

**DEPARTMENT OF  
CITY PLANNING**

COMMISSION OFFICE  
(213) 978-1300

CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

SAMANTHA MILLMAN  
PRESIDENT

CAROLINE CHOE  
VICE-PRESIDENT

HELEN LEUNG  
KAREN MACK

DANA M. PERLMAN  
YVETTE LOPEZ-LEDESMA

AJAY RELAN  
JENNA HORNSTOCK  
VACANT

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
CALIFORNIA**



ERIC GARCETTI  
MAYOR

**EXECUTIVE OFFICES**

200 N. SPRING STREET, ROOM 525  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012-4801  
(213) 978-1271

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP  
DIRECTOR

KEVIN J. KELLER, AICP  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER

SHANA M.M. BONSTIN  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

ARTHI L. VARMA, AICP  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

LISA M. WEBBER, AICP  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

VACANT  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

**MULHOLLAND SCENIC PARKWAY SPECIFIC PLAN  
IMPLEMENTATION GUIDANCE**

**DATE: MARCH 30, 2021**

**TOPIC: REVIEW PROCESS FOR PROJECTS NOT VISIBLE FROM MULHOLLAND DRIVE**

**PURPOSE OF THIS MEMORANDUM**

The purpose of this memo is to supersede the 1998 Director of Planning's memorandum and to clarify Project Permit Compliance and Design Review Procedures for Visible and Non-Visible<sup>1</sup> Projects in the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan area pursuant to Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) Section 11.5.7 and the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan (MSPSP, Ordinance No. 167,943). In Section 2 of the Purposes of the MSPSP, Subsection N states that the MSPSP seeks "To provide a review process of all projects which are visible from Mulholland Drive to assure their conformance to the purposes and development standards contained in the Specific Plan and the Landform Grading Manual." The purpose dates back to a 1972 Report of the Citizens' Advisory Committee on the Mulholland Scenic Parkway, a citizen-led group tasked with shaping plans, design standards and criteria for the Mulholland Scenic Parkway. The Committee's report prioritized development limitations for properties visible from Mulholland Drive, while maintaining flexibility in regulations when a project is not visible due to natural barriers. Additionally, changes to the Los Angeles Municipal Code, the City Charter, and departmental policy over time have tightened development standards in Hillside areas, which now supersede many aspects of the Specific Plan.

This document will:

- 1) Provide history and background regarding the original intent of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan as it pertains to the entitlement process for Visible and Non-Visible Projects; and
- 2) Explain how Visible and Non-Visible Projects shall be processed going forward to align with the original intent of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan.

This implementation guidance shall be applicable to all Projects within the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan.

---

<sup>1</sup> Non-Visible is not defined in the Specific Plan. A Visible Project is defined in the plan as a Project on a lot which can be seen with normal 20-20 vision from a location on Mulholland Drive anywhere within the lot's visibility arc. Non-Visible is inferred to refer to projects that are not visible from Mulholland Drive with 20-20 vision.

## HISTORY & BACKGROUND

The purpose of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan (MSPSP), adopted by ordinance in 1992, is to preserve the Mulholland Scenic Parkway corridor viewshed as one with unique views of the mountains, ocean, and City, and to ensure that land uses are compatible with the parkway environment. The Specific Plan spans approximately 20 miles through the Santa Monica Mountains, and includes paved and unpaved portions of Mulholland Drive, as well as privately-owned land within a 0.5 mile-wide buffer on each side of the road. The Specific Plan encompasses an area that is roughly 20 square-miles, and travels through five council districts, six Community Plans, one City-recognized Significant Ecological Area, and the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area which includes state and City-owned parks. The Specific Plan regulates an area larger than nearby municipalities like the City of Burbank and the City of Beverly Hills. The goals of the Specific Plan date back to the inception of Mulholland Drive in 1913 when the parkway was envisioned to be enjoyed by Angelenos as a scenic pleasure drive.

Throughout the 1930s and 1950s, efforts were made to expand Mulholland Drive as a scenic corridor while also balancing an interest in providing housing in the hills and valley; Outpost Estates in the Hollywood Hills portion of the MSPSP dates back to the 1920s. In the 1960s, the Mulholland Drive Scenic Development Plan was conceived. In addition to extending the paved portion of the parkway west from the Sepulveda Pass, it proposed an access route to enable the development of the surrounding land. Several unsuccessful attempts were also made during this time to have Mulholland Drive declared a state and federal scenic highway, and to limit adjacent building heights.

In the 1970s, a Citizens' Advisory Committee on the Mulholland Scenic Parkway was created by City Council to assist in shaping plans, design standards, and criteria for the parkway with the goal of preserving the viewshed of a unique resource in Los Angeles. The committee produced the Report of the Citizens' Advisory Committee on the Mulholland Scenic Parkway in 1972, which was forward thinking in its vision. It was written at a time early in the use of California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), before the creation of the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy to preserve land in the area, and before local regulations were adopted that limited grading and implemented building standards for the hillside.

The 1972 Report of the Citizens' Advisory Committee on the Mulholland Scenic Parkway noted an early concept created by the Olmsted Brothers of Mulholland Drive as a parkway, and called for a plan that encouraged a pattern of use that is dispersed, non-intensive, and at a human scale. The Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) report also called for flexible regulations and standards aimed at protecting visible topographic features and views. For example, the Citizens' Advisory Committee thought that where a natural barrier exists within the Corridor blocking a distant view from the Parkway, the Non-Visible area beyond the barrier need not be subject to the Corridor's protective standards.

The spirit and intent of many of the recommendations and guidelines contained in the report were eventually included in the MSPSP 20 years later and referenced in the Plan's preamble. The 1972 Report addressed preserving viewshed and creating a park-like setting for visitors to Mulholland Drive. The Citizens Advisory Committee report also differs from the MSPSP in that the report proposed a permanent moratorium on new structures and further grading for the Inner Corridor, which was not in the adopted MSPSP ordinance.

The MSPSP is a product of its time, and local and state environmental regulations have evolved over the past four decades. For example, in 1970 the state passed, and continually refines, CEQA,

which has become a powerful tool for evaluating and disclosing whether development can affect the environment. In 1980, the CA State Legislature established the Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy, which has focused on preserving open space in the MSPSP area through land purchases and conservation easements.

While citywide and state regulations have changed over time, only the MSPSP's Guidelines (the non-regulatory companion piece to the Specific Plan) have been updated: once in 2003 with the initial approval of the Design and Preservation Guidelines by the City Planning Commission, and again in 2009 with an amendment to the Guidelines. The guidelines, however, do not create regulations for discretionary entitlements, nor are they mandatory requirements. They provide direction on how the Mulholland Scenic Parkway can best be preserved while allowing appropriate development, and clarify what can be expected when a project is reviewed by the Design Review Board of the Specific Plan and the Director of Planning. The guidelines use words such as "should," "avoid," "as possible," or "preferred" and are not to be confused with mandatory requirements except where they mirror language in the Specific Plan's regulations.

The regulations in the Specific Plan have not been amended since the original adoption of the ordinance in 1992. Ambiguities in the text of the MSPSP, combined with conflicting or outdated regulations in an era of overlapping citywide and state-level regulations, create a specific plan that is challenging to enforce and difficult for stakeholders to understand. This has led to gradual changes to procedures and broadened the scope of the Specific Plan to include Non-Visible projects, resulting in inconsistencies and departures from the original spirit and intent of the Specific Plan.

Since the adoption of the MSPSP, the City has passed Citywide zoning regulations focused on addressing common concerns in hillside neighborhoods (timeline in the attachments of this memo) such as: 1) a Landform Grading Manual in 1983 to address grading and density in the hillsides; 2) a Hillside Regulations Ordinance in 1992 addressing substandard streets, parking, and fire safety in hillside neighborhoods; 3) a Baseline Hillside Ordinance in 2011 and updated in 2017 limiting height, footprint, grading, and Residential Floor Area to address out-of-scale development of single-family dwellings in hillside neighborhoods; 4) the Protected Tree Ordinance in 1980 and updated in 2006 limiting removals of Oak trees and other native trees important to Los Angeles; and 5) a Hillside Construction Regulation (HCR) District in 2017 imposing more restrictive grading limits and hauling standards for areas in Council Districts 4 and 5. Future regulations to create and maintain Wildlife Corridors and Ridgeline protection are currently being drafted by the Department.

On October 15, 1998, the Director of Planning issued a memo interpreting the Exemptions in Section 3.D of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan. The interpretation required all projects within the boundaries of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan to be subject to the Specific Plan's provisions if filed after June 29, 1992. That interpretation was based on a City Council Interpretation of Section 3.D of the Specific Plan that arose out of appeals to an earlier Director's Interpretation on the same subject. The Department's assessment or summary approach to the City Council's Interpretation was overly broad. That, in combination with Citywide Code Amendments of Sections 11.5.7 and 16.50 of the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) a couple years later, inadvertently created additional procedures where they did not previously exist. It resulted in Non-Visible, Outer Corridor projects being subject to the Project Permit Compliance and Design Review Board procedures where previously they had not been.

## ANALYSIS

The Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan requires that certain projects go through a Specific Plan Project Permit Compliance Procedure solely, and certain other projects obtain a Design Review from the Design Review Board and a Specific Plan Project Permit Compliance Procedure. Currently in the Specific Plan, a Project as defined in Section 4 includes all properties within the MSPSP, whether they are visible from Mulholland Drive or not. A “Project” is defined in the MSPSP as the:

*“construction of any building or structure, or the addition to, alteration, conversion, or change of use of any land, building, or structure on a lot located in whole or in part within the Specific Plan Area; or any construction, alteration, conversion or change of use of any building, structure or land in the right-of-way. For purposes of this Specific Plan, the term project shall not include interior remodeling.”*

### Design Review Board Procedures

Section 11.J of the MSPSP exempts certain projects from Design Review Board procedures such as projects consisting of remodeling, repair, or additions to a single-family dwelling and/or accessory structure that conform to all the following:

1. Color, materials, and design of exterior changes, including landscaping, are consistent with the intent and provisions of the MSPSP;
2. Total cumulative floor area of all additions does not exceed 900 square feet;
3. The building height does not exceed standards set forth in the MSPSP;
4. The project involves no change of access onto the Mulholland Drive right-of-way;
5. The project is not on a prominent ridge, and/or does not break an existing skyline;
6. The project is not located on a lot which contains a stream;
7. The project does not propose grading.

However, within the broad regulations for Projects, it is clear that the Specific Plan contemplates and places emphasis on Projects that are “Visible,” as described below. For example, Sections 5.A. and 6.A provide the land use controls for the Specific Plan. In these sections, the allowed “Uses” refer to Projects being visible from Mulholland Drive. In addition, the height limits in Section 5.D and 6.D are only prescribed for Projects that are visible from Mulholland Drive; Sections 5.C and 6.C limit grading only for lots that are visible from Mulholland Drive. Any Projects on “Prominent Ridges” are only regulated according to Sections 5.B.1 and 6.B. if they are visible from Mulholland Drive. While Section 11.J (the section that exempts certain projects from Project Permit Compliance procedures) makes no distinction between Visible and Non-Visible Projects exempted from the Project Permit Compliance procedures, the majority of the criteria that relate to regulations are only triggered if the project is Visible. Furthermore, in Section 2 of the Purposes of the MSPSP, Subsection N states that the MSPSP seeks “To provide a review process of all projects which are visible from Mulholland Drive to assure their conformance to the purposes and development standards contained in the Specific Plan and the Landform Grading Manual.” This purpose aligns with the Report of the Citizens’ Advisory Committee’s concern for properties visible from Mulholland Drive, and the report’s advocacy for flexibility in regulations if a project was not visible due to natural barriers.

Section 4 of the MSPSP also defines a Visible Project: “A project on a lot which can be seen with normal 20-20 vision from a location on Mulholland Drive anywhere within the lot’s visibility arc.” Projects that are not Visible have no impact on the viewshed from Mulholland Drive due to the inability to see them. Additionally, many of the regulations that Non-Visible projects are subject to, for example, Residential Floor Area limitations, Hillside grading, and retaining wall limitations, are regulated by other sections of the LAMC or Regulatory Compliance Measures. Many of the regulations in the citywide Zoning Code are duplicative or more stringent than the regulations of the Specific Plan. According to Section 3.B on Specific Plan Application, regulations that are more restrictive in other parts of the LAMC shall prevail and supersede those outlined in the MSPSP. As noted in the background section, many additional regulations have become effective since the adoption of the Specific Plan, as shown in the timeline in the attachments to this memo.

Below is an example of the way in which Section 5, the section of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan regulating development standards for Non-Visible projects, has been superseded by more restrictive regulations:

Development Standards	Superseding Regulations
A. Permitted Uses	Community Plans, Zoning Code, and General Plan Land Use Maps for the following areas: Bel Air – Beverly Crest; Brentwood – Pacific Palisades; Canoga Park – West Hills – Winnetka – Woodland Hills; Encino – Tarzana; Hollywood; Sherman Oaks – Studio City – Toluca Lake – Cahuenga Pass
B. Oak Tree Removal	Protected Tree Ordinance (1980; updated 2006)
C. Grading Restrictions	Baseline Hillside Ordinance (2011; updated 2017) and Landform Grading Manual requirements (1983)
D. Allowable Building Heights	Baseline Hillside Ordinance (2011; updated 2017)

### Project Permit Compliance

Non-Visible construction of any building or structure, additions, alterations, conversions, or changes of use qualify as Projects within the parameters of the Specific Plan (except interior remodeling). When the Specific Plan was adopted in 1992, it contained no procedures for Projects that fully complied with all applicable regulations. This is because at that time, the Los Angeles Municipal Code (LAMC) did not contain such procedures. Projects that did not comply were required to obtain a Specific Plan Exception, Adjustment, or Amendment, the procedures of which were contained in LAMC Section 11.5.7 (Sections 11.5.7 E, F, and G in the current code, at the time of this drafting). In 1992, LAMC Section 11.5.7 did not contain Project Permit Compliance procedures, therefore, projects at the time that complied with the regulations of the Specific Plan were only required to acquire a Building Permit sign-off from the Department of City Planning in order to construct the project; Department of City Planning staff ministerially cleared Mulholland Specific Plan projects that complied with the plan. The Department of City Planning still reviewed these projects to ensure adherence to applicable simple, objective regulations, but no Project Permit Compliance entitlement was required. In 2000, when the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 173455, an ordinance amending LAMC Section 11.5.7 as a part of the updates arising from City Charter Reform, a new Project Permit Compliance process was introduced applicable to all

Specific Plans for Projects to demonstrate compliance with the regulations of the plan through mandated Findings, which ceased ministerial review of compliance.

In the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan, the result was that Specific Plan compliant projects were considered to be subject to a Project Permit Compliance entitlement process whereas previously they were not. What were once ministerial, objective regulations pertaining to projects in the Specific Plan were incidentally elevated in process to a discretionary entitlement. Additionally, in 2003, all projects subject to Project Permit Compliance in this Specific Plan were subject to the newly-established, non-regulatory Design and Preservation Guidelines.

### **Director of Planning Authority**

Finally, Section 11.5.7 C.1 of the LAMC states that for Project Permit Compliance Review:

***“Director’s Authority.** The Director shall have the initial decision-making authority to decide whether an application for a project within a specific plan area is in conformance with the regulations established by this subsection and in compliance with applicable regulations of the specific plan. **In addition, the Director shall have the authority to determine what type of projects are exempt from these Project Permit Compliance procedures based on exemption provisions and other regulations contained in individual specific plans”** (emphasis added).*

Under this authority, the Director has determined that Non-Visible projects are to be subject to Project Permit Compliance, but exempt from Design Review Procedures. This interpretation restores the original intent to prioritize review of the projects that are visible, and yet supports and acknowledges the value in the process and practice of issuing determination letters to document project review. Non-Visible Projects that do not conform to Sections 11.J.1.b.v through 11.J.1.b.vii of the MSPSP, however, are subject to Design Review Procedures.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan’s purpose is to preserve the viewshed from Mulholland Drive. The Specific Plan does not include specific provisions for Non-Visible Projects from Mulholland Drive. Non-Visible Projects prior to the release of the October 1998 memo were ministerially approved and not subject to discretionary review. Subjecting Non-Visible Projects that neither trigger Section 5 or 6 Use standards, Environmental Protection Measure regulations, Grading regulations, nor Building standards to a Design Review Board process conflicts with the original intent of the Specific Plan. Therefore, under the authority granted to the Director of Planning by 11.5.7, Non-Visible Projects are subject to Project Permit Compliance Procedures but not Design Review Procedures of this Specific Plan if they fully comply with the MSPSP’s regulations. Furthermore, Projects that conform to all of the exemption criteria in Section 11.J.b will continue to be exempt from Design Review Procedures. The Director of Planning reserves the right to require the filing of a Design Review Board Procedures entitlement in instances where a Non-Visible Project’s compliance with regulations or guidelines may be unclear or indeterminate.

