


9-5-1931

Plan of downtown association

Down Town Merchants Association

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The Plan of the Portland Down Town Association



FOREWORD

This report has been made by an appointed committee of the Down Town Merchants Association, and has been approved by members of the City Planning Commission, City and County Officials, Suburban Community Clubs, Property Owners and Traffic Officials. After an exhaustive study, this report embraces as a whole, the sentiment and approval of those mentioned.

COMMITTEE, G. M. Vinton, Kenneth Beebe, J. H. Luibin
J. R. Haight, Chairman

NO.	117996	SUBJECT	Front St. etal
DATE	SEP - 5 1931	DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS	
FOR YOUR		FILE	777
		DATE	9/10 SEP 16 1931
		DATE	9/12/31

THE proposed plan and purpose of this association is limited not only to one part or section of this city, but by the improvement of one section of the city, it will thereby benefit the whole. It is with this purpose in view, that we work with no selfish motive to ourselves. We desire to enlist the friendly support of any, or all, similar organizations in our city who may assist us in our undertakings, while we, in turn will work with our friends to make Portland a bigger and better city in which to live.

THE FRONT STREET PROJECT

To insure a direct and convenient route through the city from North to South, it is evident that our plan should start with the proposed widening of Front Street.

To make way for development it has been proposed by the Portland Waterfront Citizens, in accord with our City Engineer, to widen Front Street to a width of 100 feet.

The Citizen's Committee, which is composed of the representatives of 25 organizations, has in its custody a petition signed by 50 of the owners of property along both sides of Front Street, between Jefferson and Glisan, asking for this widening to be made.

City Engineer Laurgaard, in a report to the City Council has estimated the cost of acquiring the land between Front Street and the Willamette River from Jefferson to Glisan Street and a supplementary plan of arranging for the freight traffic is to be developed.

The beginning of this thoroughfare will approach the city from Hood Street, veer left to Water Street—thence

along to Montgomery Street. At Montgomery Street it will again veer to the left and onto Front Street. Continuing North at Davis—the street will divide—the left branch will become the approach or ramp to the Steel Bridge; the Front Street proper will continue on North and act as a subway under the present west approach of the Steel Bridge.

With the opening up of Front Street, according to the proposed widening, it will feed the incoming commercial, tourist and shopping traffic into Front Street. From the South it will become the only direct route through the city—through which thousands of vehicles, commercial and pleasure—will pass through the city, or which may feed into the other streets or arteries into the shopping districts of our metropolis.

It is suggested, by our City Engineer, that inasmuch as the widening of Front Street is of such vital importance as a commercial artery through the city that the project to be paid for and bonded by the city.

With the widening of Front Street we then travel North and veer to the left at Davis Street between Front and First Street to approach

THE STEEL BRIDGE RAMP

which approaches the present West approach of the Steel Bridge from the South. This ramp is to be of easy grade and wide enough so as to accommodate both North and South traffic onto the ramp and over the Steel Bridge to the East approach.

Many good reasons are given for the new ramp.

The new Burnside Bridge has been built wide and modern so that it is used by 36,000 cars every 16 hours.

The Broadway bridge has been improved and is now used by 40,000 cars every 16 hours.

The Railroad or Steel Bridge, as it is called, has not been modernized and the cars using it has decreased from around 25,000 to 9,000 per day.

The city is paying a rental to the Southern Pacific Railway Company of about \$70,000.00 per year, which means we are paying about 3½¢ for every car passing over the Steel Bridge.

The lease which the Railroad Company has with the city is renewed annually, which may continue until 1955. The amount of rental paid is based upon the valuation of the upperdeck at \$1,000,000.00 and is figured on a 4½¢ interest rental on that investment. The general maintenance of the bridge is, of course, taken into consideration based upon this rental.

It is also understood that Multnomah County pays the city 3¢ for each street car passing over the Steel Bridge. The rental thus involved goes to prove that the Steel Bridge is at present a very expensive proposition for the city.

The reduced traffic over the Steel Bridge is caused—
FIRST: The West approach is both difficult and dangerous to get on or off.

SECOND: The present ramp is 6% grade, slippery surface and a bad curve without proper gradient.

THIRD: The extremely heavy traffic on Broadway and Burnside Streets bottle it up. It is easier to join the stream pouring onto the Broadway or Burnside Bridge than to break through to use the Steel Bridge.

It would seem then that the forcing of more traffic over the Steel Bridge would relieve the load of the Broadway and Burnside Bridges and thereby decrease the upkeep of the two bridges and at the same time increase the load of the Steel Bridge. The new ramp will do it.

