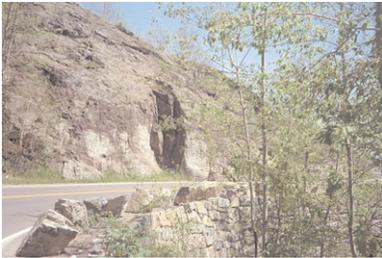


motorists to share the road safely with the possibility of expanding the road section to accommodate users.

- **Horseback Riding:** Horseback riding should be encouraged west of Beck's Road and possibly in the Seven Bridges Road area.
- **Snowmobiles:** Snowmobiles should be encouraged in the seasonally-closed Bardon's Peak segment, the Mission Creek segment and on trails in the Seven Bridges Road segment.
- **All-terrain vehicle use:** ATV use should be strongly discouraged.

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES



The road responds to surrounding landforms.

The next four sections of this report present a series of recommendations for management strategies in the following areas:

- Interpretation
- Resource Management
- Road Improvements
- Recognition and Stewardship

Figure 3, Proposed Improvements, graphically depicts those recommendations that are geographically specific.

INTERPRETATION

EXPERIENCING THE PARKWAY

Visits to Skyline Parkway by city residents often produce a reaction of surprise – a realization that they may have never known about the Parkway's wealth of resources. Many residents are familiar with only a few segments that have their own identity, such as Seven Bridges Road, Hawk Ridge or Twin Ponds. The more remote Western Extension and Bardon's Peak segments are especially obscure to most residents and Parkway users. People who remember the Parkway as one of the City's premier visitor attractions are surprised at its current obscurity. Many residents along the Parkway have also had the experience of giving directions to confused motorists, and are keenly aware of the difficulties in finding and following the route.

An Interpretive Framework Plan

As a first step in the process of rediscovering the Parkway, **an interpretive framework plan should be developed.** Many stories about the Parkway's past and present are waiting to be told, or have already been expressed through publications, films, and other media. The Parkway's landscape itself, however, reveals little to the traveler today. An interpretive framework would provide a strategy for identifying these stories, how they fit into a larger context, and their relevance for the present. It should make the Parkway experience accessible, understandable and meaningful to visitors. It should also enrich residents' understanding of their own region, fostering a sense of pride and stewardship over the Parkway's resources.



2

PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS



Legend

Original Parkway Alignment

Connecting Links to Parkway

High Traffic Area

Skyline Parkway

Park/Open Space



LHB Engineers & Architects
 Arrowhead Regional Development Commission
 Mary Means & Associates
 Patrick Nunnally

A major component of an interpretive framework is the identification of primary and secondary themes, and target audiences. The Corridor Management Plan process has resulted in preliminary identification of themes, as follows:

Main Theme: Duluth and the Skyline Parkway are unique responses to a distinctive natural environment. The road alignment that follows the contours of the bedrock ridge overlooking Lake Superior, the routes along the stream valleys that connect the bluff to the lake, the use of native stone in both ornamental and structural forms, the relationship of the road to adjacent landforms and vegetation – all are designed to take maximum advantage of a succession of viewpoints and to afford the visitor a variety of experiences within a relatively short distance.

Secondary Themes:

- **What is the geology that created this place?** The ridge upon which the Parkway is built is the shoreline of Glacial Lake Duluth and contains some of the oldest rocks in North America. The Parkway can be interpreted as a response to that geology – its alignment, viewpoints and materials, and the process of building it out of solid rock. Existing markers, erected at overlooks by the Lions Club in the 1970s, discuss bedrock geology in terms that now need to be updated.
- **The era of Samuel F. Snively and F. Rodney Paine.** The Parkway as a designed landscape in the picturesque tradition.
- **Continued tourism/visitor use.** Focusing on locations such as Twin Ponds that were historic tourist attractions; linking the Parkway to other

attractions and to the secondary road segments that once made up the Duluth Parkway System.

- **What do the views from the Parkway reveal?** Each Parkway overlook provides an opportunity to interpret the stories connected with Duluth, its harbor and Lake Superior. City-related themes might include the international seaport, the mining industry, World War II war production, Indian and immigrant settlements, existing neighborhoods, and individual resources such as Park Point and the Aerial Lift Bridge. Themes related to the broader natural environment might include lake and lakeshore geology, tributary streams and their resources, migratory birds, wildlife, and so on. Clearly, the large number of potential themes would need to be refined through the interpretive planning process. Using the Parkway to reveal these stories could strengthen the relationships and connections among the City's historic and recreational resources.