In summary, consistent with the purpose of the MSPSP, all Projects in areas of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan that can be proven to be Non-Visible and clearly comply with: all applicable Specific Plan regulations, applicable Design Guidelines; and conform with Specific

Plan Sections 11.J.b.v through 11.J.b.vii regarding prominent ridges, streams, and grading, are required to file for only Project Permit Compliance Procedures unless otherwise stated in this memo.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'VPB', is written over a horizontal line.

VINCENT P. BERTONI, AICP  
Director of Planning

**ATTACHMENTS**

A. Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan Regulatory Framework Timeline

B. Historical Reports and Interpretations

September 1972 Report of the Citizens' Advisory Committee on the Mulholland Scenic Parkway

May 1998 Director's Interpretation of Section 3.D

October 7, 1998 City Council Plan Interpretation

October 15, 1998 Director of Planning Memo on Section 3.D

LAMC Section 11.5.7 from 1989 and 1996

## Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan Regulatory Framework Timeline

1970: CEQA codified

1972: Report of the Citizens' Advisory Committee on the Mulholland Scenic Parkway produced

1979: Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy created through AB 1312

1980: City of LA adopts first Protected Tree Ordinance

1983: City adopts Landform Grading Manual

1992: City's Hillside Regulations Ordinance adopted

1992: City adopts Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan

2003 CPC adopts Mulholland Specific Plan's Design and Preservation Guidelines

2006: City expands Protected Tree Ordinance

2009 CPC amends Mulholland Specific Plan's Design and Preservation Guidelines

2011: City adopts Baseline Hillside Ordinance

2013: City motion to expand Protected Tree Ordinance more

2014: Motion to create a Wildlife Corridor Ordinance

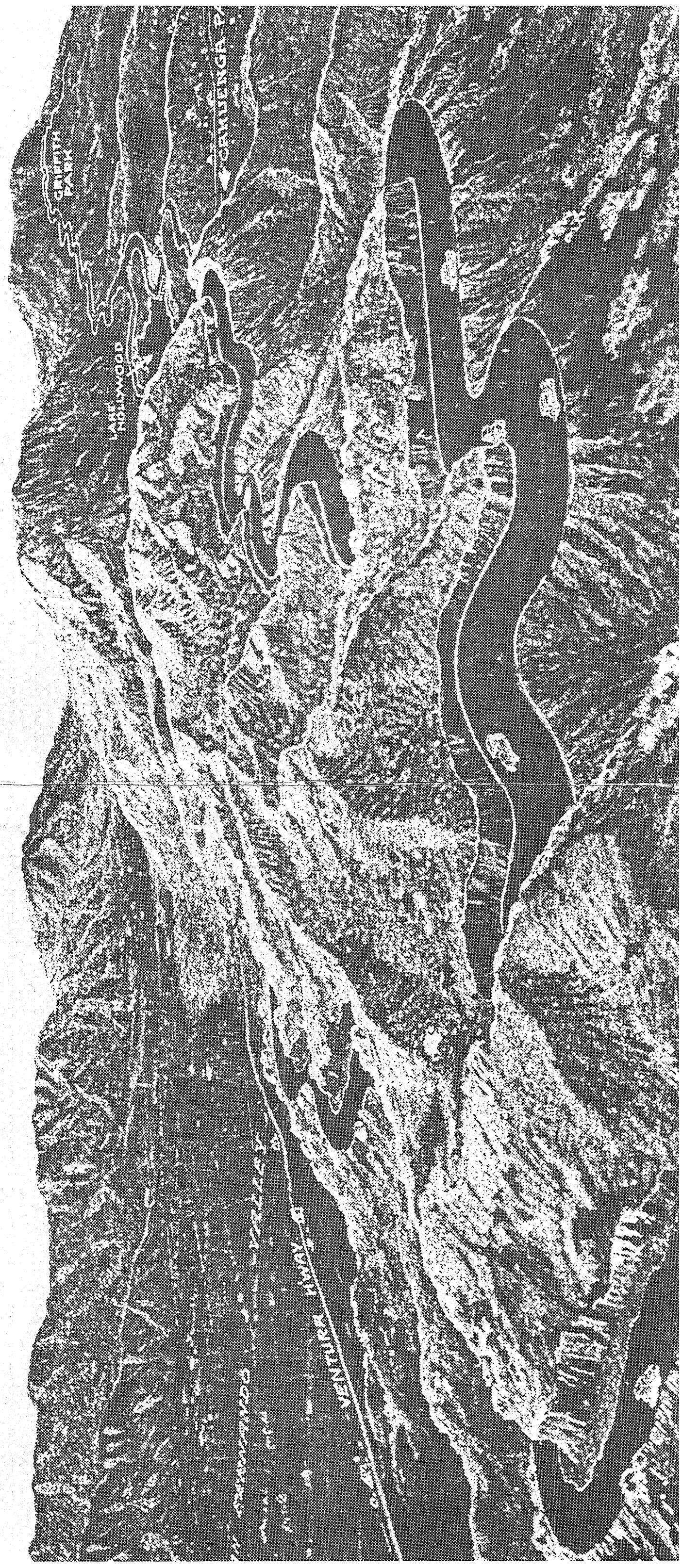
2017: Baseline Hillside Ordinance updated

2017: City adopts Hillside Construction Regulation District



ATTACHMENT B  
REPORT OF THE  
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ON THE  
MULHOLLAND SCENIC PARKWAY

cover design - anderson/chono  
sketch: charles hamilton owen (1924)



REPORT OF THE  
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
ON THE  
MULHOLLAND SCENIC PARKWAY

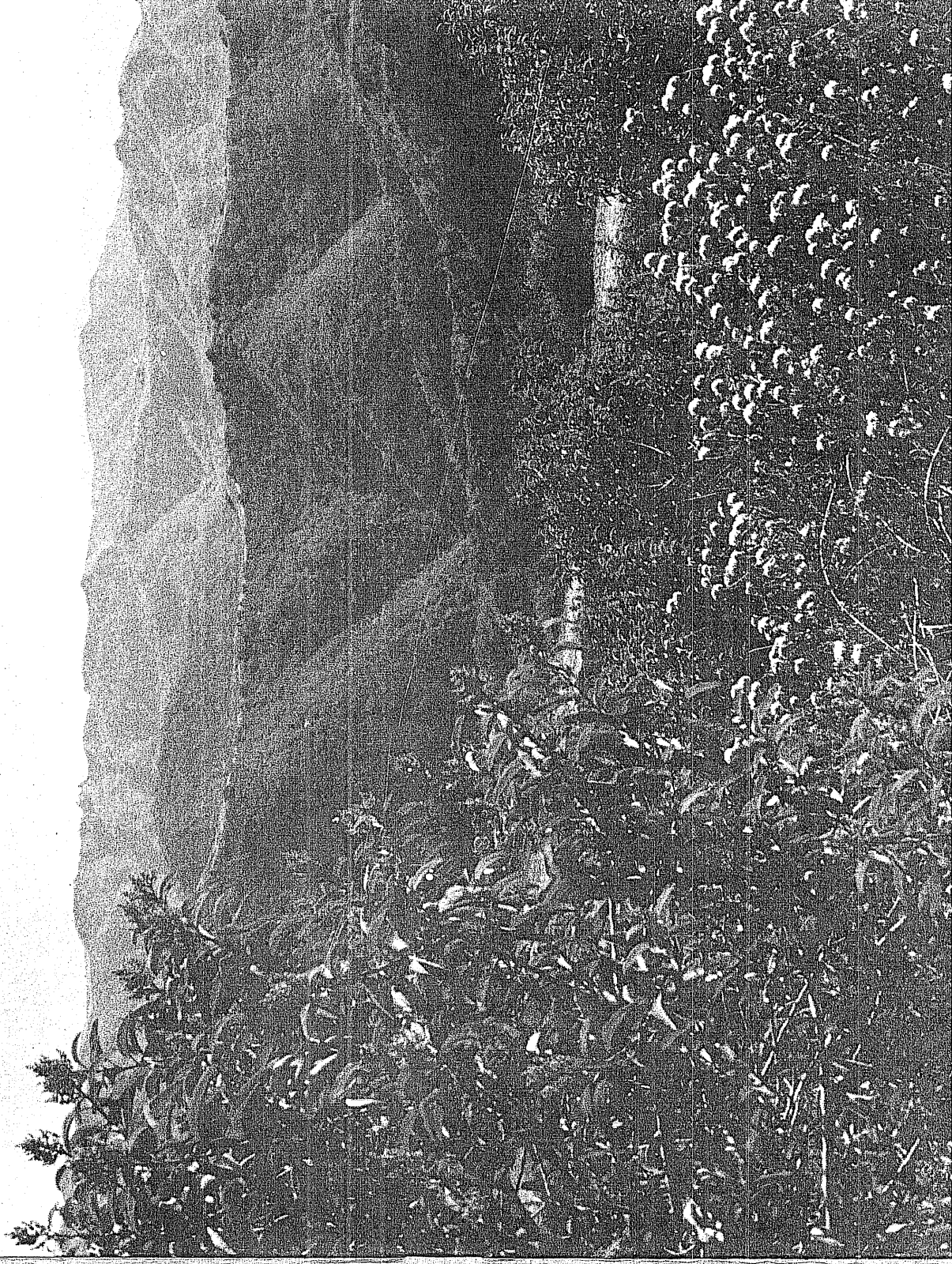
September, 1972



Tom Bradley, mayor

**CITY COUNCIL**

John Ferraro, president  
Ermani Bernardi  
Marvin Braude  
David S. Cunningham  
Robert Farrell  
John S. Gibson, Jr.  
Gilbert W. Lindsay  
Joy Picus  
Bob Ronka  
Pat Russell  
Arthur K. Snyder  
Peggy Stevenson  
Joel Wachs  
Robert M. Wilkinson  
Zev Yaroslavsky



Printed — September 1972  
re-printed — January 1978

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

The Honorable John S. Gibson, President  
Los Angeles City Council  
City Hall  
200 North Spring Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012

September 1, 1972

Dear President Gibson and Members of the Council:

The Mulholland Parkway Citizens' Advisory Committee is pleased to submit to you and to the people of Los Angeles its unanimous report on the Mulholland Scenic Parkway, pursuant to the City Council's motion of October 6, 1971.

From the outset of its research and deliberations, the Committee has been impressed by a dominant theme that pervades the City's relationship with Mulholland Drive: that this skyline roadway along the crest of the Santa Monica Mountains is a unique resource of the City of Los Angeles, that it has unusual value for scenic and recreational purposes for the entire metropolitan area, and that to retain its value the natural character and scenic quality of Mulholland must be preserved.

The Citizens' Advisory Committee unanimously re-affirms these principles. Mulholland Drive has always been regarded as a special road, and as such it must be treated in a special way - with keen regard to its value not only for the present, but for future generations as well. The Committee believes that the standards and criteria contained in this report will preserve the integrity of Mulholland Drive and ensure its worth to all the people of our community.

The Committee wishes to express its gratitude to the many people who shared with it their counsel and time. A special word of thanks must be noted, as well, for the patience and assistance of Shoji Fukuma and Larry Greer, of the Bureau of Engineering, of Tom Stemnock, of the Department of Planning, and of Wanda Valentine, of Councilman Lorenzen's office.

The Committee finally wishes to thank the City Council for affording it the opportunity to work on this project, which it believes to be so important to the welfare of Los Angeles.

Sincerely,

Ira Edward Yellin,  
Chairman,  
Mulholland Citizens' Advisory Committee

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

- Ira Edward Yellin, Chairman
- Lillian Melograno
- Harold J. Smotkin, Vice-Chairman
- Royce Neushatz
- D. C. Bakeman
- Errol Newton
- Estelle Dvorin
- Patricia Rosenfeld
- Robert Gibbs
- Florence Verger
- Tawney Lawrence
- Grace Wright

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Letter of Transmittal	ii
Committee Membership	ii
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	2
<b>BACKGROUND</b>	3
A Brief History of Mulholland Drive	3
Mulholland Today: A Description of the Route	4
Hollywood Freeway to Laurel Canyon	5
Laurel Canyon to San Diego Freeway	5
San Diego Freeway to Topanga Canyon Boulevard	5
<b>CONCEPTS AND PRINCIPLES</b>	7
<b>DESIGN CRITERIA</b>	9
Roadway	9
Lanes	9
Median	9
Shoulders	9
Speed	10
Intersections and Access	10
Utilities and Street Fixtures	10
Alignment	10
Trails	11
Vista Points and Recreation Sites	11
Landscape and Special Design Features	14
Vehicles	15
Transportation and Parking	15
<b>SCENIC CORRIDOR</b>	17
Outer Corridor	17
Inner Corridor	17
<b>IMPLEMENTATION</b>	18
Design Plan	18
Mulholland Parkway Coordinator	18
Interdepartmental Task Force	18
Mulholland Parkway Citizens' Advisory Committee	18
Related Recommendations	18
<b>FINANCING</b>	19
<b>APPENDICES AND EXHIBITS</b>	22
Council Motion	22
Speakers and Presentations to Committee	23
State Department of Recreation and Parks letter	24
Resource Materials	25

## BACKGROUND

### A Brief History of Mulholland Drive

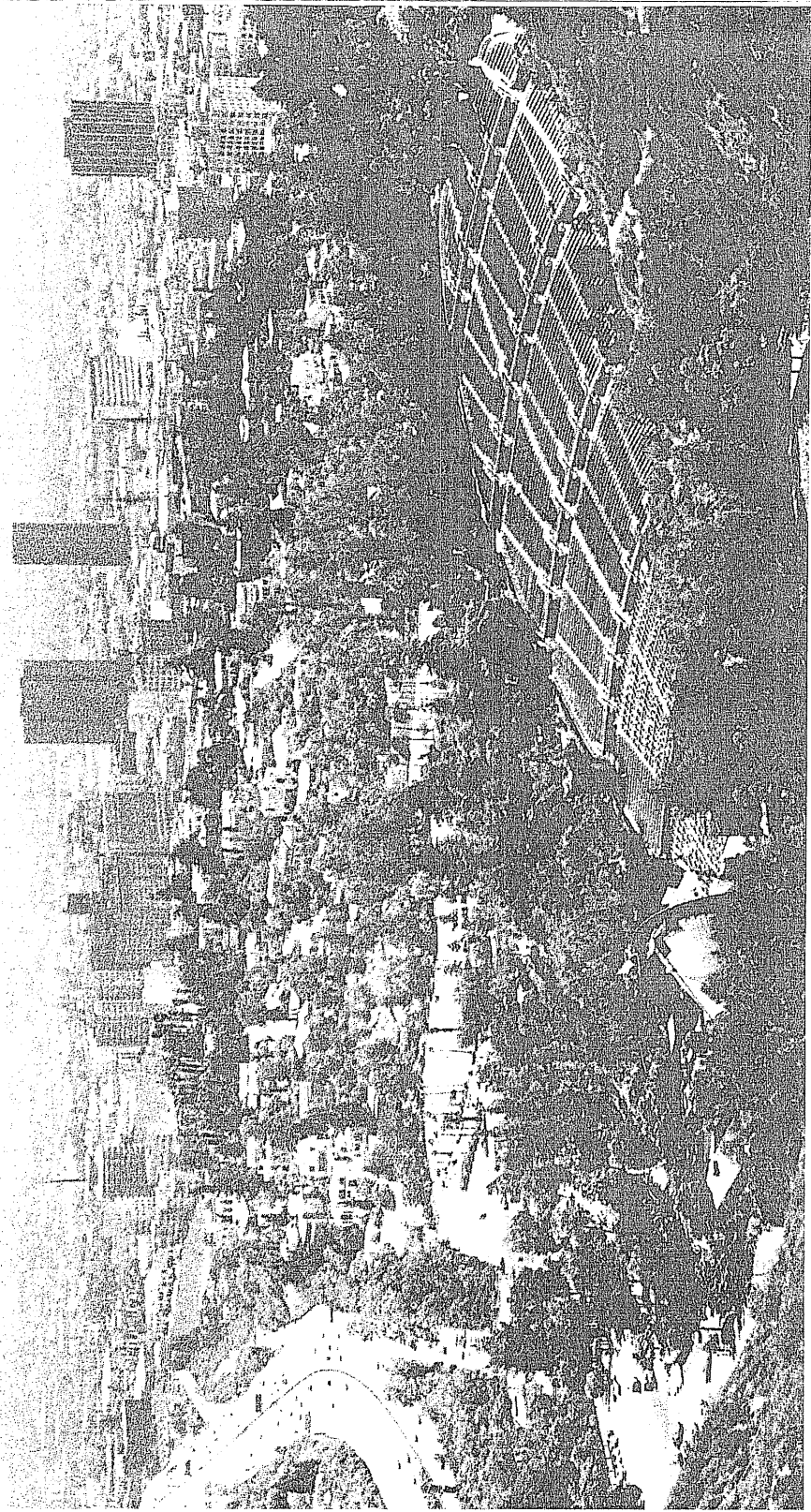
**1913** Mulholland Drive was conceived in 1913 by William Mulholland, Chief Engineer of the Los Angeles Water Department, as a great scenic road along the crest of the Santa Monica Mountains from Cahuenga Pass west.