However, to force traffic across Burnside or Broadway Streets in front of the respective bridges, onto the Steel Bridge would not be of material benefit. A gain in that way would be lost by reducing the capacity of the Burnside and Broadway bridges as bridges will carry more cars than streets, as they are without crossings.

Engineers recognize that where moving bodies come together at right angles one or the other must stop. The solution of traffic problems in many cases will be by grade separation. Having built Burnside bridge high with a long approach we now have grade separation at Front, First and Burnside, and it is possible, in fact desirable, that advantage be taken of it through the use of the Steel Bridge, as shown by the chart.

Building a Ramp onto the Steel Bridge landing between Front and First Streets, using this grade separation, having a grade of less than 5%, with easy curve and concrete deck will be beneficial in many ways.

FIRST: Cars starting from the East side of the river between Vancouver Ave. on the West and Broadway on the South, wishing to go to the west side from Hoyt street on the north to Broadway on the west, could cross the Steel Bridge, and those going south of Burnside would go south

on First Street under Burnside traffic, with less traffic congestion than any other way. It would also be the best route from these points on the west side to the same points on the east side.

SECOND: Traffic diverted from Burnside Street from Third to Broadway, under Burnside Bridge to Front or First Streets will reduce cross traffic and greatly increase the capacity of the Burnside Bridge.

THIRD: Traffic diverted from the Broadway or Burnside Bridge to the Steel Bridge would leave an added relative capacity for that traffic which from necessity must use them.

FOURTH: The district between Hoyt and Burnside Streets west to Broadway is close to the Ocean Terminal, freight and passenger depots and this easy ramp attached to the Steel Bridge which lands in the middle of the east side would make it a very desirable location for light manufactures, or wholesale houses.

FIFTH: Front Street will ultimately be widened to 100 feet and extended to the city limits in both directions, and a ramp just off this street connection to a bridge with the east approach landing in the middle of the east side with arterial highways, leading in all directions, will be of great value for passenger, freight or buss traffic, originating or going to any point on the street or out of the city.

SIXTH: It will connect with Lloyd Boulevard via Oregon Street, thence to Broadway and Sandy Boulevard.

SEVENTH: Building Burnside Ramp west to Third Street diverted traffic out of the district from Third to Front Streets, and greatly reduced the utility of the property which has been reflected in the selling value, and will of necessity be followed by a reduced assessed value and taxes collected from the district. By the use of the grade separation on Front and First Streets an amount of traffic probably approximating that using the old Burnside Bridge will be routed through the district which will stimulate building modern building there maintaining if not increasing the old assessed values. This will produce more than enough revenue to pay for the ramp.

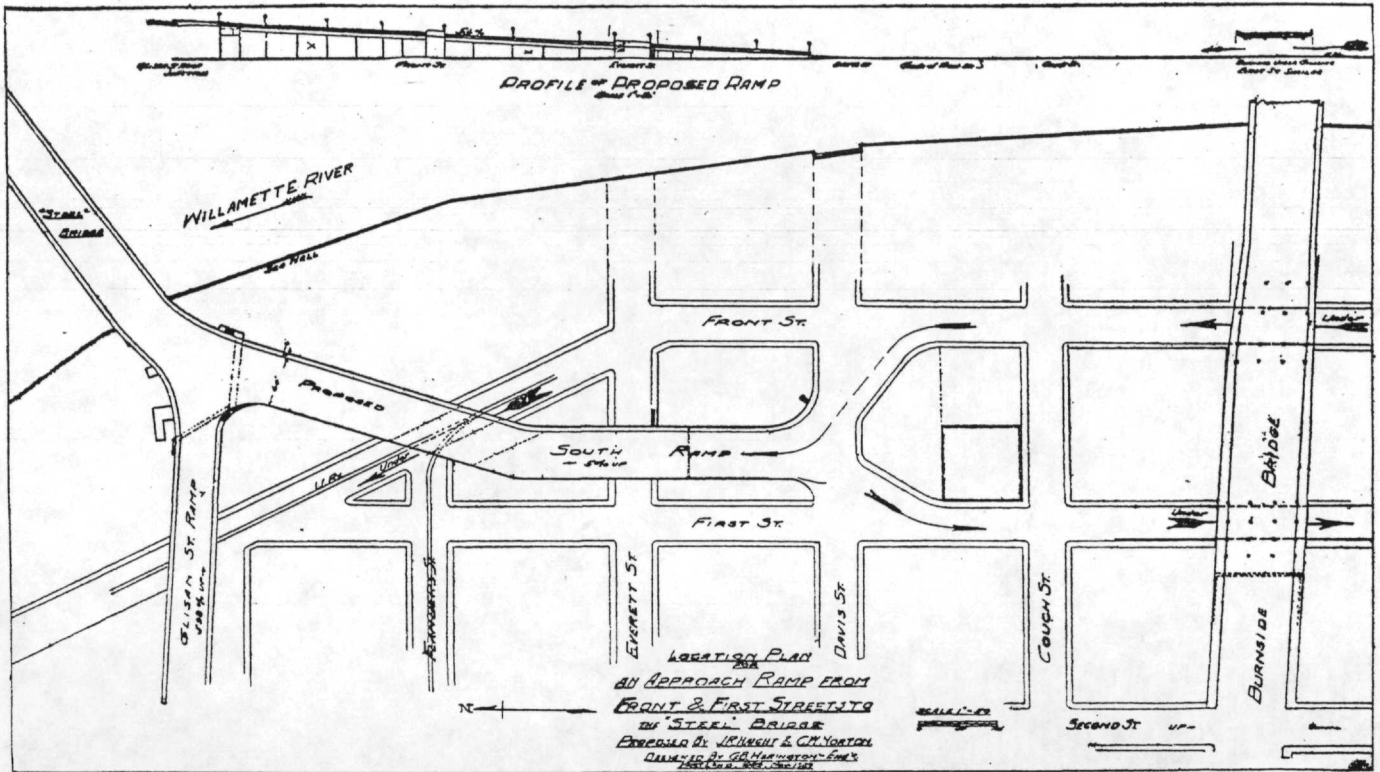
EIGHTH: We are paying a substantial sum for the use of the deck of the Steel Bridge which is not carrying anywhere near its capacity, and while it is now worth the money we are paying, yet the expenditure of around 33% more to increase its use from 200% to 300% would seem to be a very intelligent investment, especially as the traffic will be taken from bridges which are close to capacity, and unless relieved, other bridges will shortly have to be built to relieve them.