Target Audiences: Additional research would be needed to identify the primary audiences for interpretation, but it is clear that an interpretive strategy needs to address local residents as well as tourists. Residents of the Duluth-Superior region are among the primary users of the Parkway at present, especially for outdoor recreation. How can their experiences be enhanced to the point where they will bring out-of-town visitors to tour the Parkway, as was once a common practice? Another issue is which segments of the tourist market should be targeted – environmental tourists (expanding on the popularity of Hawk Ridge), families, motorcoach tours, cultural heritage tourists, etc. An interpretive plan would explore these issues in greater detail.



Touring and tourism played a major role in Skyline Parkway's past.



Interpretive signs must be weather-resistant and historically appropriate. Example: Omaha Boulevard System.



Remnants of green stripe that once marked the route can still be found.

IMPROVE WAYFINDING AND INTERPRETIVE FACILITIES AND MEDIA

Interpretive themes and target audiences provide a meaningful starting point for organizing information, but not a visual identity. Strengthening the Parkway’s identity will make it more readily understandable and usable by visitors and residents.

Wayfinding Signs and Markers

Develop a family of wayfinding signs and markers, distinguished by consistent materials, colors, graphics and use of an updated Parkway logo.

The Parkway is currently identified by a variety of signs, some of which carry its historic logo and many of which do not. Another identity marker, now almost vanished but faintly visible in some locations, was the “green stripe” that once marked the center of each

lane. This simple wayfinding device is often cited by residents as something they would like to see restored. Unfortunately, the green stripe could be mistaken for a centerline under poor visibility conditions and thus becomes a safety hazard. Current highway safety standards also appear to preclude a colored stripe that is not an official yellow centerline. Alternatives to the green stripe could include stencilled logos or arrows on the pavement at intersections.

The other identifying feature of the Parkway, as with other parkways in Duluth, is the use of native stone in construction, especially the “guard stones” that line the edge of the road. Use of this stone should be continued whenever possible in markers, displays and other interpretive facilities.

The original Parkway logo was developed in 1929 when the route was named, and residents continue to



The original Parkway logo, now poorly-reproduced on directional signs.

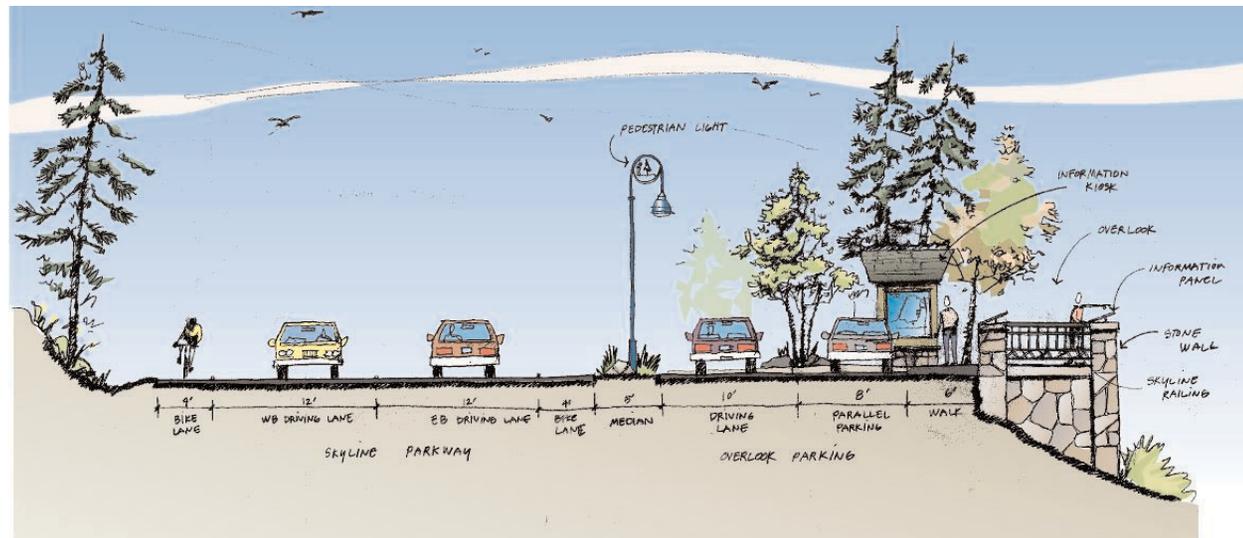


FIGURE 5: Parkway overlook section

strongly identify it with the Parkway. Unfortunately, its graphic quality has suffered from poor-quality reproductions on undersized signs, and the green color scheme makes it appear identical to most free-way signs. Minor updating of the lettering and color scheme would again make it a distinctive Parkway symbol.