Successively referred to as a "parkway", "scenic public highway", "pleasureway park", "scenic drive", "expressway", "California parkway", and finally as a "City Scenic Parkway", Mulholland Drive has most frequently been considered as a special road intended for pleasure driving to enjoy the view, a road unique to Los Angeles. In later years, Mulholland Drive was seen as the core of a Mulholland Open Space Program, providing a system of parks, bikeways, and riding and hiking trails, together with fire protection for the mountain area. From its earliest days, Mulholland Drive has not been viewed as a major access road or traffic artery, a reflection of its extraordinary location and of its potential value to the people and City of Los Angeles.

**1922** Formation of the Hollywood Improvement Association in December, 1922, was the first action taken to raise private funds for the proposed scenic highway. In 1923, a special Improvement District was formed, and a special election successfully held in the District to issue bonds of a value of \$1,000,000 for construction of the scenic public highway. Work began with acquisition of a 100 foot right-of-way from Laurel Canyon east to Cahuenga Pass.

**1924** On December 27, 1924, the entire 24.2 miles to Calabasas was completed as a roadway 40 feet wide, with up to 30 foot wide surfacing "to a depth of six inches of decomposed granite". This roadway was dedicated to the City, without cost, with the exception of one parcel. A city-wide festival signalled the opening, with the Los Angeles Times noting that Mulholland Drive was "destined to take its place as one of the famous scenic highways of the world".

**1930** In 1930, a study report on *Parks, Playgrounds and Beaches for the Los Angeles Region* was presented by the nation's leading landscape architectural firm, Olmsted Brothers and Bartholomew, to a citizens'committee. The Study recommended the encouragement of pleasure driving through a system of interconnected pleasureway parks. It recommended keeping Mulholland at the crest of the hill and the acquisition of mountain areas with scenic corridors, and it expressed concern that growth would diminish the views of the mountains.



## INTRODUCTION

Mulholland Drive is one of the most famous scenic roads in this country. It follows the crest of the Santa Monica Mountains for approximately twenty miles, from the Hollywood area westward to Topanga Canyon Boulevard, where it leaves the City of Los Angeles and continues on to the sea. Its fame, conveyed to the nation by the nearby entertainment industry, grew with generations of residents and tourists who found in it an island of natural tranquility in the midst of a metropolis.

In an effort to preserve these values for future generations, the Los Angeles City Council established Mulholland Drive as a Scenic Parkway on October 6, 1971. At the same time, it created a twelve member Citizens' Advisory Committee to assist the city in establishing standards and criteria for its development. Each of the six Councilmen through whose district Mulholland Drive passes appointed two members. The Committee's deliberations began in November, 1971. Since then, the Committee has toured and studied the full extent of Mulholland Drive and has held almost thirty public meetings, to hear testimony and receive advice from over thirty speakers in the process of developing the recommendations submitted in this report.

The Committee early recognized that over ninety percent of the City's population lives within fifteen miles of the

roadway, that substantial undeveloped lands adjoin the roadway, and - very importantly - that the City already owns a wide right-of-way affording a variety of possible benefits (200 feet everywhere west of Laurel Canyon Boulevard). Thus, the report reaffirms not only the unique beauty of Mulholland Drive, but its extraordinary potential as a primary scenic and recreational area for the people of Los Angeles. It is the Committee's conviction that only immediate and courageous action by city government will preserve a unique scenic heritage of our City - for our future and the future of our children. Mulholland Drive must not become just another urban highway in an urban setting.

The report is presented in a manner which should afford the reader some perspective on the long relationship between the City and Mulholland Drive, and on the many public and private efforts to preserve Mulholland for the people to use and enjoy. Thus, both a history and description of Mulholland precede the presentation of concepts, principles, and design criteria. The remainder of the report concerns the land corridors adjoining Mulholland Drive, and provides recommendations regarding implementation of the parkway plans and avenues of financing.

It is the Committee's hope that it might provide a continuing service to the people of Los Angeles in the development of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway.

**1934** In 1934 the City Planning Commission approved Mulholland Drive as a major highway on the City's new Master Plan of Highways. In 1940 an ordinance changed the name from Mulholland Highway to Mulholland Drive.

**1959** In January, 1959, the Los Angeles County Master Plan of Regional Recreation Areas designated Mulholland Drive as part of a 50 mile long parkway - Griffith Park to the Ventura County line. It was also included in the Los Angeles County plan of scenic corridors, 1961.

**1962** In January, 1962, the Los Angeles City Council authorized the City Engineer to prepare plans for the development of Mulholland Drive from Sepulveda Boulevard to Topanga Canyon Boulevard as an assessment district with assistance in funding from developers, as well as from State and County governments. These "Mulholland Drive Scenic Development Plans", completed by the City Engineer in 1964 at a cost of over \$730,000, delineate a 64 foot wide roadway within a 120 foot right-of-way, four 12 foot traffic lanes, and two 8 foot parking lanes.

**1963** In March, 1963, the Los Angeles City Council adopted a resolution requesting the State Legislature to include Mulholland Drive in the State Highway System for the purpose of designating it as a State Scenic Highway.

In October, 1963, the City Council authorized the initiation of a 1911 Assessment Act Project for the development of Mulholland Drive, providing that the cost of improving the highway be paid by the property owners who might benefit from the improvement. This project was subsequently abandoned.

**1964** In November, 1964, the "Mulholland Drive Scenic Development Plan" was approved by the Planning Commission and adopted as part of the City's Master Plan. This Plan, intended as a guide for the design and implementation of a scenic highway along Mulholland Drive (to complement the City Engineer's realignment and improvement plans), featured a 200 foot right-of-way, 18 scenic facilities (road-side or wayside parks) totaling 212 acres, together with equestrian and hiking trails.

**1967** In March, 1967, the Los Angeles City Council approved an agreement between the City and the State authorizing the development of Mulholland Drive as a State Scenic Highway. The State rejected this proposed agreement on the grounds that the design was not in conformity with State Scenic Highway standards. The State's standards have since changed.

**1968-70** In 1968, legislation was introduced in the State Assembly for the appropriation of funds for the construction of Mulholland Drive as a State Scenic Highway built to "freeway" standards. Although amended to include

certain trail and park requirements, the bill never passed. Subsequent attempts to revive the State Scenic Highway legislation failed, and Mulholland Drive finally was removed from the State's Master Plan of scenic highways.

**1971** In May, 1971, a Resolution was introduced in the Los Angeles City Council to include Mulholland Drive in a proposed State Parkway System. The Bureau of Engineering and the Department of Traffic recommended that the resolution not be adopted at that time. The Department of Planning concurred. Subsequently, the Planning Department recommended that the City Council consider the development of Mulholland Drive as a City Scenic Parkway, to include such features as low speed travel, limited access, appropriate landscaping, turn-outs, and other facilities which would promote and enhance the use of Mulholland Drive and surrounding areas for scenic and recreational purposes.

The Ventura-Los Angeles Mountain and Coastal Study Commission in its Final Report of March 6, 1972, endorsed and mapped the following concepts: that Mulholland Drive from Laurel Canyon to the Pacific Ocean become a scenic parkway designed for recreational driving, with a low volume of traffic. It further recommended that the design include bicycle and horse trails and scenic turn-outs and other appropriate amenities, and that the County and City of Los Angeles take immediate steps to provide by their zoning power a protective corridor.

In October, 1971, Mulholland Drive was designated a City Scenic Parkway by the Los Angeles City Council, which created the Citizens Advisory Committee to assist in shaping plans, design standards, and criteria for the twenty mile route of Los Angeles' first scenic parkway.

#### **Mulholland Today: A Description of the Route.**

"The route of Mulholland Parkway follows the crest of the beautiful Santa Monica Mountains which project within the vast Los Angeles metropolitan area. From this scenic drive can be seen the wide panoramic views of the valleys below where some nine million people reside. The daylight scenic qualities and the view of lights at night as seen from this road are unique in the world. The high San Gabriel and Santa Susana Mountains provide a picturesque and prominent backdrop for the San Fernando Valley to the north, and the ocean with its beautiful beaches and its coastal islands forms an impressive background to the south".

What has changed since the State Department of Parks and Recreation described Mulholland Drive in these terms in 1967? There are more people and more lights. More smog - but Mulholland is above it. More cars. More horses. Many more bicycles. Rising environmental consciousness. Rising land and building prices. The opportunity for Mulholland Scenic Parkway is still open - but for how long?

Following is a brief description of the look and feel of Mulholland today. It is already a great scenic drive, about which these few paragraphs do slight justice. There is no substitute for do-it-yourself: to drive, walk, or bicycle the City's twenty miles - and beyond, all the way to the coast - is an opportunity which must be preserved and enhanced for future generations.

#### **Hollywood Freeway to Laurel Canyon**

In this reach, Mulholland lies just south of the crest affording spectacular views - first of Cahuenga Pass and back toward the easterly end of the range to Griffith Park, then of the changing shape of downtown Los Angeles, then of Hollywood and beyond - some days to the Ocean and Catalina Island.

At Nichols Canyon the road is on the crest with views both North and South, and then it crosses to the north side looking over the San Fernando Valley pattern, particularly striking at night with freeways akin to rivers of light, scattered clusters of tall buildings in the distance, some diagonal streets adding interest, and dark mountains beyond.

This portion has scattered homes and much native vegetation, at least until the regular pads and roofs of Laurelwood at the Mulholland-Laurel Canyon intersection come into view. Except for this intersection, Mulholland provides two lanes of asphalt paving and dirt shoulders, with a 100 foot right-of-way.

#### **Laurel Canyon to San Diego Freeway**

The road migrates back and forth between the south and north sides of the crest. The wedge-shaped Santa Monica Mountain Range widens perceptibly. The canyons are longer. The development projects are larger. The imposition of geometric patterns on the natural ridge and canyon topography is harsh. By contrast, the watersheds above the Department of Water and Power's Franklin and Stone Canyon Reservoirs are thickly green and undisturbed, with glimpses of the sparkling waters below.

The traffic increases for a short half-mile where Coldwater Canyon Drive and Mulholland become one, and then most of the traffic drops down into the Valley. Between Benedict Canyon and Beverly Glen, a new half-mile portion of Mulholland is built to the more urban standards of a city - wider, concrete curbs, with designed medians and edges at Beverly Glen. Rustic and scenic Mulholland is comprised if not lost here, because of cross mountain traffic.

Elsewhere, the roadway remains two-lane asphalt with dirt shoulders. The right-of-way is 200 feet wide, except for a short distance northwest of Franklin Canyon Reservoir

where it is only 100-110 feet. Most of Mulholland has never been surveyed, and much private grading and even parts of some structures lie within this right-of-way.

#### **San Diego Freeway to Topanga Canyon Boulevard**

Mulholland crosses the Freeway on a bridge, a strange and dazzling sight at night as red taillights flow away in the distance. West of the Freeway, the roadway is paved for about a mile, serving two private schools, a church, and a stretch of residential development somewhat urban in quality.

The pavement then stops, and Mulholland continues as a two-lane graded dirt roadway. "There is no development adjacent to this portion of the road and the approximately 9 mile stretch of land in this area is a wilderness", as reported in the State's 1967 study. This "wilderness", however, offers us power lines and utility installations.

There are panoramic views of mountains, valley, and ocean. The as-yet undisturbed canyons and ridges are spectacular, and there are rolling areas and meadows as well. The native chaparral changes as the marine influence becomes more pronounced. On the south side, the City is far away, but nearby to the north are the developments of the valley and the foothills. The Encino Reservoir is quite close, and the first view of it comes as a dramatic surprise.

This unpaved portion undoubtedly offers the best potential for a full, well planned parkway, and it has been the subject of official and private planning studies during the last decade.

East of Canoga the paving resumes - the familiar two-lane roadway with rustic residential development nearby. Abruptly, Mulholland then changes to a very wide and very urban four-lane highway, as it crosses Topanga and descends to the valley in an inglorious and decidedly non-parkway finale at the City's west boundary. Finally, westerly in the County, after an urbanized stretch, Mulholland becomes two lanes again, traversing over 30 miles of varied, spectacular, and beautiful valley and mountain scenery to the coast - rich in natural, scientific, historical, and archeological interest, as well as in esthetic and recreational potential.



## DESIGN CRITERIA

### Roadway

#### Lanes

- Two travel lanes, one in each direction, each 15 feet wide;
- Passing lane segments at appropriate locations;

#### Reasons:

- Preserve the natural atmosphere and scenic experience, the unique charm and extraordinary value of Mulholland Drive;
- Preserve maximum area in the right-of-way for trail and recreational purposes;
- Minimum disturbance of natural terrain; (A wider road would require severe cutting and filling, leaving scarred slopes too steep for planting.)
- Grading shall be kept to an absolute minimum. All grading shall be contour grading, gently sculptured and softened to blend with natural contours, and landscaped with trees and shrubs;
- Minimum damage to the access and frontage of many existing homes that adjoin the right-of-way;
- Minimum obstruction of the view by moving traffic;
- Minimum danger to those who must occasionally cross the Parkway to utilize the Parkway's recreational facilities;
- Minimum cost of construction and maintenance;
- Wide lanes provided for safety and comfort;
- Passing lane segments provided to facilitate easy movement of traffic;
- From both the present traffic flow on Mulholland Drive and the Committee's projection of traffic requirements, the Committee concludes that future traffic on the Mulholland Parkway will be efficiently and safely met by a two lane roadway.

#### This conclusion is based upon the following factors:

- Future large subdivisions in the Santa Monica Mountains need not, and must not, utilize the Mulholland Scenic Parkway as their primary access road;
- Cross-mountain traffic (north-south), which might otherwise utilize the Mulholland Parkway, will be minimized by an improved traffic flow through Cahuenga Pass and Sepulveda Pass, by mass transit, and by the use of cross mountain roads which do not necessarily provide vehicular access to the Mulholland Parkway;

Revisions of the Santa Monica Mountain Master Plan, now in preparation, will reduce density for future subdivisions and thus further reduce future access and traffic requirements;

The continuing acquisition of large parcels of land for parks in the Santa Monica Mountains will create less traffic. Proposed Park plans call for low density development of the parks and surrounding areas. Park access will be facilitated by public transportation, and park traffic will not usually occur during normal rush hours.

