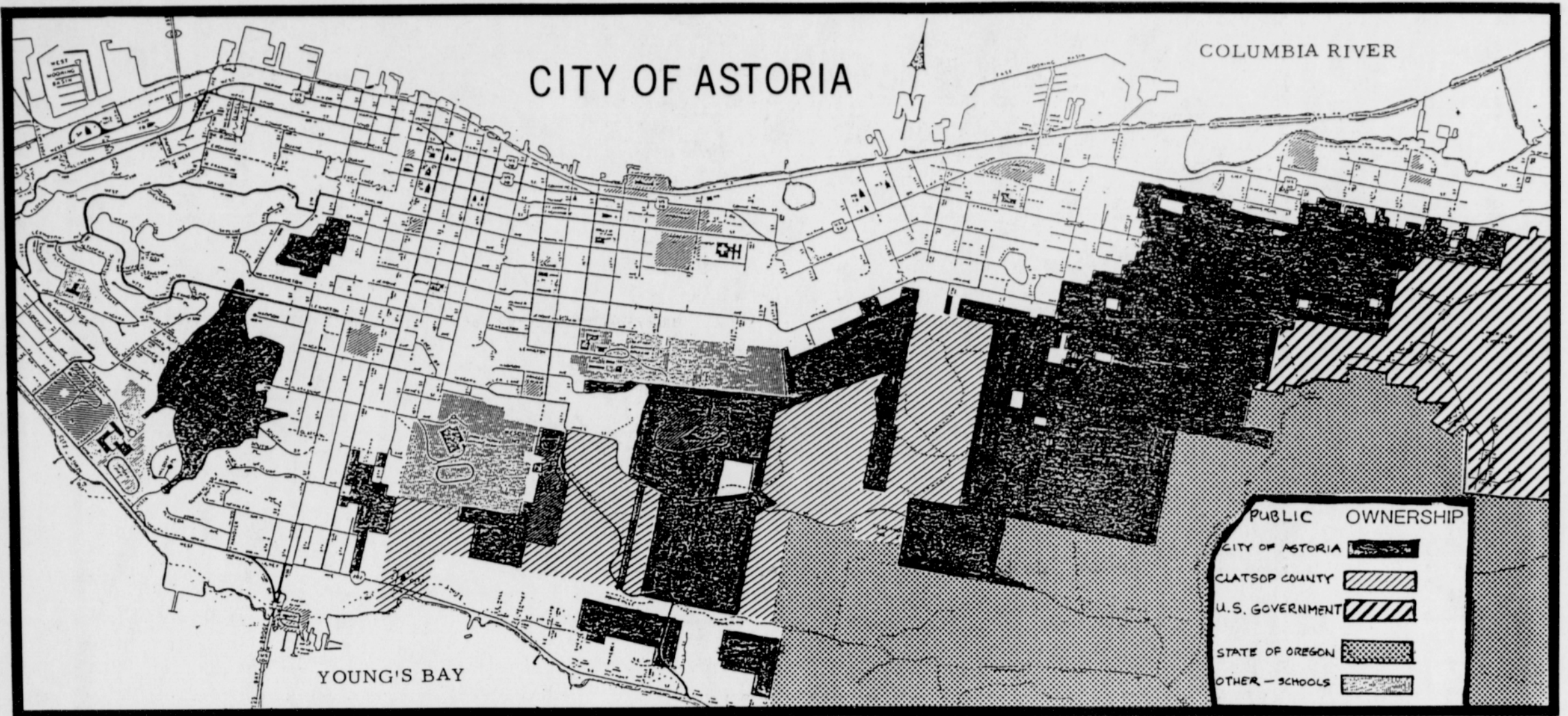




ASTORIA'S CITY FOREST

& TREES FOR ALL

In the long and arduous debate over the future of the forests of Astoria one item has repeatedly been made clear. The issue is much too important to be addressed by a handful of people. Witness the recent action taken by the city council to harvest the wind damaged eastern edge of the urban forest and do what is euphemistically termed "damage control" (Councilman Ellsberg the only nay vote). What started as the salvage of the windthrow has exploded into a major cut which will open an entirely new edge to the next series of blows. Personally, I see this scheme as nothing more than a weak excuse to circumvent due process and allow "management" before the citizens' voice is heard.

I have no problem with utilizing the downed trees and think it should be done in timely

manner. But the paranoid urgency which drives this call for harvest smacks of incongruity and deceit. At the same council meeting the individual who hammered at this urgent need to beat the deterioration of the fallen trees also asked why the harvest couldn't include the windthrow on adjacent tracts that is numerous years old. Inconsistency? How about the fact that during the discussion on cutting to channel and control the predominant winds it was stated that we need to do this because the damage will continue to grow, but with the winds of this winter the edges of older damage experienced virtually zero new blow-down? Seems to me that the existing edge with its weak trees now culled out provides the strongest defense against further damage. Instead, the decision was made to open a new

BY HOWARD BRUNER

stand to the ravages of the storms of the north coast.

This example of the limited understanding of the city council on the matter of our urban forest is just the beginning of mismanagement which will leave moonscapes and slides where cool glades now stand. This is your forest. You can let your elected representatives know how you feel about preserving and enhancing Astoria's groves.

I urge the council to put the matter to a public vote, to place the two plans that recommend courses of action before the voters, to settle this divisive and contentious issue before irreversible actions are taken.