Initiate Overlook Improvements

In addition to signs, the major interpretive sites along the Parkway are its overlooks, both formal and informal. The formal or improved overlooks currently consist of a few elements: a pull-out with enough room to accommodate several vehicles, a low retaining wall, a trash receptacle and, in some cases, a Lions Club marker describing some prominent feature of the vista, the geology or the location. Overlooks are frequently marred by litter and are sometimes the location of late-night parties that result in more litter, noise and annoyances to neighbors.

An **overlook enhancement program** should be developed as part of the interpretive framework plan. The sketches below represent a sample conceptual design for an overlook with decorative lighting, exhibit markers, landscaping, and other elements that could be implemented at specific overlooks. The level to which these locations can be enhanced will depend in part on the degree of surveillance and security that can be provided, and this will differ by location. The most visible, well-used overlooks should receive the highest level of improvements. Lighting, for example, is only feasible where city utilities are present, and only appropriate in or near residential areas where street lights already exist.

Create Defined Routes

Create a series of well-defined **road linkages** between the Parkway's major attractions and Duluth's other visitor attractions, especially the Lakewalk and Bayfront. According to Convention and Visitors Bureau staff, the most common questions from visi-

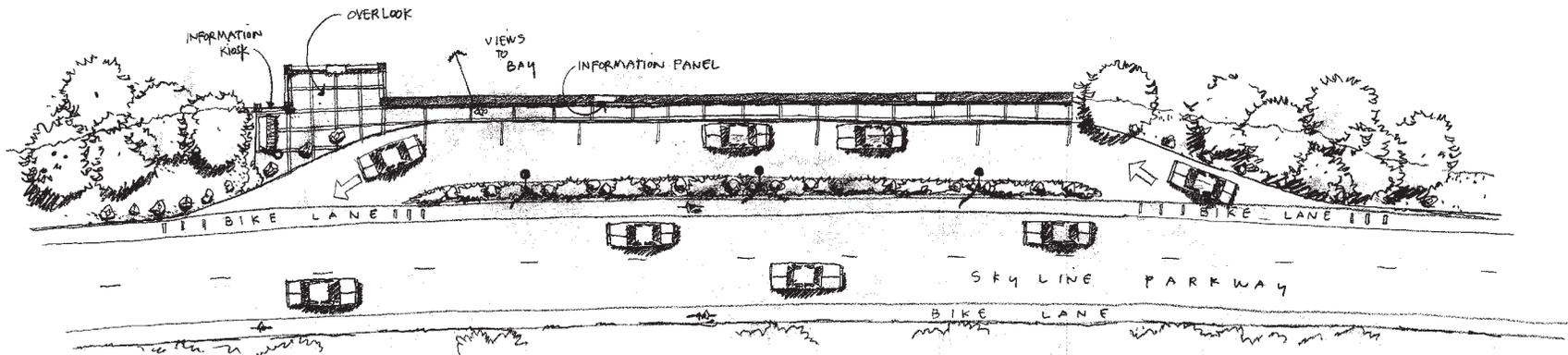


FIGURE 6: Conceptual design for Parkway overlook, plan view



Tour buses tend to park along certain residential Parkway segments such as here near 8th Street.

tors involve how they can reach specific locations along the Parkway, such as Hawk Ridge and Enger Tower, from the Lakewalk or other downtown or Bayfront locations. There are many potential routes, but few are continuous or easy to follow. A series of defined routes between these places would simplify access to the Parkway and lessen confusion. Routes could be signed; visitors could also be guided by a map or brochure (see below). Management of tour buses is also an issue; parking and stopping areas for buses should be located to avoid impacts to residential neighborhoods.