(Attached as an exhibit to this report is a letter from the State Department of Parks and Recreation which discusses the likely traffic relationship of the Mulholland Parkway to the State parks.)

#### Median

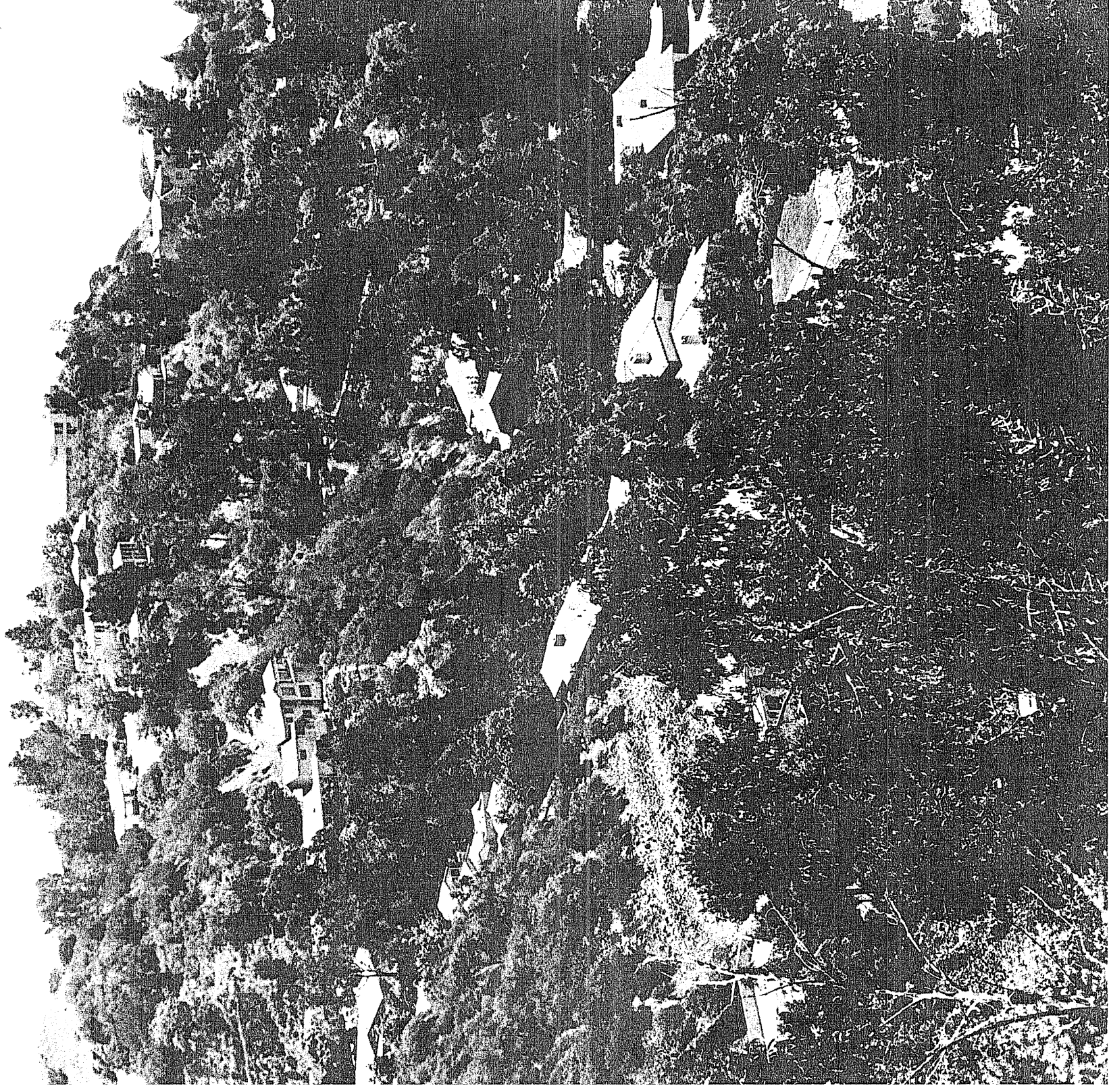
- No continuous constructed median strip;
- Where topography dictates, a roadway divided around a natural feature - such as a hill - thus serving as a "natural median", may be desirable to preserve important natural and scenic features;

#### Reasons:

- Preserve and enhance view, and natural and scenic quality;
- Minimum disturbance of natural terrain;
- East of the San Diego freeway, a constructed median would necessitate extensive and costly condemnation of existing homes;
- West of the San Diego freeway, a constructed median would necessitate extensive and costly cut and fill;
- Minimize cost of landscaping and eliminate the continuous maintenance cost of a median;
- Facilitate movement of police, fire and other emergency vehicles;
- Preserve maximum area of the right-of-way for trails and Parkway facilities;
- Preserve easy access to existing private driveways that exit onto Mulholland;
- Scenic Parkway safety needs met by limited speed and by wide lanes, rather than by artificial median.

#### Shoulders

- Shoulders with a natural look - hard surfaced, but not with concrete or black-top;



- 8 feet wide, except where topography dictates less;
  - Rolled berms instead of curbs;
  - No sidewalks;
- Reasons:
- Preserve natural look. Curbs and sidewalks are unnecessary and inconsistent with Parkway character;
  - Trails satisfy all walking and bicycling needs;
  - Rolled berms allow emergency access to shoulders by vehicles.

#### Speed

- 30 mile per hour speed limit and a variable design speed not exceeding 35 miles per hour (present Mulholland Drive speed limit varies between 25 and 30 miles per hour);
- Lower speeds posted for sharp curves;
- Roadway grade and curve radius to be variable, so as to minimize impact on landscape;

#### Reasons:

- Provide low-speed recreational drive and maintain safety standards;
- Preserve scenic character;
- Higher design speed necessitates excessive and costly grading and condemnation.

#### Intersections and Access

- Minimum number of intersections;
- Turn pockets at major intersections;
- Offset intersections (i.e., cross streets that jog at Mulholland) must be avoided;
- Minimum number of cross mountain roads. All such roads need not and shall not intersect the Mulholland Parkway or provide vehicular access to the Parkway. Tunnels, overpasses, and underpasses must be utilized wherever feasible;
- Future subdivisions adjoining the right-of-way shall not front upon or have driveway access to the Mulholland Parkway; existing lots shall not have driveway access to the Mulholland Parkway, unless there is no feasible alternative;
- Any future subdivisions need not and shall not use the Mulholland Parkway as their primary access road;

- Emergency access intersections permitted; but restricted with a barrier which yields easily to the force of a vehicle. (An example is the Hill Park Drive-Hollywood Highlands apartment area near the Hollywood Bowl).

#### Reasons:

- Retain parkway atmosphere, scenic quality, and minimize interference with trails, yet provide efficient and safe flow of Parkway traffic.

#### Utilities and Street Fixtures

- Underground all wiring in right-of-way and in adjacent areas;
- Lighting only at intersections and vista points/parking areas;
- Lighting shall be of a minimum intensity; no mercury-vapor or similar lights to be used;
- All street fixtures to be kept to a minimum;
- Special design for lights and other required street fixtures appropriate to Parkway character;
- Hydrants and call boxes to have specially designed protective barriers in lieu of curbs.

#### Reasons:

- Maintain and enhance parkway atmosphere, preserve scenic quality, and avoid creation of an urban street.

#### Alignment

- *Griffith Park to Hollywood Freeway*: Foot, bike, and equestrian trails only, no roadway. Continuity of the trails from Griffith Park to Topanga Canyon Boulevard, and through the County to the Ocean, is an essential feature of the Parkway;
- *Hollywood Freeway to San Diego Freeway*: Present alignment satisfactory; re-alignments would require excessive and costly grading and condemnation; special design and landscape treatment to restore natural character and scenic quality where needed;
- *San Diego Freeway to Topanga Canyon Boulevard*: Minor alignment changes to increase safety, minimize disturbance of terrain, and maximize scenic view; where realignments are made, the land in the original alignment should be retained for such purposes as scenic enhancement, view sites, and trails;
- *“Scenic Loops”*: Serious consideration should be given in future years to the enhancement of the Parkway by the creation of scenic loops. One scenic loop could begin at Sepulveda Boulevard, travel through the Mission

Canyon landfill, and return to the present alignment at “Eastridge”, just west of Calneva. Another could begin just east of Canoga Avenue, travel through the Los Angeles County area until it joins Mulholland Highway in the County, west of Topanga Canyon Boulevard, and - hopefully - continue on to the Pacific Ocean. Both loops would afford dramatic views of the sea.

#### Trails

- Hiking, equestrian and bicycle trails shall be developed from Griffith Park (and Elysian Park) westerly along the entire length of the Mulholland Parkway to Topanga Canyon Boulevard, and, through cooperation with other jurisdictions, to the ocean;
- Vista points and other locations of interest shall be accessible by trail;
- Trails shall be developed to standards now being established by the city;
- Access trails up from the foothills shall be included in all community plans and shall be required as a condition of future subdivisions;
- All trails need not be within the present right-of-way; Department of Water and Power lands, easements, and park lands, for example, should be utilized;
- Trails to be separated from the roadway, unless not feasible;
- Where necessary, hikers and equestrians can share one trail. Bicycle trails need a firm surface and have different grade and curve radius requirements. In developed portions of Mulholland, where physical constraints preclude all alternatives, a portion of one shoulder can be used for the bicycle trail and the other shoulder can be used for riding and hiking. The continuity of the trails, however, is essential to the success of the Parkway;
- No motor vehicles on trails;
- User groups should be invited to aid in trail planning, development, and maintenance.

#### Vista Points and Recreation Sites

- Parking areas shall be landscaped, and surfaced with materials creating a hard surface but affording a natural look. Standard concrete or asphalt is undesirable;
- Picnic areas, drinking fountains, restroom facilities, watering roughs, hitching rails, and simple shade structures shall be provided at larger sites;

- No permanent commercial facilities shall be permitted;
- Interpretive facilities displaying and explaining historic, scientific and educational aspects of the area shall be incorporated within the Parkway facilities;
- Certain lands adjacent to the Mulholland Parkway must be acquired for the vista points, park and recreation sites, and parking facilities. Acquisition of a fee interest, of development rights alone, or of scenic easements where applicable (perhaps as conditions to the approval of subdivision maps), are among the possible alternatives for public acquisition;
- The Committee has toured and examined the full extent of Mulholland Drive from the Hollywood Freeway to Topanga Canyon Boulevard. The Committee recommends that a program be established for the acquisition of the appropriate public interest in the relevant portions of the following described locations, and for the identification and acquisition of additional desirable locations:

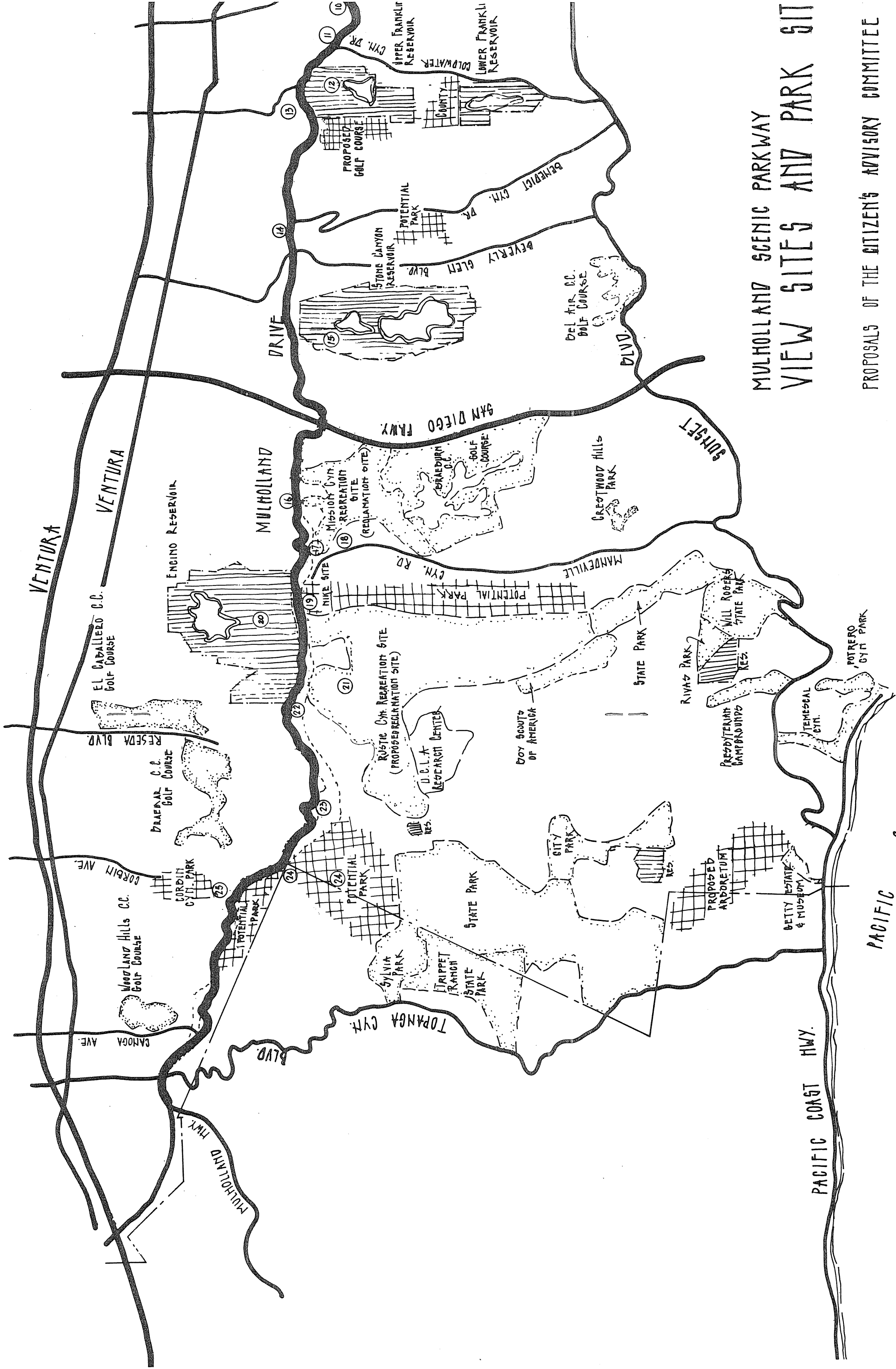
#### Griffith Park West to Hollywood Freeway

