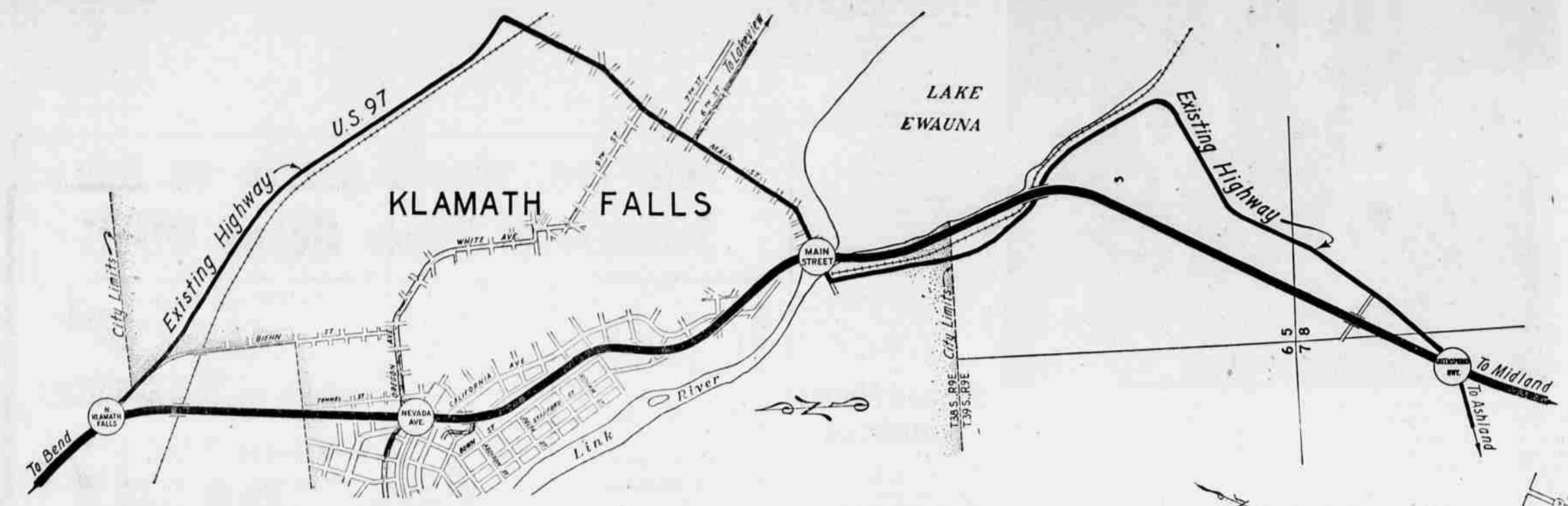
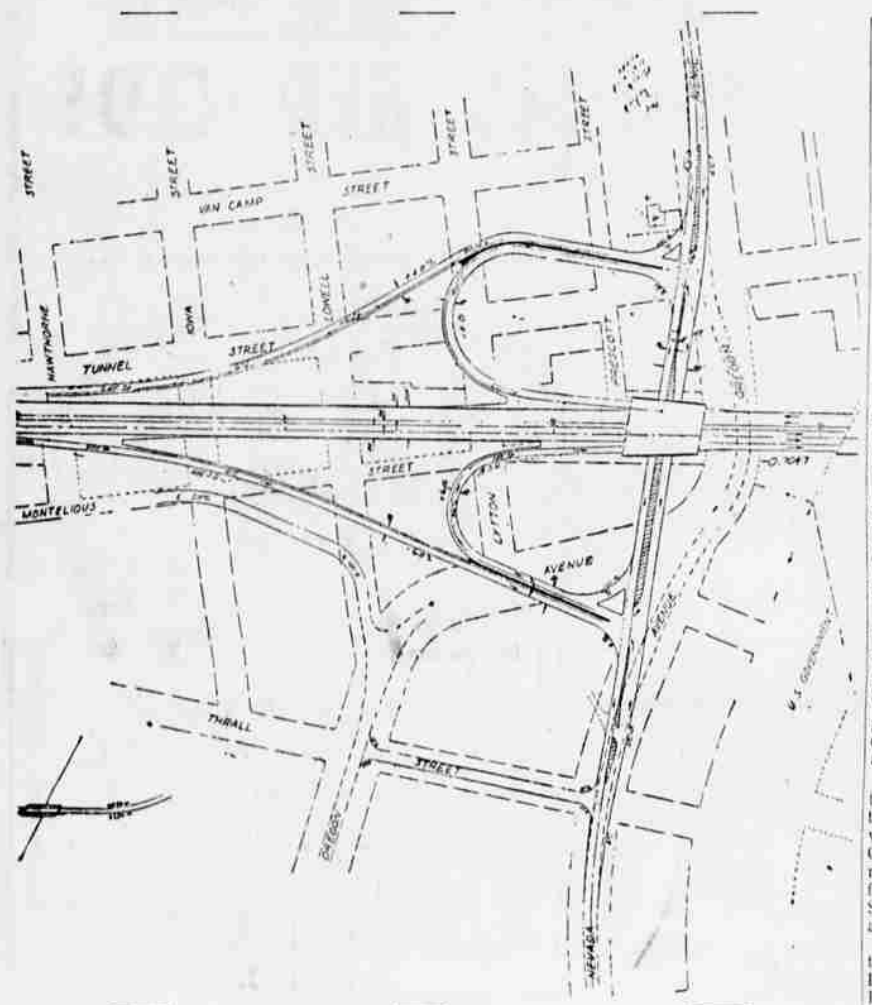
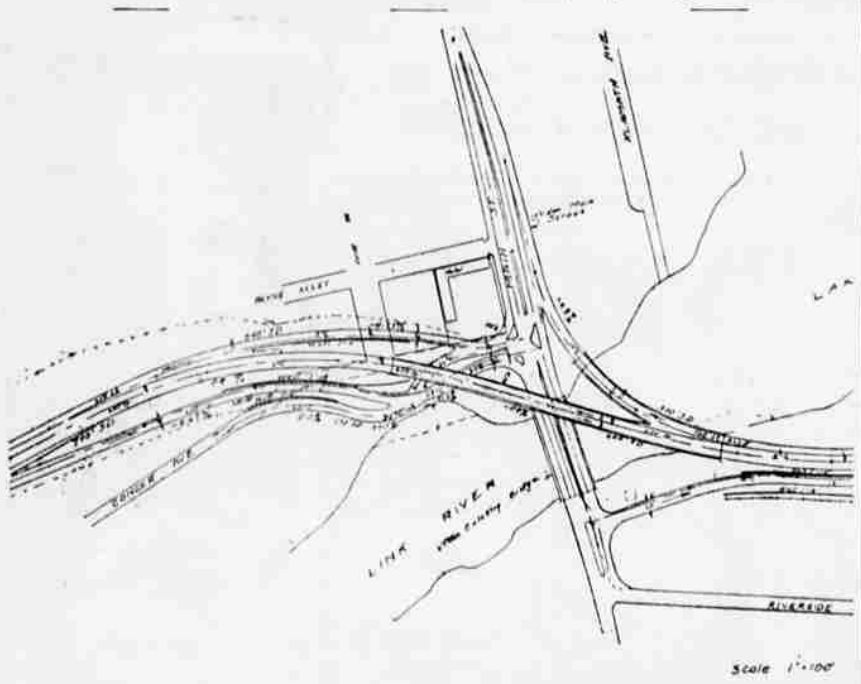