NINTH: Plans for rebuilding the Morrison and Hawthorne bridges contemplate elevating the west side ramps, something similar to the Broadway bridge and a Steel Bridge Ramp as outlined will be of equal advantage to them.

TENTH: An auto-bus terminal could be located close to Front Street and busses could get into and out of the west side without interference with other traffic.

The cost of the proposed new Steel Bridge Ramp has been estimated to be about \$220,000.00 to \$260,000.00—depending on foundation conditions. It can best be financed by a bond issue by the city.

Map of Steel Bridge Ramp



THE LLOYD PROJECT

Passing over the new ramp and the Steel Bridge we come to Oregon Street which is a thoroughfare to and from the new Lloyd enterprise. We are advised by Mr. C. W. Norton, the manager of the Lloyd interests, that petition to widen the two blocks between Grand Ave. and E. 7th Street North is now in circulation and that without a doubt Oregon Street will be widened in this section to conform in width west to the Steel Bridge. It is the purpose of the Lloyd Interests to lighten Oregon Street—making it a well lighted thoroughfare. This will also result in the lightening of the Steel Bridge and Ramp for the entire distance.

At Oregon and Union Avenue, all traffic of cars will flow from Union Avenue to Oregon. It will complete an ideal artery through the city North and South. Union Avenue has all ready been widened to meet this occasion.

FIRST STREET AND ITS IMPROVEMENTS

Traffic organizations from East of the Steel Bridge and on Union Avenue and going South through the city will, of course, come south in coming off the west approach of the Steel Bridge and go over the new ramp and at the foot of the ramp will veer to the right into First Street. First Street will provide a means for traffic to filter through the down town section for the convenience of shopping and other purposes. Such development as may come later on First Street is yet to be determined.

THE PRESENT FOURTH STREET SITUATION

Since the Southern Pacific Railroad has deeded their right-of-way on Fourth Street to the city, it will make a splendid road or boulevard into the city from the south. This means that traffic arriving at Davis and Fourth Street may turn into First Street and proceed North over the ramp and onto the Steel Bridge.

Officials who have been consulted regarding the big plan are of the opinion that if the public is educated so they thoroughly understand the purpose of these improvements, that there will be no difficulty in having it definitely placed upon the next ballot. It is believed that the proposition will be accepted by the voters and approved by them without question.