1. Undeveloped lands in the Lake Hollywood area will provide excellent park/picnic/view sites and trails.

#### Hollywood Freeway West to San Diego Freeway

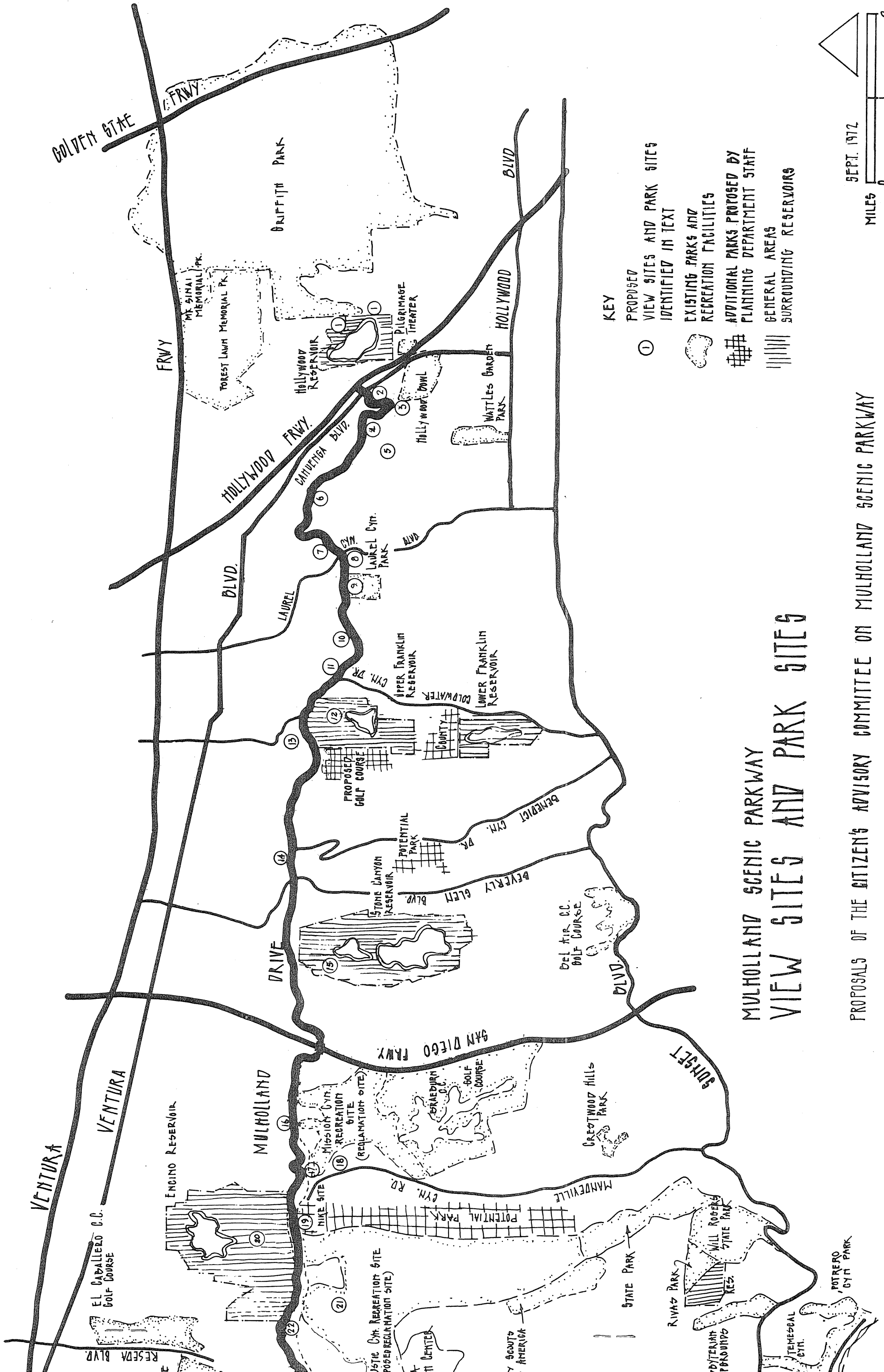
2. Hill Park Drive area: Both sides of Mulholland: hill-top view site and unused subdivision site. Parking/possible picnic site/trails.
3. Hollywood Bowl view site: View of city, long ridge with trail possibilities.  
From No. 2 to No. 3, good trail possibilities.
4. “Kinder” lots — west of Base Line Trail and Dept. of Water and Power: View of city, ledge within corridor, parking along road.
5. Pyramid Place — Desmond Hill Estates Road: Spectacular view knoll with long trails/park plus lovely pocket park of about an acre, presently for sale.
6. “Errol Flynn Ranch” (head of Nichols Canyon) Existing historical marker: Excellent park and recreational possibilities; natural ravine; access to ridges, plus valley view site.  
Approaching Fire Station No. 97 from east, already re-aligned road leaves available area for landscaping and trails.
7. Site adjacent to Fire Station No. 97: Already graded for view site overlooking valley, hiking trail possibilities to high knoll to the south.
8. Southwest corner Mulholland and Laurel Canyon: Park site under preparation. Area is presently being filled.





MULHOLLAND SCENIC PARKWAY  
VIEW SITES AND PARK SIT

PROPOSALS OF THE CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE



- KEY**
- PROPOSED
  - ① VIEW SITES AND PARK SITES IDENTIFIED IN TEXT
  - EXISTING PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES
  - ADDITIONAL PARKS PROPOSED BY PLANNING DEPARTMENT STAFF
  - GENERAL AREAS
  - SURROUNDING RESERVOIRS

## MULHOLLAND SCENIC PARKWAY VIEW SITES AND PARK SITES

PROPOSALS OF THE CITIZEN'S ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MULHOLLAND SCENIC PARKWAY

SEPT. 1972



9. Laurel Canyon landfill: City owned park site, under preparation. Recreational possibilities/trails/park. Large knoll to the south should be included.
10. Laurel Pass: Park and view site of valley. Large knoll opposite good trail area.
11. Portion of Spindler Hill area opposite Bowmont Drive overlooking valley: View site/parking/knoll/trails.
12. Franklin Canyon Reservoir: Lovely natural area with lake and creek, including surrounding knolls and high points on west side. Heartland of proposed Mulholland regional park complex. Should include abandoned fire station across Mulholland already designated a future park (land swap completed for Sepulveda Basin fire station re-location). Major park and recreational purposes, e.g., Ferndell; primary acquisition choice; trail loops and linkages from foothills.  
Vacant golf course property (Beverly Ridge); good recreational area.
13. Lustgarden Hills: North side of Mulholland across from vacant golf course. Good valley view and extensive trail uses.  
View sites just west of this location within road dedication or corridor.

14. Benedict Canyon-Beverly Glen: City-owned "cut" hill on north side next to Dept. of Water & Power substation should be view site with trails running north on ridge. Good possibilities for trails from foothills.

15. Stone Canyon Reservoir area: Already in public ownership, this area could be major park/recreational uses. Westerly entrance to reservoir has view site and excellent open space area on valley side. Frontage and access on Mulholland needed.

#### *San Diego Freeway West to Topanga Canyon Boulevard*

16. Opposite Mountain Patrol Fire Station, just east of Calneva: Existing small view site, natural area with trees, parking.
17. Mission Canyon Regional Park at Encino Hills Drive: Potential park and view site overlooking Mission Canyon.
18. Kenter Ridge: View site with trail leading to Crestwood Hills Park.
19. Abandoned Nike site should be retained for view site, picnic area and interpretive center.
20. Encino Reservoir: Expansive open area, trails on ridges of reservoir property, prime recreational uses, access to Sepulveda Basin via powerline easement.
21. Rustic-Sullivan Canyons: Trails leading to site of County landfill in Sullivan Canyon and to Camp Josepho Boy Scout Camp along Rustic Ridge and to Will Rodgers State Park.
22. High ground west of Encino Reservoir, south side of Mulholland, westerly from water tanks: Best views of ocean and entire San Fernando Valley. (Shown on Mulholland Scenic Development Plan)

23. Reseda-Temescal fire road with high mountain knoll: (Potential scenic area on Mulholland Scenic Development Plan) Excellent scenic picnic area: large bowl south of Mulholland west of Temescal fire road currently being considered for acquisition by State Parks Dept. This beautiful area could be the entrance to State Park.

24. High knoll, south side of Mulholland, just east of Van Alden fire road at point of county and city boundary above Santa Maria Canyon: Large oaks, all year stram, rock formations. Primary acquisition by City/County/State as trail connection between Mulholland and State Park at Trippet Ranch and Eagle Springs.

25. Corbin Canyon, north side of Mulholland between Tarzana and Woodland Hills: Excellent park land and vital link in chain of parks concept. Primary acquisition by City.

Entire area should have a comprehensive trail network leading north and south from Mulholland into foothill communities. Trails shown on Community Plans as well as trails linking proposed park sites should be included to insure access other than by motor vehicles to entire Santa Monica Mountain area.

Any additional scenic view sites shown on 1966 Mulholland Scenic Development Plan.

#### **Landscape and Special Design Features**

Fire resistant native plants and trees, and other compatible materials suited to hillside conditions, shall be emphasized to preserve natural character and minimize maintenance costs;

Irrigation shall be utilized, as necessary, to sustain plants and to make the Mulholland Parkway a green belt - a fire resistant corridor - for fire control; reclaimed water could be used, possible from the Sepulveda Basin facility; drainage shall be designed to conserve rain water;

All necessary grading to be contour graded and fully landscaped;

Landscaping should soften and beautify the Parkway and should create minimum interference with the view; except to screen existing unsightly views;

Avoid standard concrete; natural effect desired;

No commercial signs allowed;

All necessary signs, street fixtures, and road related facilities shall be specially designed to enhance the natural and scenic experience;

Bridges and tunnels preferable to massive cuts and fills;

#### **Vehicles**

- No commercial or truck traffic except emergency and service vehicles;
- Sightseeing minibuses recommended.

#### **Transportation and Parking**

- Access to the Mulholland Parkway and adjoining parks must not depend solely on the private automobile; residents and visitors without cars must have the means to enjoy one of the city's great resources; heavy traffic and high density parking, moreover, is inconsistent with Parkway character;
- Bus service should be provided from all the communities of Los Angeles to points within the Mulholland Parkway, and between the Parkway and other recreational areas, such as the Sepulveda Basin;
- School and visitor tours should be encouraged;
- Downtown minibuses, not in weekend use, would serve well on the Mulholland Parkway, affording (free) access and tours along the Parkway;
- Large parking lots along the Mulholland Parkway are neither desirable nor necessary; for the most part, the vista points, adjacent parks, and occasional use of roadway shoulders will afford ample dispersed parking for Parkway sightseeing and recreation;
- Peripheral parking should be planned for peak periods, with a bus shuttle to the Parkway; facilities with existing parking lots - such as the Hollywood Bowl or public schools - may be utilized on appropriate occasions.

## SCENIC CORRIDOR

A scenic corridor is a means to preserve the scenic quality of the visible land area outside the Parkway right-of-way itself. Delineation of the corridors and application of other standards for the corridors should be flexible, with the accomplishment of the intended objective being the primary concern. For example, where a natural barrier within the corridor (a hill, for example), blocks the distant view from the Parkway, the area beyond this barrier need not be subjected to the corridor's protective standards.

The following scenic corridor protection standards, based largely on Engineering and Planning Department proposals and on the Planning Department's 1967 proposed Corridor Protection Plan, are recommended as an essential feature in preserving and enhancing the scenic quality and the "ribbon park" function of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway.

### Outer Corridor: One Half Mile From Each Side of Existing Right-of-Way

- Maximum preservation of natural terrain and vegetation shall be required.
- Subdivision location and design shall be regulated to protect and preserve the natural terrain and scenic resources;
- Buildings or structures shall not exceed three stories or 45 feet, and shall not interfere with the quality of the view from the Mulholland Parkway or from Parkway facilities;
- No commercial signs shall be allowed. No residential or real estate "For Sale or Rent" signs, exceeding six square feet, shall be allowed in any area visible from the Mulholland Parkway road, trails, or vista points.
- No new commercial developments shall be permitted, except recreational facilities directly related to the Parkway; non-conforming use status to be accorded to the few existing commercial structures and uses;
- Grading for public and private projects shall be kept to an absolute minimum. All grading shall be contour grading, gently sculptured and softened to blend with natural contours, and landscaped with trees and shrubs;
- Special grading criteria for the Mulholland Parkway and its scenic corridors shall be developed and implemented with the objective of avoiding grading wherever possible. To visualize what is meant, observe two neighboring developed areas as seen from the present Mulholland Drive: The Outpost Drive Section, in the Hollywood area, largely developed before the implementation of modern grading techniques, offers a pleasing and satisfying view. The topography has not been greatly altered; the houses nestle into the hills. Contrast Outpost with Mount

- Olympus, between Nichols Canyon and Laurel Canyon. Here, the hills have been sliced and gashed, creating an ugly, harsh, and barren view that will never compare with Outpost, even if and when landscaping is fully grown. Similar - perhaps more striking - examples abound as we move westward.

- A design review procedure shall be established for all proposed public and private developments to ensure adherence to the above standards. Environmental impact studies and statements shall be required for both public and private proposed projects. Single family homes on individual lots, and in "minor projects" (to be clearly defined) which involve only minor grading, or minor structures or modifications, shall be excepted from the design review procedure and shall not be required to file environmental impact statements.

### Inner Corridor: 500 Feet From Each Side of Existing Right-of-Way

- The Inner Corridor area shall be subject to all Outer Corridor standards noted above. However, no further grading and no new structures shall be permitted within this area, except for trails, vista points, and other proposed facilities complementary to the Parkway.
- Allowance shall be made for a variance or exception procedure for hardship cases involving single family residences only. Provisions of any such variance shall include conditions for site plan, design review and approval, and screen landscaping (fence or wall) to insure preservation of views from the roadway. The provision of any such variance should also seek to preclude any new direct driveway access onto the Mulholland Parkway, any new frontage on the Mulholland Parkway, or the use of the Mulholland Parkway right-of-way for private grading purposes. No use variances shall be permitted.
- Among the techniques which might be used by the City to accomplish these objectives are the imposition of subdivision conditions, the acquisition of rights-of-first-refusal to acquire properties within the corridor placed on the market for sale, and acquisition of scenic easements or development rights on critical properties along the route.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Parkway program will combine a variety of disciplines and will involve among other things, detailed design management, coordination and review, and legislation and finance. The Committee makes the following recommendations for the implementation of this report.

### Design Plan

A detailed design plan shall be prepared as early as possible, showing the roadway, trails, scenic turnouts and vista points, existing and proposed park and other public lands, points of scientific, cultural and historic interest, cuts and fills, utilities, landscaping, and other aspects. Each of these elements shall be developed in an integrated manner, not as separate items. The Design Plan shall include the Scenic Corridor Protection measures recommended herein and shall incorporate an appropriate design review procedure to become effective when the Design Plan is officially adopted.

The Mulholland Scenic Parkway Design Plan shall be adopted as an element of the General Plan and incorporated in all relevant community plans and technical elements. A study should be initiated examining the cost, method, and feasibility of utilizing reclaimed or other water in the development of the Mulholland Parkway as a firebreak corridor.

### Mulholland Parkway Coordinator

For efficiency and quality results, one individual should be charged with the responsibility of leading and coordinating the many aspects of Mulholland Parkway planning; developing and implementing the Design Plan, in cooperation with the Citizens'Advisory Committee. The Committee recommends that the City Engineer, or his appointee, be designated as the Coordinator.

The Coordinator's responsibilities should include the following:

- Direction and management of Design Plan preparation;
- Direction of the development of special grading standards for Scenic Corridors;
- Liaison with City departments, other jurisdictions and agencies;
- Close working relationship with the Citizens' Advisory Committee;
- Staff Assistance to Citizens'Advisory Committee.

### Interdepartmental Task Force

The Mulholland Scenic Parkway Design Plan should be prepared by a task force of Los Angeles City department

personnel, with the continuing assistance of the Citizens' Advisory Committee under the supervision of the Parkway Coordinator.

The Mulholland Parkway Design Task Force should be an interdisciplinary professional team, with representatives from Engineering, Planning, Recreation and Parks, Traffic, and such other agencies as may be appropriate, under the direction of the Parkway Coordinator.

### Mulholland Parkway Citizens' Advisory Committee

Concerned citizen interest, which has played such an important role in the history of Mulholland Drive, should continue to be an important factor in the realization of the Scenic Parkway. Accordingly, the Citizens'Advisory Committee should function actively throughout the planning and implementation stages of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway - and, thereafter, as a general advisory group dedicated to maintaining the integrity of the Parkway.

The present Committee should be augmented by appointees of the Councilmen whose districts do not encompass Mulholland Drive - in recognition of the City-wide benefits of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway - and the further addition of an architect, an engineer, a landscape architect, and a member of the Cultural Heritage Board, all appointed by the City Council upon recommendation from the Committee.