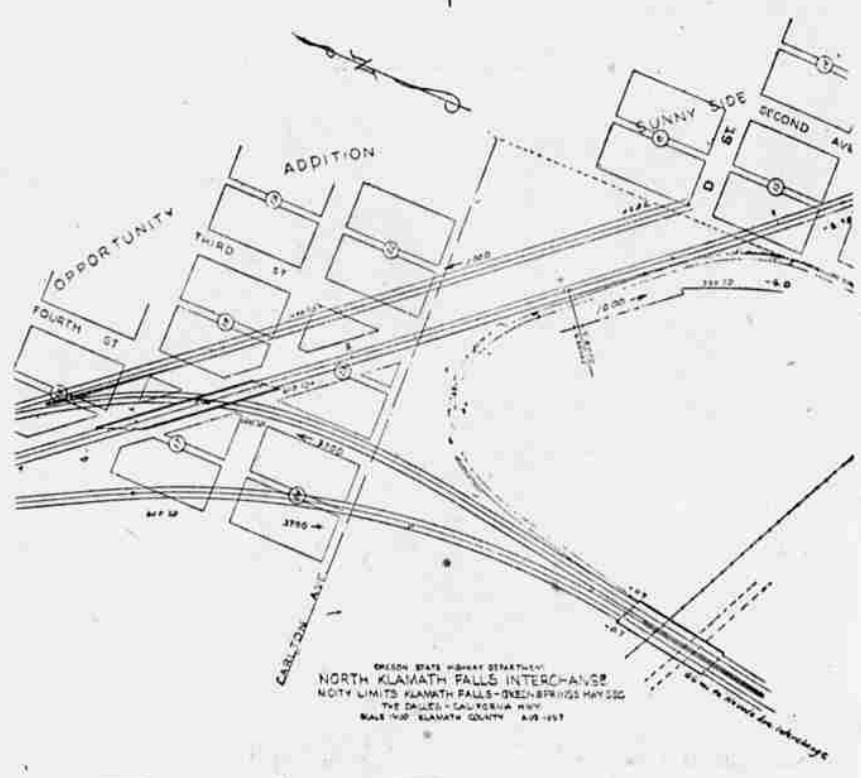
Proposed Klamath Falls Bypass Outlined