REPORT OF CONSULTING ENGINEER

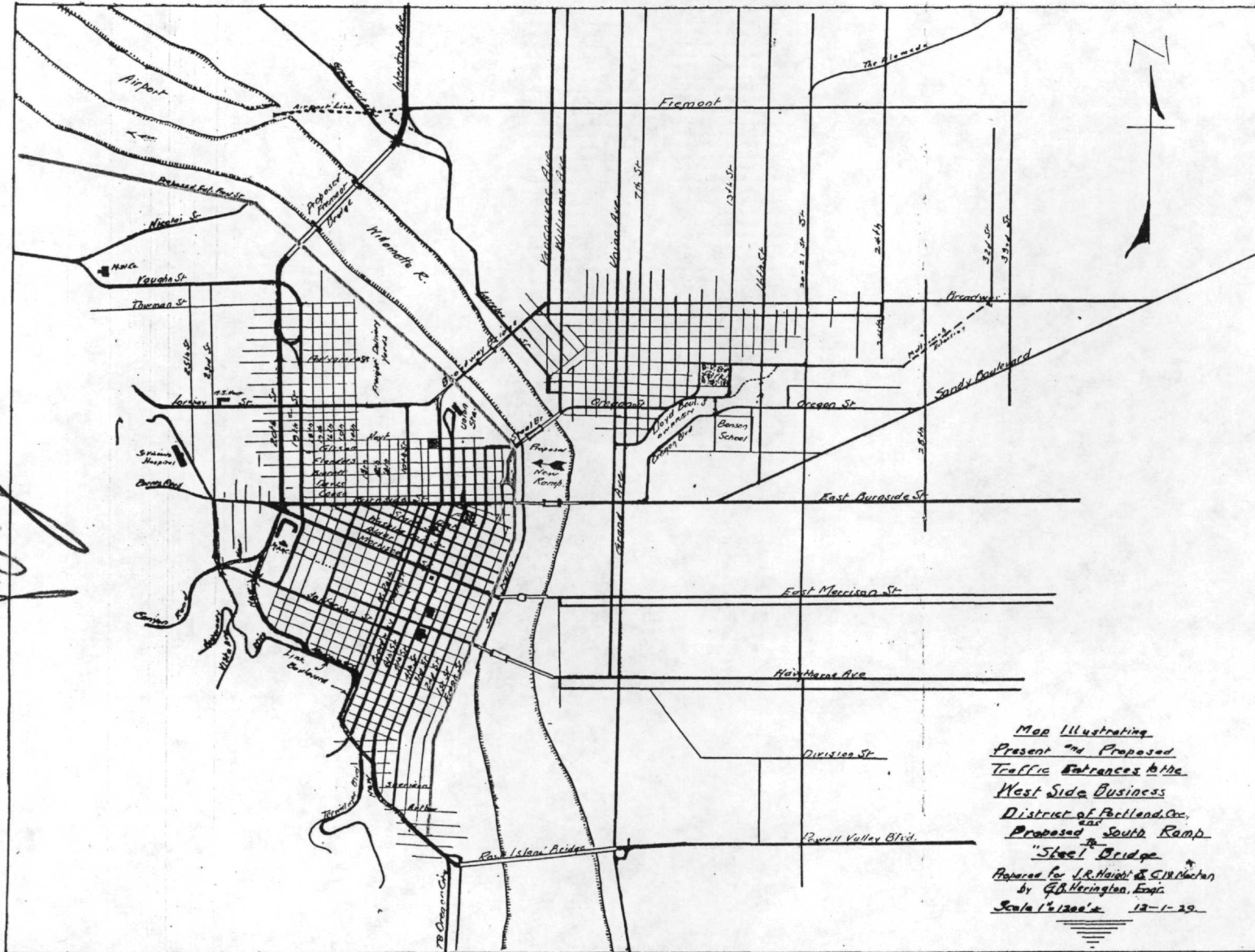
The Broadway Bridge carries the heaviest traffic load of any of the Portland bridges. The traffic stream on Broadway is very difficult for entrance or crossing during the morning and night peak hours. The least loaded bridge between the east and west side is the Steel or Railroad Bridge. This is one of the strongest of the Portland bridges and is normally tributary to a very considerable area on both sides of the river. It has an excellent approach on the east side. The west side approach, as now built, lands traffic under severe conditions of congestion. A side ramp similar to the Broadway-Lovejoy Ramp and on a lighter grade than the present approach to the Steel Bridge, will give a vastly increased use demand for this least used bridge.

A ramp which will connect with North and South traffic, discharging to Front and First Streets will relieve the peak of east side, west side travel through its accessibility and will add value for shortening distance as well as speeding travel which naturally would then be expected to utilize this more available structure.

The ramp is practical from an engineering standpoint and is not excessively expensive for the value to be obtained. As designed it is fitted into a widened Front Street either now or hereafter to which plans for same can be later adjusted readily.

G. B. HERINGTON, Engineer.

11750



Map illustrating
 Present and Proposed
 Traffic Entrances to the
 West Side Business
 District of Portland, Ore.
 Proposed South Ramp
 "Steel Bridge"
 Prepared for J.R. Heitl & C. H. Neuman
 by G.B. Herington, Engr.
 Scale 1"=1200' 12-1-29

Proposed Steel Bridge Ramp and Front Street Project