The Committee's tasks should include:

- Assistance to the Parkway Coordinator and the Interdepartmental Task Force on a regular, periodic basis during the development of the Design Plan;
- Approval of the Design Plan by the Committee to be a mandatory requirement prior to the submission of the Design Plan to the City for official review and formal adoption;
- Review and advice on current public and private projects within the Inner and Outer Corridors, pending adoption of the Design Plan and of the special grading standards;
- Policy recommendations to the City Council on matters affecting the Mulholland Scenic Parkway;
- Communications channel between citizen groups and the City on matters relating to the Mulholland Scenic Parkway;
- Liaison to other citizen groups.

## FINANCING

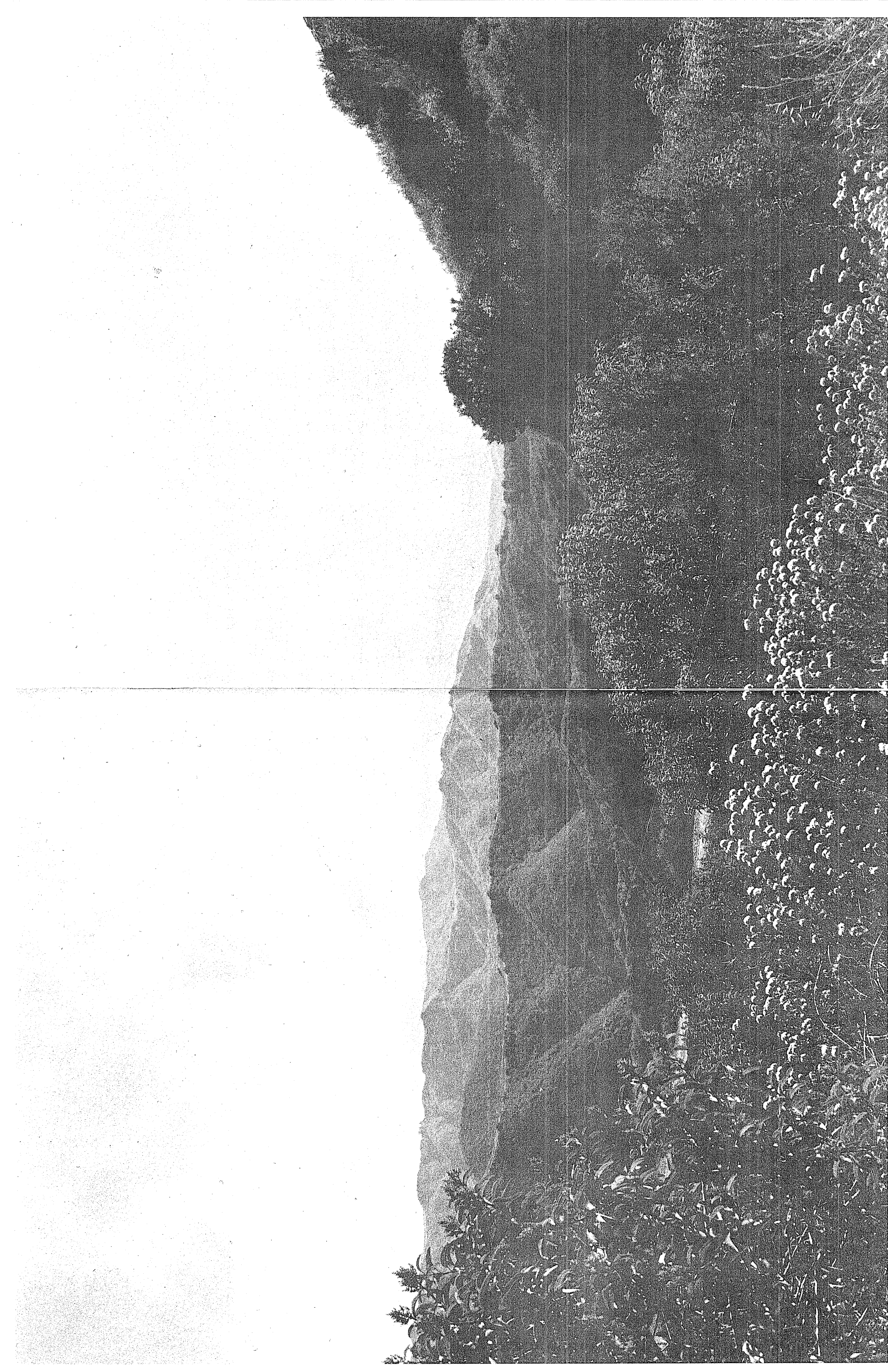
Economic factors have been an integral part of all deliberations of this Committee. In considering the Parkway, the conservationist approach became the economical approach. While it was not in the purview of this Committee to do a detailed financial analysis, it is nevertheless the Committee's belief that the program proposed in this report - de-emphasizing massive construction and reconstruction of the natural terrain -- is the most economical of a number of alternatives, and most fully realizes the potentials of this beautiful scenic drive.

The following funding sources have been researched and found to be available for the development of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway.

- **Gas Tax Fund**
- **Capital Improvement Program.** Inclusion in the Capital Improvement Program would enable work to proceed as funds became available. Recommended inclusion in Recreation and Park Capital Improvement Program, as well, for the purchase of park sites along the Parkway.
- **Subdivision Requirements.** Developers are now required to pay for costly street improvements. Parkway requirements will be less expensive than requirements for major highway improvements.
- **\$200 Unit Fee for Park Acquisition.** It is estimated that the Recreation and Parks Department will gain annually from \$3½ million to \$4½ million from this source alone.
- **Quimby Bill Funds**
- **Los Angeles County Funds.** The County may share the costs of developments of regional interest. The County Department of Parks and Recreation already has urged the development of the full recreational potential of the Mulholland alignment, from the San Diego Freeway west to the Pacific Ocean at Leo Carrillo State Park and Beach.
- **Assessment District**
- **General Obligation Bonds**
- **Gifts and Tax Incentives.** Scenic viewpoints, for example, can serve as lasting memorials.
- **Bagley Conservation Fund (first year withholding tax sum).** A portion is earmarked for park acquisition, part of which might be used for the purchase of vista points, trails, and picnic sites.
- **Future State and Federal Funds.** These funds may materialize as part of a State Parkway program and/or a Federal Parkway system, especially with relation to the proposed National Urban Park.

### Related Recommendations

- Amend all necessary elements of the General and community plans to incorporate the Mulholland Scenic Parkway;
- No further acquisition of land in Santa Monica Mountains for landfills;
- Fire protection methods should be appropriate to mountain area;
- Smoking regulations should be strengthened;
- Police Department should consider modifying its Department's division lines to ensure the safety of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway. (The road is now the dividing line of five divisions.)
- The Department of Water and Power owns major and choice open spaces. The City Council and this Committee should explore this potential for public park and recreational use - with the understanding that certain limitations are needed to protect water quality;
- Development and strict enforcement of improved laws on subdivision and buildings, traffic, fire, littering, and similar matters to insure the integrity and success of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway.



APPENDICES AND EXHIBITS

Council Motion

Persons Testifying

State Department of Recreation and Parks, letter

Resource Materials

70-5000 S-86

CITY OF LOS ANGELES CALIFORNIA



CITY CLERK ROBERTA CITY HALL LOS ANGELES, CALIF. 90012

SAM YORTY MAYOR

October 6, 1971

Honorable Sam Yorty, Mayor... Honorable John S. Gibson, President of the City Council... Councilman Donald D. Lorenzen - Councilman, Second District... Councilman Edmund D. Edelman - Councilman, Fifth District... Councilman Marvin Braude - Councilman, Eleventh District... Councilman Robert J. Stevenson - Councilman, Thirteenth District... Councilman Arthur K. Snyder - Councilman, Fourteenth District... Board of Public Works - 5... Planning Department... City Administrative Officer... State Division of Highways - 120 So. Spring St., Los Angeles 90012

At the meeting of the Council held October 6, 1971, the attached motion was adopted.

Ray E. Keyton

City Clerk mls

CITY ENGINEER

OCT 13 1971

BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS

DIRECTOR OF THE BUREAU OF STREET LIGHTING

SEP - 02W - Board - A'll Squed - WLA - WY - EV - Hol - King - Sweeney - Doran - Lenons - Riley - Dennis - Tillman - Parase - Zimney - Yatt - ... (2)

REFERRED TO YOU FOR THE NECESSARY ATTENTION

MO T I O N

I MOVE that Mulholland Drive between the Hollywood Freeway and the Ventura Freeway be designated as a City Scenic Parkway.

I FURTHER MOVE that there be a Citizens' Advisory Committee to assist the City bureaus and agencies in determining plans, design standards and criteria for developing Mulholland Drive as a City Scenic Parkway.

I FURTHER MOVE that the Citizens' Advisory Committee be composed of a total of 12 people (Councilmen of Districts 2, 3, 5, 11, 13, and 14 to appoint two persons each) and that inasmuch as possible these persons shall have expertise in the areas of public health and safety, parks, landscape design, recreation, urban geography and related fields.

Handwritten notes and signatures: 'New p. report to Pres. of the City Council', 'Lorenzen - CD # 2', 'Edelman - CD # 3', 'Stevenson - CD # 5', 'Snyder - CD # 11', 'Parase - CD # 13', 'Zimney - CD # 14', '10-5-71', 'Ray E. Keyton', 'S. Y. Gibson'.

PRESENTED BY

FORNOLD D. LORENZEN Councilman, Third District

SECONDED BY

MARVIN BRAUDE Councilman, Eleventh District

ADOPTED OCT 6 1971

LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

SPEAKERS AND PRESENTATIONS TO COMMITTEE

December 9, 1971 - April 27, 1972

Planning Department, City of Los Angeles  
Calvin Hamilton, Director of Planning  
Bert Fullmer, City Planner, Community Plans Section  
Tom Stenrock, City Planner, Transportation Section

Bureau of Engineering, City of Los Angeles  
Donald C. Tillman, City Engineer  
Irving R. Cole, West Los Angeles District Engineer  
Shogi Fukuma, Civil Engineer, Street Opening and Widening  
Larry Greer, Civil Engineering Associate, Street Opening and Widening  
Donald Howery, Division Engineer, Street Opening & Widening  
Lloyd Paulsen, East Valley District Engineer  
Billy Schubert, West Valley District Engineer

Traffic Department, City of Los Angeles  
Sam Taylor, City Traffic Engineer  
Melbert Huber, Traffic Engineering Associate  
A.L. Hutchison, Deputy City Traffic Engineer  
Recreation and Parks Department, City of Los Angeles  
Ted. C. Heyl, Assistant to the Planning Officer

Fire Department, City of Los Angeles  
Chief Anthony Jordan  
Police Department, City of Los Angeles  
Lt. Al Schlocker, Community Relations Officer, West Los Angeles

Water and Power Department, City of Los Angeles  
Robert C. Burt, Sr. Electrical Engineer, Design & Construction  
James Wickser, Sr. Waterworks Engineer  
Councilman Marvin Braude, Chairman, Ventura-Los Angeles Mountain and Coastal Study Commission

Los Angeles City Council Deputies:  
Carl Knoll - Councilman Joel Wachs  
Marion Morrison - Councilman Marvin Braude  
Wanda Valentine - Councilman Donald D. Lorenzen (liaison with appointing Councilmen)

City Administrative Officer  
Norman Gottlieb, Chief Administrative Analyst, Bureau of Budget and Efficiency

Los Angeles County Department of Recreation and Parks  
Hubert Duke, Head Park Planner

Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission  
Ray Ristic, Highway Planning  
Robert Crawford, Development Plans and Subdivision

California Department of Parks and Recreation  
Robert M. Baker, Assistant Deputy Director

Other Speakers and Participants:

William Bridges, Member, State Scenic Highway Commission; Member, Los Angeles Beautiful; Private Landscape Architect  
Walter J. Canton - Lantain Corporation

Donald Cunningham - Land Use Consultant, Rep. of Tucker Land Company

Francis Dean, Landscape Architect: Consultant to Ventura-Los Angeles Mountain and Coastal Study Commission

Ernest Friedberg, Encino Chamber of Commerce

Carol Hamcke, Midvalley Ecology Committee, PTA

Frank E. Hurd, Mulholland Landowner

Jack Kinder, Mulholland Landowner

Nelson Leonard, Chief Archaeologist, Dept. of Anthropology, UCLA

Stuart Martin, Mulholland Landowner and Developer

Susan Nelson, Friends of the Santa Monica Mountains Park

Ken Outwater, Landscape Architect, Land Use Consultant

Murray Rosenthal, Sierra Club

Kaz Sei, Jennings Engineering

Robert Shelton, Lantain Corporation

William Shepherd Traffic Consultant, Wilbur Smith & Assoc.

H. Randall Stoke, Attorney, Rep. of Mulholland Landowners

Dudley Trudgett, Landscape Architect

VTN Development Representatives

Observers from Citizens groups, other developers and landowners, residents, Urban Planning students, and interested citizens

## DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

128 Plaza Street  
Los Angeles, California 90012



March 27, 1972

Mr. Ira Yellin  
c/o Stella Devoran  
4149 Salttillo  
Woodland Hills, California 91364

Dear Mr. Yellin:

Your Committee's efforts to develop environmentally sound criteria for the Mulholland Parkway is highly commendable.


During the meeting of March 8, I was asked whether the State Department of Parks and Recreation felt that a Mulholland Roadway was necessary to provide adequate access to the State Parks.

As I explained to the Mulholland Advisory Committee, the State Park System is considering low density development for all of its units in the Santa Monica Mountains. This includes Leo Carrillo State Beach, Santa Monica State Park, Point Mugu State Park. Originally, these parks were going to have high density development, consequently, the visitor use would have been quite high, thereby requiring major roadways for public access to the parks. This is no longer the case, and the Department of Parks and Recreation, based on discussions with the Division of Highways, has concluded that Highways 101 and 1 can adequately handle the anticipated traffic.

I also pointed out that in the opinion of the Department, the primary purpose of a parkway can and should be a recreational end in itself. Maximum speed limits should be approximately 35 miles per hour, with numerous vista points with adequate parking. The design of the parkway should conform to the natural terrain, thereby diminishing or totally eliminating the need for cuts and fills, which would visually intrude in otherwise a natural scene.

Our Department has not been involved in any parkway studies since completing the California Parkways Preliminary Report on California Parkways, a Plan for a Statewide Parkway System.

Thanks again for the opportunity to explain to your advisory committee, our department's past, present, and future programs.

Sincerely,  
  
Robert M. Baker,  
Assistant Deputy Director

RMB:sf

cc: William Penn Mott, Jr., Director  
Ray Hunter, Deputy Director

## RESOURCE MATERIALS — MULHOLLAND SCENIC PARKWAY

Mulholland Scenic Parkway--Citizens' Advisory Committee

*Action on the Los Angeles Environment*, Mayor's Council on Environmental Management, July 1971

*Bikeways Plan (Preliminary)*, Los Angeles City Planning Department, March 1972

Brentwood-Pacific Palisades Citizens' Advisory Committee, Park and Recreation Subcommittee, *Santa Monica Mountains and Coastal Zone*, Preliminary Report, January 12, 1972

Braude, Marvin, Los Angeles Councilman and Chairman, Ventura-Los Angeles Mountain and Coastal Study Commission: Outline for presentation to Committee, and statement

Brooks, Mary E., *Planning for Urban Trails*, American Society of Planning Officials, Report No. 252, December 1969

*Brush Area Fire Protection Plan*, Preliminary Draft, Los Angeles City Fire Department, January 10, 1972

Bureau of Engineering Presentation to Citizens' Advisory Committee on Mulholland Drive, January 12, 9172

*California Parkway Series No. 4*, Mulholland Parkway, Los Angeles County, Preliminary, April 1967

*California Parkways*, A Plan for a State Parkway System, Preliminary Report, California Department of Parks and Recreation, June 1967

Chronological Summary of Events and Actions Re: Mulholland Drive, Prepared by the Department of City Planning, January 5, 1972

Fire Protection Plan--Summary and Recommendation, Staff Report, Los Angeles City Planning Department, City Plan Case 19708

Leonard, N. Nelson, "Relationship and General Importance of Archaeological Resources to Mulholland Parkway", Archaeological Survey, UCLA, March 8, 1972

Los Angeles City-County Fire Board of Inquiry, Final Report, April 12, 1971

*Los Angeles County Grand Jury 1971*, Final Report

Los Angeles Fire Department, Circulars of Information--Fire Hazards of Mountains: *Hydrant Spacing Requirement*; Ordinance No. 138195, Amending Los Angeles Municipal Code relating to fire prevention and fire protection; Circular about Brush Clearance; *Fire Retardant Plants*

Los Angeles Times (copy), Articles on opening of Mulholland Highway as a Scenic Drive, October 19, 1924, December 1, 14, 26, 28, 1924.