THE WEST SIDE BYPASS is outlined in the full-width map at the top of the page, beginning at the extreme left with the northern approach to Klamath Falls of The Dalles-California U.S. Highway 97, showing the existing route of U.S. 97 through the city via Kit Carson Way and down Main Street to the Link River bridge. It also outlines in broad dark lines the proposed new west side bypass via California Avenue to the Link River bridge. The North Klamath Falls interchange is outlined in more detail in the map drawing on the right. The second cloverleaf arrangement, the Nevada interchange is shown in detail on the extreme left, and the Main Street interchange at the Link River bridge is detailed at the lower left.

By FLOYD L. WYNNE

The controversy over the building of a west side bypass for the relocation of The Dalles-California Highway on U.S. 97 was under the spotlight Thursday morning at a special hearing called for the council chambers at city hall.

A crowded council room attested to the interest in the proposed highway project, and from the protests voiced it was clearly evident that much misunderstanding has arisen regarding the project.

The maps here outlined show the overall route of the bypass as well as detailing three of the four cloverleaf arrangements. The initial interchange, at Kit Carson Way on the north entrance will permit bypass traffic to cut off or continue on to the downtown area via Kit Carson Way.

Traffic entering the bypass at this route, will then continue on through the Nevada interchange which provides traffic access from Oregon Avenue with cloverleaf arrangements covering the area from Oregon Avenue and Lytton Street on the one side to Tunnel and Lytton on the other.

The third interchange will be at the head of Main Street at the Link River bridge. This cloverleaf arrangement will permit traffic to come down Main Street or detour via the bypass going in either direction.

The present plans do not call for the completion of the final link from the bridge out to the Ashland Junction. When questioned on this point at the Thursday morning hearing, State Highway Engineer W. C. Williams, stated that this final link was not yet on the drawing board.

The approximate cost of the project was estimated at between two and 2.2 million dollars, and Williams indicated that if the project is authorized by both the Oregon Highway Department and the Federal Bureau of Public Roads, actual construction work would get under underway just after the first of 1958, and the project should be completed in about two years time.

The hearing brought forth questions about the steepness of the grade in the area of Conger School, and Williams pointed out that the grade would not be excessively steep at this point. As a matter of fact, he said, the steepest point of the grade would be from the north interchange at Kit Carson Way to the Nevada interchange. From there it will more or less level off, he said.

The fear was expressed that it might create problems from runaway trucks such as happened at Dunsmuir recently. Williams spiked these fears by stating that the grade was such that the trucks would not even have to shift gears and that such a happening was impossible with the slight grade at this point.

It was also pointed out, in response to queries as to the proximity of the bypass to the school grounds of Conger School, that the bypass would be completely fenced, and that the only way any person could get on the highway on foot would be by climbing over the fence.

The biggest share of the objections appeared to be based on fear of property devaluation. This fear was expressed a number of times, but countered in part by expressions from persons who owned property in the area of the bypass, yet were not fearful of such an event.

The hearing also brought out that the valuation of the area where the bypass will be going will be approximately one and one-half million dollars whereas the downtown business area where the most relief will be felt from the bypass is valued in the vicinity of 10 million dollars.

A number of persons reported that while their property would be concerned in one way or another with the bypass location, they had not yet been contacted by the Oregon Highway Department.

The Nevada interchange apparently has created some difficulties, also, and in one instance a dead end arrangement, under the present plan, would block some residents from access to their homes. This problem, also, was expected to be ironed out.

The project has been under consideration for a number of years, but it wasn't until several years ago that it began to take definite shape.

It is designed to facilitate the flow of traffic around and through the city of Klamath Falls. Indications are that approximately 65 per cent of the traffic on U.S. 97 is traffic that will stop in Klamath Falls. The bypass is so planned that the other 35 per cent, including many of the truck and trailer rigs that use this route, may bypass the city without entering the congested downtown area.

Cost of the project will be divided, with the Bureau of Public Roads putting up some 60 per cent of the financing, and the Oregon Highway Department providing the other 40 per cent.

Councilman Walter Fleet indicated at the hearing that if the bypass were not constructed, it would take a huge sum of money to rebuild Klamath Avenue so that it could continue to handle the amount of traffic that it now does.

The transcript of the hearing apparently will weigh heavily in any considerations given the project by both the Oregon Highway Department, and the Bureau of Public Roads.

But, if the interest indicated at the hearing is properly captured by the transcript of the testimony, there appears to be no doubt that the city of Klamath Falls should see construction on the west side bypass begin in earnest shortly after the first of the year.

Court Records

KLAMATH COUNTY DISTRICT COURT

Robert Lee Hindle, contributing delinquency of minor, request additional time advise court, set for October 22, 1957 at 10:00 a.m., remanded to custody of sheriff.

Carl Clifford Clowett, excessive length, $20 bail forfeited.

Floyd Alvin Lamb, failure stop at stop sign, $5 bail forfeited.

Lowell Wilson, improper muffler, $5 paid.

Charles Richard Lewis, violation of basic rule, $7.50 paid.

Theodorna Wright, failure drive on right side, $7.50 bail forfeited.

James Edgar Swift, tandem axle overload, $65 bail forfeited.

Paul Leroy Sinclair, axle overload, $20 bail forfeited.

Jess Freddie Francis, combination overload, $390 bail forfeited.

Ralph Jack Carr, violation basic rule, dismissed.

Ingeborg Fox, violation of basic rule, $7.50 paid.

The Isthmus of Panama was discovered on Christmas Day 1502, by Christopher Columbus. It was his fourth voyage to the New World.

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