stakes of the

expressway debates and amplified what were in many cities long-standing concerns about social and environmental impacts. This in turn made the call to accept or reject the roads at the height of the debates a different decision than when the routes were originally proposed.

At the time expressways were being planned, creating a modern city was considered an absolute necessity. Cities were in a fight -- real, exaggerated or imagined -- for survival in the face of rapidly expanding suburban centres. In addition, shifting national growth trends were challenging the old hierarchy of Canadian cities, granting increased status to some while diminishing the influence of others. Instead of the old order of Montréal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver, Edmonton and Halifax, a new ranking was emerging: Toronto, Montréal, Vancouver, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Halifax. If these pressures were not enough, many were also concerned with how Canadian cities measured up to urban centres internationally. Where planners identified an opportunity to shape cities' development for years to come, they looked largely to American cities to support their autocentric vision. Progress was something officials sought to nurture, yet it was also something that was ultimately inevitable. Progress would occur, with or without cities on board. As a result, officials focused on ensuring their cities would not be left behind.

These tensions gave rise to a narrative shaped both by similarities and differences. Expressway controversies were marked by regional distinctions that generally reinforced the existing and enduring image of each city. Toronto took the lead, even when it was not the chronological leader. Pro and anti-expressway forces across the country repeatedly called on the Toronto example as a guide. Protestors sought inspiration and encouragement from the city's activists, and the road cancellation was widely regarded as a reliable predictor of the fate of plans

in other centres. In Vancouver left-wing political activism sustained two distinct rounds of debates. There, both opponents and supporters made their arguments with special awareness of the city's prized scenery and natural setting. The similarities between Edmonton's story and the others were perhaps most notable for once again demonstrating the strength of liberalism and progressive thought in a province defined more than any other in the country by conservatism. In Winnipeg the context of the debates spoke to both the regional and national experience. There, the preoccupation with the city's declining status as a regional economic centre shaped arguments both for and against expressways. In the same way, Montréal's controversy was influenced by pre-existing issues. Growing tensions between Francophones and Anglophones lent a nationally unique element to the widespread concerns over the future of Canada's cities. All of this unfolded amid the added pressure of city officials' push to make Montréal a world class city. Finally, Halifax's debates were also shaped by challenges that perpetually plagued the city. Where officials sought to restore some of its wartime strength and influence through city building projects, protestors favoured embracing its maritime character and protecting the city's disadvantaged neighbourhoods, a local interpretation of developing urban reform values.

To return to the questions posed in the introduction about national history, what does this study reveal about the feasibility, rewards and limits of large scale national history projects? Is it possible to write truly national history, and is it possible to discuss national trends? This study shows that it is indeed possible to write truly national history and to discuss national trends. The way in which expressway disputes in all six cities were local variations on a national pattern has been established. This clearly demonstrates that regional peculiarities were important in shaping the story in each city, but were not so pronounced as to prevent a discussion of national trends,

and in particular, the common tensions that shaped urban development in the postwar era. Considering the diversity and size of the country, this consistency is remarkable. This study demonstrates the value of large scale national history projects in a country where there is perpetual anxiety over the existence or lack of a national history and identity, as it suggests that the national experience may best be described as being at once the same and different.

This study also raises the question of whether there is anything unique in the national experience of expressway disputes in Canada. Debates in Canadian cities help situate the country within a broader transnational community of countries like the United States, England, Australia and New Zealand that were experiencing the same tumult at the same time. This begs the question, what, if anything, was unique about the national experience within Canada? This study reveals that pro and anti-expressway forces in Canadian cities were looking to different examples for very different reasons. The extensive freeway networks in many American cities initially seemed aspirational to expressway supporters. As the tide turned, these examples -- Los Angeles in particular -- quickly became cautionary tales both for opponents who argued against expressways and for supporters who maintained Canadian networks would not be like the American systems.

More important than any American examples, however, was one domestic case: Toronto. In city after city across Canada, those on both sides of the debates looked to Toronto for encouragement as well as the best indication of whether expressways would be built. In Vancouver both sides consulted with Toronto figures on how best to make their case, and protestors upheld Ontario's expressway cancellation as a model to emulate. In Edmonton and Winnipeg protestors admired Toronto activists for their role in stopping the expressway. Also in

Winnipeg, city planners and officials studied the Spadina defeat in an effort to better understand the turn against inner city expressways. Like other activists, those in Montréal consulted with Toronto protestors and celebrated the defeat of the Ontario road. Finally in Halifax, skeptics questioned the appropriateness of an inner city expressway by comparing it to the size of the planned Toronto route. In all cases and for both sides, Toronto was the model -- for better or for worse -- to which all others were compared. In these respects, expressway disputes reveal how established national dynamics were evident in even the most raucous urban battles, and how large scale national history projects can illuminate these patterns while also offering new and unexpected insights about the forces shaping urban development.

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