Minutes (copy) of Los Angeles Board of Public Works, November 27, 1923, Authorizing Construction on Mulholland; and changes, June 30, 1926; letter requesting reimbursement of expenses on formation of Improvement District, April 15, 1924-- provided by Jack Kinder

*Mulholland Alignment--Development Considerations*, Department of Parks and Recreation, County of Los Angeles, January 19, 1972

*Mulholland Drive City Scenic Parkway--Preliminary Standards and Criteria*, Department of City Planning, January 26, 1972

*Mulholland Highway*, Outline for Presentation to Mulholland Citizens' Advisory Committee, Los Angeles County Regional Planning Commission, Ray Ristic, January 19, 1972

*Mulholland Scenic Drive Preliminary Criteria*, Bureau of Engineering, O&W, January 26, 1972

*Open Space in California: Issues and Options*, Prepared by Western Center Community Education and Development, University of California Extension, in cooperation with California State Office of Planning, 1965

*Parks, Playgrounds and Beaches for the Los Angeles Region*, Olmsted Brothers and Bartholomew and Assoc., Landscape Architects, Report to Citizens' Committee, 1930

Porter, Russell W., *Tools and Techniques for Acquiring and Preserving Open Space*, California Department of Parks and Recreation, Lecture at UCI, May 13, 1971

*The Santa Monica Mountains and Seashore Urban National Park*, Susan Nelson, Report of Friends of the Santa Monica Mountains' Park, January 31, 1972

*Scenic Highway Corridor Survey and Facility Study*, State Division of Highways

*The Scenic Route*, A Guide for the Official Designation of Eligible Scenic Highways, California Department of Public Works, November 1970

*Staff Report*, Department of City Planning: Recommendation from the Director to City Planning Commission (City Plan Case 23663) indicating opposition to City Council Resolution--Request that State Legislature adopt a State Parkway System and that Mulholland Drive be Included Therein, July 1971

*Staff Working Paper*: An Environmental Conservation Element, Los Angeles City Planning Department, August 1970

State of California *Highway Design Manual 1.401.1*, August 7, 1970 *Womensclature* (1-400)

*Subdivision Regulations*, City of Los Angeles, Proposed Comprehensive Revision, Department of City Planning

*Ventura-Los Angeles Mountain and Coastal Study Commission*, Preliminary Report, August 23, 1971; Final Report, March 6, 1972

## Maps

*Bikeways Plan*, An Element of the Los Angeles City General Plan, Preliminary, Prepared by Department of City Planning and the Recreation and Parks Department, March 1972

*Fire Protection Plan*, An Element of the General Plan of the City of Los Angeles, Prepared by Department of City Planning and the Fire Department, October 1971 (Map and Plan)

*General Plan--Santa Monica Mountain Area*, 1964, City Plan Case 9708

*Highways and Freeways with Circulation System*, 1964, City Plan Case 9708, Portion of Master Plan, City of Los Angeles

*Los Angeles Department of Traffic*, 4-year Accident Count, Mulholland Drive

Los Angeles Fire Department Maps, *Fire Roads*, 1965, July 1970



*Major Equestrian and Hiking Trails Plan* -- An Element of the Master Plan of the City of Los Angeles, Prepared by Department of City Planning and the Recreation and Parks Department, December 1968 (Map and Plan)  
*Mountain Fire Districts and Fire Buffer Zone, With Brush Area Fire Protection Plan*, Fire Department, City of Los Angeles  
*Mulholland Drive Scenic Development Plan*, 1964, 1966 City Plan Case No. 12910  
*Santa Monica Mountain Pump Systems*, Current and Proposed Facilities, Department of Water and Power, March 1954--Sept. 1970, Preliminary  
*Santa Monica Mountains*, Contour and Street Pattern, indicating possible cross mountain streets, under study by Mr. Paulson, East District Engineer  
Site Plan for Venture Holding Co., TR 25914, Mulholland Drive and Old Topanga Canyon  
Tract Map, indicating Ownership, area South of Mulholland, West of San Diego Freeway, 1971

8

design and production by the Graphics Section,  
Department of City Planning, Los Angeles, California, 90012

Gene Wolfe, graphics supervisor  
James E. Anderson, publications unit head, design and production  
Cynthia Chono, layout and production  
Mason Dooley, photographer  
Charles Montgomery, city planning associate  
Masaru Matoi, cartographer

**MULHOLLAND SCENIC PARKWAY SPECIFIC PLAN  
(ORDINANCE NO. 167,943)**

**DIRECTOR OF PLANNING SPECIFIC PLAN INTERPRETATION**

**SUBJECT**

INTERPRETATION OF SECTION 3.D., WHICH EXEMPTS PROJECTS THAT HAVE SECURED DISCRETIONARY APPROVAL ON OR BEFORE THE EFFECTIVE DATE OF THE MULHOLLAND SCENIC PARKWAY SPECIFIC PLAN FROM DESIGN REVIEW BY THE MULHOLLAND SCENIC PARKWAY DESIGN REVIEW BOARD, AND FROM THE PROVISIONS OF THE SPECIFIC PLAN.

**DISCUSSION**

This interpretation is limited to Section 3.D. of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan (MSPSP) ordinance which states:

“The provisions of this Specific Plan shall not apply to any project where one or more of the following discretionary approvals initiated by application of the property owners or their representatives, and subject to a public hearing, was granted on or before the effective date of this Specific Plan and is still valid at the time an application for a building permit is filed: zone change, height district change, Specific Plan exception, conditional use, variance, tract map, parcel map, project permit pursuant to an interim control ordinance, coastal development permit or zoning administrator approval pursuant to Section 12.27 of the Code.”

The question has been raised as to whether the above Section would exempt a project which received any of the listed discretionary approvals at any time prior to the effective date of the Specific Plan, if the approval is still valid at the time of an application for a building permit. For example, would a tract map approval in 1936 which has recorded lots, exempt all future building construction on those lots from the provisions of the MSPSP?

Our review of the City Council's findings is that the intent of this section in the Specific Plan was to avoid duplicate reviews for the same project. The City Council included in its findings, Finding #5 which states:

5. Section 3D (Specific Plan Application) “Projects which have received discretionary approval before the effective date of this Specific Plan and such approval is still valid at the time an application for a building permit is filed and in that process were subject to a public hearing are exempt from the provisions of the Specific Plan. These discretionary approvals include change of zone, height district change, specific plan exception, conditional use, variance, tract map, parcel map, project permit pursuant to an interim control ordinance, coastal development permit or Zoning Administrator approval pursuant to Section 12.27 of the Code. This provision is provided

since there is no intent to duplicate other project review processes. The Citizen's Advisory Committee for the Mulholland Scenic Parkway has been reviewing proposed project since approximately 1982 within the Specific Plan area to insure that they conform to the spirit and intent of the report of the Citizen's Advisory Committee on the Mulholland Scenic Parkway, and since subdivisions and parcel map applications have been subject to the LAMC Section 17.05S, Mulholland Scenic Parkway, such projects have already been reviewed as to their conformity with the intent of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway and therefore do not require further review."

The Mulholland Scenic Parkway has provisions requiring conformance with the spirit and intent of the Report of the Citizens' Advisory Committee on the Mulholland Scenic Parkway as adopted by the City Council March 26, 1973. Additionally, effective October 3, 1974, it became the duty of the Advisory Agency to interpret and apply standards to tract and parcel map applications that were subject to the LAMC Division of Land Section 17.05S. Between 1982 and the effective date of the MSPSP (June 29, 1992), a Citizen Advisory Committee was appointed to review projects in the Plan area. The Committee's review was to ensure that proposed projects conformed to the spirit and intent of their "Mulholland Scenic Parkway Report" (the "Green Book"), which later became the Design Development Manual.

Since the 1992 effective date of the Specific Plan, all projects (other than those with exemptions) have been subject to design review by the Board and to the provisions of the Specific Plan, including those projects that received new discretionary approvals after 1992.

Section 3.D. of the Specific Plan exempts projects that were by application, subject to a public hearing and secured discretionary approval on or before the effective date of this Specific Plan, if such approval is still valid at the time an application for a building permit is filed. Based on the review of the findings of the City Council's action in adopting the MSPSP, the intent of this section is to prevent the duplication of other project review processes. Discretionary approvals considered between April 24, 1982 and June 29, 1992 should have been reviewed by the Citizen Advisory Committee. Subdivisions and parcel map applications have been subject to the LAMC Section 17.05S since October 3, 1974.

### INTERPRETATION

Section 3.D. of the MSPSP is hereby interpreted to exempt projects that filed an application, were subject to a public hearing and received one of the listed discretionary approvals, if such discretionary approval had Citizen Advisory Committee review of the project or explicit City Planning Commission, Director, Advisory Agency or Zoning Administrator findings and approval of the same. Only those projects that received such discretionary approval, which considered the spirit and intent of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Report, would be considered to be exempt from the provisions of the Specific Plan and design review by the Board.

TO THE COUNCIL OF THE  
CITY OF LOS ANGELES

Your **PLANNING AND LAND USE MANAGEMENT** Committee  
reports as follows:

Public Comments Yes No  
XX —

PLANNING AND LAND USE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE REPORT relative to appeal from Director of Planning's Interpretation for Section 3.D of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan (MSPSP).

Recommendation for Council action:

DENY APPEALS IN PART filed by Corin L. Kahn and Mulholland Tomorrow from the Director of Planning's Interpretation for Section 3.D of the MSPSP and, APPROVE CLARIFICATION of Council's intent for Section 3.D. to read as follows (footnotes contained in summary section):

Section 3.D of the MSPSP is hereby interpreted to exempt only those aspects of any project for which an application was filed, subjected to a public hearing with legally adequate notice, and for which the project received one of the listed discretionary approvals, and such discretionary approval had explicit findings and conditions of approval which reflect the Scenic Corridor Section of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Report and which were then imposed by either the Citizen Advisory Committee, City Planning Commission, Deputy Advisory Agency, Planning Director or the City Council. In the event the rules governing the project have changed, whether voluntarily, such as an application for a new permit or a changed project, or in the event of an involuntary change, such as a city-initiated change in zone which would change development requirements, the provisions of this exemption shall not apply.

CPC 98-0170 DRB-A

Fiscal Impact Statements: The Planning Department advises that there is no General Fund impact, as administrative costs are recovered through fees.

Summary:

The Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan (MSPSP) was adopted on June 29, 1992. Recently a number of questions have been raised regarding Section 3.D for projects that are exempt from the provisions of the MSPSP, including a request to clarify the language in the provisions of Section 3.D. On May 7, 1998, the Director of Planning issued a written interpretation to clarify for the general public the meaning of Section 3.D. Said interpretation was based upon the review of the public record including the original City Council findings. The review of

Planning and Land Use  
Management Committee Report  
CF 98-1384

these findings indicated that the intent of Section 3.D in the Specific Plan was to avoid duplicate reviews for the same project, whether it was the Citizen Advisory Committee or the Advisory Agency that had reviewed the project. The Council's findings indicated that there should be no separate review by the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Design Review Board if the original decision-making body had considered the spirit and intent of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Report in its discretionary approval.

On September 15, 1998, the Planning and Land Use Management Committee conducted a public hearing on appeals filed by Corin L. Kahn and Mulholland Tomorrow from the Director of Planning's Interpretation for Section 3.D of the MSPSP, stating that the interpretation is erroneous and contradictory to law.

At this meeting, Planning Department staff submitted further clarification language regarding the 3.D Exemption Interpretation to the Committee. The appellants expressed agreement with the clarification.

As such, the Committee moved to approve the clarification language for Section 3.D as follows:

Section 3.D of the MSPSP is hereby interpreted to exempt only those aspects<sup>1</sup> of any project for which an application was filed, subjected to a public hearing with legally adequate notice, and for which the project received one of the listed discretionary approvals, and such discretionary approval had explicit findings and conditions of approval which reflect the Scenic Corridor Section of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Report<sup>2</sup> and which were then imposed by either the Citizen Advisory Committee, City Planning Commission, Deputy Advisory Agency, Planning Director or the City Council. In the event the rules governing the project have changed, whether voluntarily, such as an application for a

---

<sup>1</sup> Only those aspects of projects which were demonstrably evaluated for the project's compliance with LAMC Division of Land Section 17.05S, if applicable, and the spirit and intent of the proposed draft Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan would be considered to be exempt from the provisions of the Specific Plan and review by the Design Review Board. Issues raised pursuant to the applicable version of the Specific Plan, not already adequately considered pursuant to this interpretation, specifically would not be exempt.

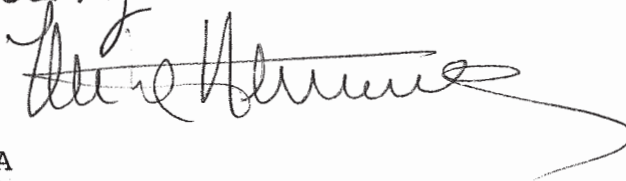
<sup>2</sup> See page 17 of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Report.

Planning and Land Use  
Management Committee Report  
CF 98-1384

new permit or a changed project, or in the event of an involuntary change, such as a city-initiated change in zone which would change development requirements, the provisions of this exemption shall not apply.<sup>3</sup>

Respectfully submitted,

PLANNING AND LAND USE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

*City Manager*  


KC  
9-23-98  
Enc: CPC 98-0170 DRB-A  
CDS 2,4,5,11

#981384

---

<sup>3</sup> To find otherwise would be inconsistent with all other policies which govern planning decisions in the City. It was never the intent of Council as part of its AB283 downzoning to allow greater development rights than was allowed before the downzoning including and exemption from the Specific Plan.

REPT.  
**ADOPTED**  
OCT 07 1998  
LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL

CITY OF LOS ANGELES  
CALIFORNIA

DEPARTMENT OF  
CITY PLANNING  
221 N FIGUEROA STREET  
LOS ANGELES CA 90012-2601

CITY PLANNING  
COMMISSION

PETER M. WEIL  
PRESIDENT

ROBERT L. SCOTT  
VICE-PRESIDENT

MARNA SCHNABEL

NICHOLAS H. STONNINGTON

ANTHONY N.R. ZAMORA

COMMISSION  
EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT  
(213) 580-5234



RICHARD J. RIORDAN  
MAYOR

DEPARTMENT OF  
CITY PLANNING  
6255 VAN NUYS BOULEVARD  
VAN NUYS CA 91401  
(818) 756-8044

CON HOWE  
DIRECTOR  
(213) 580-1160

FRANKLIN P. EBERHARD  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
(213) 580-1163

GORDON B. HAMILTON  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
(213) 580-1165

ROBERT H. SUTTON  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR  
(213) 580-1167

FAX (213) 580-1176

October 15, 1998

**MULHOLLAND SCENIC PARKWAY SPECIFIC PLAN  
3D EXEMPTION INTERPRETATION**

All Interested Parties:

Pursuant to Section 3D of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan, the City Council adopted on October 7, 1998 a modification of the Director of City Planning's interpretation for projects exempt from the provisions of this Specific Plan and review by the Design Review Board.

The Director of Planning had originally issued an interpretation that only those projects that received discretionary approvals and had a public hearing with legal notice prior to June 29, 1992, the effective date of the Specific Plan, could be exempt from further review. Additionally, the interpretation stated that such discretionary approvals had to include explicit findings and conditions, reflecting the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Report that the Citizen Advisory Committee had prepared before the adoption of the Specific Plan. For the purposes of clarity, the City Council made modifications to the Director's interpretation.

With the adoption of the 3D Exemption Interpretation, virtually all new projects, both private and public, will be subject to the provisions of the Specific Plan and review by the Design Review Board. The only exception from these provisions would be if a project received discretionary approval prior to the effective date of the Specific Plan and had considered the intent and spirit of the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Report.

All other projects, including new single-family dwellings on vacant lots, additions greater than 900 square feet to existing buildings, and utility projects by either public agencies or privately held companies are subject to the provisions of the Specific Plan, review by the Design Review Board, and approval by the Director of Planning. Projects subject to these provisions may also include private fences, walls and other structures encroached into the Mulholland Drive right-of-way and public utility facilities and structures on Mulholland Drive. Therefore, all of these projects must be reviewed for compliance with the provisions of the Specific Plan.

Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated. For further information or any questions, please contact the staff person, presently Steve Kim, for the Mulholland Scenic Parkway Specific Plan at (818) 756-9172.

Sincerely,

CON HOWE  
Director of Planning

ROBERT H. SUTTON  
Deputy Director

RS:sk



action of the Council is contrary to the recommendations of both the City Planning Commission and the Mayor. (*Amended by Ord. No. 150,658, Eff. 4/23/78.*)

**SEC. 11.5.7 — SPECIFIC PLANS. A. Purpose** — A specific plan shall provide by ordinance regulatory controls or incentives for the systematic execution of the General Plan and shall provide for public needs, convenience and general welfare.

**B. Content** — The following specific plans are set forth under the specified articles of this Chapter:

1. Zoning provisions as set forth under Articles 2, 3 and 6 of this Chapter.
2. Building Line provisions as set forth under Article 4 of this Chapter.
3. The provisions of Article 2.5 of this Chapter. (*Added by Ord. No. 151,432, Eff. 10/12/78.*)

**C. Procedure** — Procedures for the establishment, change or repeal of specific plans, or any part thereof, are prescribed under the aforementioned articles of this Chapter.

**D. Exceptions from Geographically Specific Plans.**

**1. Authority of Planning Commission** — The Planning Commission may permit an exception from the definite statements of policy, standards and regulations which are exclusively applicable to a definable area of the City. The Commission after conducting a mandatory public hearing in the manner provided by Paragraph (b) of Subdivision 3 of Subsection B of Section 12.24 of the Municipal Code and after reviewing a report from the Director of Planning on the matter, may permit an exception from a geographically specific plan if all the following findings are made:

(a) That the strict application of the policies, standards and regulations of the geographically specific plan to the subject property would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose and intent of such specific plan;

(b) That there are exceptional circumstances or conditions applicable to the subject property involved or to the intended use or development of the subject property that do not apply generally to other property in the specific plan area;

(c) That such exception from the geographically specific plan is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use generally possessed by other property within the geographically specific plan in the same zone and vicinity but which, because of such special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships is denied to the property in question;

(d) That the granting of such exception will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements adjacent to or in the vicinity of the subject property; and

(e) That the granting of such exception will be consistent with the principles, intent and goals of the geographically specific plan and any applicable element of the general plan.



In granting an exception from a geographically specific plan, the Commission shall impose such conditions as will remedy any resulting disparity of privilege and which are necessary to protect the public health, safety, welfare and assure compliance with the objectives of the general plan and the purpose and intent of the geographically specific plan. An exception from a geographically specific plan shall not be used to grant a special privilege, nor to grant relief from self-imposed hardships.

**2. Applications — Form and Contents** — An application for an exception from a geographically specific plan shall be filed in any public office of the Department of City Planning upon a form and accompanied by such data and information as has been prescribed for that purpose. Each such application shall be verified by the owner or lessee of the property involved.

**3. Determination by Planning Commission —**

(a) The Commission shall render a determination on an exception from a geographically specific plan within 75 days after filing unless the applicant consents to a longer period.

(b) Determinations by the Planning Commission shall be supported by written findings of fact based upon written or oral statements and documents presented to it, which may include photographs, maps and plans, together with the results of its investigations. Upon making a determination upon an application for an exception from a geographically specific plan, the Commission shall forthwith place a copy of its written findings, where required, and determination on file in the City Planning Department and furnish a copy thereof to the applicant, the Department of Building and Safety, and the Director of Planning.

**4. Determination Effective-Appeal** — The determination of the Commission shall become final after an elapsed period of 15 days from the date of mailing of the Commission's determination to the applicant, unless an appeal therefrom is filed with the City Council within such period. Any appeal not filed within the 15 day period shall not be considered by the City Council.

The filing of an appeal stays proceedings in the matter until determination by the City Council.

**5. Appeal-Contents** — An applicant, any other person aggrieved by a determination of the Commission, or any officer, board, department or bureau of the City may appeal to the City Council. The appeal shall set forth specifically wherein the determination of the Commission fails to conform to the requirements of this section, or wherein the conditions imposed are improper. Such appeal shall be filed in duplicate in any public office of the Department of City Planning. Thereupon, the appeal and the Planning Commission file shall be transmitted to the City Council, together with a report thereon disclosing in what respect the Commission found that the application and facts offered in support thereof met or failed to meet the requirements of this section.

The City Council, by resolution, may reverse or modify, in whole or in part, any determination of the Commission, but such resolution may be adopted only by a two-thirds or more vote of the whole Council. The resolution must contain a finding of fact showing wherein the proposed

exception to a geographically specific plan meets or fails to meet the requirements of this section. Any vote of the Council in which less than two-thirds of the whole Council vote to reverse or modify the determination of the Commission shall be deemed to be an action denying the appeal. The failure of the Council to vote upon an appeal within 90 days after the expiration of the appeal period or within such additional period as may be agreed upon by the applicant and the Council shall likewise be deemed a denial of the appeal.

**6. Failure to Act-Transfer of Jurisdiction** — If the Commission fails to act on an application for exception from a geographically specific plan within the time limits specified in this section, the applicant may file a request for a transfer of jurisdiction to the City Council for a determination of the original application, in which case the Commission shall lose jurisdiction. Such request shall be filed in any public office of the Department of Planning. Thereupon, the request and the Planning Commission file shall be transmitted to the Council.

The Council may approve the application subject to the qualifications contained in Subdivision 1 of Subsection D of this section, and may impose upon such approval such conditions as it deems necessary in accordance with the provisions of Subdivision 1 of Subsection D of this section. Such action of the Council shall be by resolution adopted by a majority vote of the whole Council.

**7. Hearing by Council** — Before acting on any appeal, or on any matter transferred to it because of the failure of the Commission to act, the City Council or its Planning Committee shall set the matter for hearing, giving the same notice as provided in this section for hearings before the Commission. (*Added by Ord. No. 151,682, Eff. 12/22/78.*)

**SEC. 11.5.8 — PERIODIC COMPREHENSIVE GENERAL PLAN REVIEW.** **A. Purpose** — Periodic comprehensive General Plan review is necessary to insure that the City's General Plan properly and systematically addresses the needs of a constantly changing city. These needs include the provision of adequate housing public services and transportation, the optimum allocation of land for industry and commerce, the preservation of environmental amenities, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all of the residents of the City of Los Angeles. Comprehensive procedures for evaluating, and where necessary amending, the General Plan and other land use regulations are required in order to meet these needs.

**B. Planning Area** — The City is hereby divided into 37 planning areas. Each planning area constitutes an area for which either a community plan, district plan, or other portion of the land use element of the General Plan has been adopted by the City.

The boundaries of each planning area shall be those of the applicable adopted community or district plan, or other portion of the land use element of the General Plan. These boundaries may be modified or changed by amendment to the General Plan pursuant to the procedures set forth in Section 11.5.6 of this Article.

**C. Geographical Area** — Pursuant to the requirements of Section 96.6 of the City Charter and for the purpose of maintaining and updating the various community and district plans, the City's 37 planning areas shall be grouped into four geographical areas. The Director of Planning shall establish the boundaries of the four geographical areas. The Director may modify such bound-

**SEC. 11.5.7 -- SPECIFIC PLANS**

A. **Purpose** -- A specific plan shall provide by ordinance regulatory controls or incentives for the systematic execution of the General Plan and shall provide for public needs, convenience and general welfare.

B. **Content** -- The following specific plans are set forth under the specified articles of this chapter:

1. Zoning provisions as set forth under Articles 2, 3 and 6 of this chapter.

2. Building Line provisions as set forth under Article 4 of this chapter.

3. The provisions of Article 2.5 of this chapter. *(Added by Ord. No. 151,432, Eff. 10/12/78.)*

C. **Procedure** -- Procedures for the establishment, change or repeal of specific plans, or any part thereof, are prescribed under the aforementioned articles of this chapter.

D. **Exceptions from Geographically Specific Plans.** *(Added by Ord. No. 151,682, Eff. 12/22/78.)*

1. **Authority of Planning Commission** -- The Planning Commission may permit an exception from the definite statements of policy, standards and regulations which are exclusively applicable to a definable area of the City. The Commission after conducting a mandatory public hearing in the manner provided by Subdivision 2 of Subsection D of Section 12.24 of the Municipal Code, and after reviewing a report from the Director of Planning on the matter, may permit an exception from a geographically specific plan if all the following findings are made: *(Amended by Ord. No. 169,013, Eff. 9/28/93.)*

(a) That the strict application of the policies, standards and regulations of the geographically specific plan to the subject property would result in practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships inconsistent with the general purpose and intent of such specific plan;

(b) That there are exceptional circumstances or conditions applicable to the subject property involved or to the intended use or development of the subject property that do not apply generally to other property in the specific plan area;

(c) That such exception from the geographically specific plan is necessary for the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right or use generally possessed by other property within the geographically specific plan in the same zone and vicinity but which, because of such special circumstances and practical difficulties or unnecessary hardships is denied to the property in question;

(d) That the granting of such exception will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements adjacent to or in the vicinity of the subject property; and

(e) That the granting of such exception will be consistent with the principles, intent and goals of the geographically specific plan and any applicable element of the general plan.

In granting an exception from a geographically specific plan, the Commission shall impose such conditions as will remedy any resulting disparity of privilege and which are necessary to protect the public health, safety, welfare and assure compliance with the objectives of the general plan and the purpose and intent of the geographically specific plan. An exception from a geographically specific plan shall not be used to grant a special privilege, nor to grant relief from self-imposed hardships.

**2. Applications -- Form and Contents --** An application for an exception from a geographically specific plan shall be filed in any public office of the Department of City Planning upon a form and accompanied by such data and information as has been prescribed for that purpose. Each such application shall be verified by the owner or lessee of the property involved.

**3. Determination by Planning Commission --**

(a) The Commission shall render a determination on an exception from a geographically specific plan within 75 days after filing unless the applicant consents to a longer period.

(b) Determinations by the Planning Commission shall be supported by written findings of fact based upon written or oral statements and documents presented to it, which may include photographs, maps, and plans, together with the results of its investigations. Upon making a determination upon an application for an exception from a geographically specific plan, the Commission shall forthwith place a copy of its written findings, where required, and determination on file in the City Planning Department and furnish a copy thereof to the applicant, the Department of Building and Safety, and the Director of Planning.

**4. Determination Effective -- Appeal --** The determination of the Commission shall become final after an elapsed period of 15 days from the date of mailing of the Commission's determination to the applicant, unless an appeal therefrom is filed with the City Council within such period. Any appeal not filed within the 15 day period shall not be considered by the City Council.

The filing of an appeal stays proceedings in the matter until determination by the City Council.

**5. Appeal -- Contents --** An applicant, any other person aggrieved by a determination of the Commission, or any officer, board, department or bureau of the City may appeal to the City Council. The appeal shall set forth specifically wherein the determination of the Commission fails to conform to the requirements of this section, or wherein the conditions imposed are improper. Such appeal shall be filed in duplicate in any public office of the Department of City Planning. Thereupon, the appeal and the Planning Commission file shall be transmitted to the City Council, together with a report thereon disclosing in what respect the Commission found that the application and facts offered in support thereof met or failed to meet the requirements of this section.

The City Council, by resolution, may reverse or modify, in whole or in part, any determination of the Commission, but such resolution may be adopted only by a two-thirds or more vote of the whole Council. The resolution must contain a finding of fact showing wherein the proposed exception to a geographically specific plan meets or fails to meet the requirements of this section. Any vote

of the Council in which less than two-thirds of the whole Council vote to reverse or modify the determination of the Commission shall be deemed to be an action denying the appeal. The failure of the Council to vote upon an appeal within 90 days after the expiration of the appeal period or within such additional period as may be agreed upon by the applicant and the Council shall likewise be deemed a denial of the appeal.

**6. Failure to Act -- Transfer of Jurisdiction --** If the Commission fails to act on an application for exception from a geographically specific plan within the time limits specified in this section, the applicant may file a request for a transfer of jurisdiction to the City Council for a determination of the original application, in which case the Commission shall lose jurisdiction. Such request shall be filed in any public office of the Department of Planning. Thereupon, the request and the Planning Commission file shall be transmitted to the Council.

The Council may approve the application subject to the qualifications contained in Subdivision 1 of Subsection D of this section, and may impose upon such approval such conditions as it deems necessary in accordance with the provisions of Subdivision 1 of Subsection D of this section. Such action of the Council shall be by resolution adopted by a majority vote of the whole Council.

**7. Hearing by Council --** Before acting on any appeal, or on any matter transferred to it because of the failure of the Commission to act, the City Council or its Planning Committee shall set the matter for hearing, giving the same notice as provided in this section for hearings before the Commission.

**SEC. 11.5.8 -- PERIODIC COMPREHENSIVE GENERAL PLAN REVIEW**  
(Added by Ord. No. 160,862, Eff. 4/1/86.)

**A. Purpose --** Periodic Comprehensive General Plan review is necessary to insure that the City's General Plan properly and systematically addresses the needs of a constantly changing city. These needs include the provision of adequate housing, public services and transportation, the optimum allocation of land for industry and commerce, the preservation of environmental amenities, and the enhancement of the quality of life for all of the residents of the City of Los Angeles. Comprehensive procedures for evaluating, and, where necessary, amending the General Plan and other land use regulations are required in order to meet these needs.

**B. Planning Areas --** The City is hereby divided into 37 planning areas. Each planning area constitutes an area for which either a community plan, a district plan, or other portion of the land use element of the General Plan has been adopted by the City.

The boundaries of each planning area shall be those of the applicable adopted community or district plan, or other portion of the land use element of the General Plan. These boundaries may be modified or changed by amendment to the General Plan pursuant to the procedures set forth in Section 11.5.6 of this article.

**C. Geographical Area --** Pursuant to the requirements of Section 96.6 of the City Charter and for the purpose of maintaining and updating the various community and district plans, the City's 37 planning areas shall be grouped into four geographical areas. The Director of Planning shall establish the

boundaries of the four geographical areas. The Director may modify such boundaries as necessary in order to more effectively carry out the purpose and intent of this section.

**D. Procedures --** The Commission shall begin consideration of each of the four geographical areas at least once every six months. The City Council, after considering the recommendations of the City Planning Commission, shall adopt by resolution a schedule and program for the systematic review and amendment of the General Plan by geographical area.

The Commission may begin consideration of a General Plan amendment proposal involving a particular lot or lots only during the period set forth in the adopted schedule for review of the geographical area within which such lot or lots are located. However, that the Commission or Council may authorize a deviation from the adopted schedule, if either the Council or Commission finds that a deviation from the adopted schedule is appropriate because the proposed plan amendment is needed to: (1) avoid unusual financial loss or extreme hardship, (2) provide for low and moderate income housing or other social benefits, or (3) achieve compatible land uses or other planning objectives.

The Director of Planning shall develop the administrative procedures and forms necessary to administer the General Plan review program adopted by Council. Changes of zone or height district which are necessary to achieve consistency between zoning and the General Plan may be considered at the time scheduled for a geographical area review. The Director shall develop procedures, consistent with the provisions of this Code, for the processing of applications for such zone or height district changes.

The procedures and forms developed by the Director shall be submitted for Commission review and approval prior to their implementation or use.