Improve Printed and Online Visitor Information

The other major category of media is printed and online material – maps, guides and itineraries for the visitor. While a number of maps and brochures have been developed for the Parkway in the past, these are no longer available. Their design and development is an essential piece of the interpretive framework. Materials should orient the first-time visitor, link the Parkway to the City’s other attractions, convey the same identity as the other media, and also enable the visitor to access more detailed information from online or printed sources.

A Single Map/Brochure

Develop a **single user-friendly map/brochure** for use by the travelling public, showing the entire primary route, secondary and trail segments, overlooks and nearby attractions. Such a map could be distributed at visitor centers and highway rest stops, complementing the array of scenic byway brochures currently available. Eventually, depending on visitor interest and funding, it may be desirable to have a series of brochures on particular attributes of the Parkway – history, natural/scenic resources, and recreational

activities (summer and winter).

Integrate Parkway Information with Other Visitor Resources

The Duluth Convention and Visitors Bureau (DCVB) will share information about the Parkway to the extent that they are provided with appropriate materials. The DCVB should work to **integrate the Parkway’s resources into the totality of visitor attractions in Duluth**, based upon the information in this report. Likewise, information about the Skyline Parkway needs to be integrated into state scenic byways resources, as marketed by the Minnesota Office of Tourism. A new web site for scenic byways of the Arrowhead Region, www.superiorbyways.com, offers one relatively simple, low-cost method of integrating visitor resources.

RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

This section of the Corridor Management Plan discusses management strategies in the following areas:

- Vegetation Management
- Land Use Management
- Commercial Sign Controls
- Historic Resources
- Parks and Recreation

VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

Manage vegetation at key overlooks and other important viewpoints to maintain or restore the views traditionally associated with Skyline Parkway.



Many views along the Western Extension are blocked by vegetation.

Initially, management of vegetation at designated overlooks should be given priority. This process is not as simple as it may appear. The accompanying photographs, taken by a resident at the same locations in 1979 and 2002, show a remarkable diminishing of views from the overlook at Observation Road east of Enger Park. Interestingly, some of the tallest vegetation is not in the foreground but some distance downslope. Should any of these trees be trimmed or removed? There seems to be general consensus that increased tree growth in the past several decades has softened views from above and has many other aesthetic and ecological benefits.

Beyond preservation of views, vegetation management can serve a variety of goals, including wildlife habitat and ecological diversity. A set of vegetation management guidelines should be developed that will enable residents and City forestry staff to assess the variety of conditions along the Parkway and develop solutions that balance these goals and address residents' concerns. An initial list of priorities for vegetation management would include:

1. **Keeping views from all existing “formal” overlooks clear.** These are the overlooks with defined pull-off areas and, in many cases, interpretive markers, as shown in the Inventory of Overlooks (Table 1).
2. **Re-opening and clearing the overlooks that have been closed along the Western Extension segment.** This step would require a suitable maintenance and monitoring system to protect them from further vandalism and dumping, relying on a combination of City law enforcement, volunteer monitoring and periodic clean-ups.



1979



2002

Photos by Mark Jennings



Historically, the Parkway had more open views than it does today.



New residential lots are being created along the Parkway west of Chester Bowl.

3. **Identifying specific view corridors** not associated with overlooks, for example, along Rogers Boulevard between Enger Park and Chester Park, where some views should be re-opened.

Where vegetation blocking these views is located on City property or on County-owned conservation lands, the City should assume responsibility for periodic clearing or trimming.

Clearance of vegetation on private property to date has involved a process established by the City Forester that includes the following steps:

- Property owner meets with City Forester on site to evaluate the vegetation of concern, potential erosion problems, aesthetic issues and other environmental concerns;
- City Forester meets with other abutting property owners;
- If a consensus can be reached among abutting owners, property owner may hire a qualified tree service or contractor to perform the work, with monitoring by the City.

In cases where the City has the primary interest in keeping views open, a process for negotiation with property owners should be established, including replacement of specific trees with lower-growing species, where feasible.

LAND USE MANAGEMENT

Manage land use to ensure that new development is compatible with traditional development patterns and does not intrude upon key views or the landscape as a whole.

While much of the land along the Parkway is City parkland or protected open space (tax forfeit lands), there are a few locations with potential for extensive development. Any new development should be designed to meet several goals:

- preserve key views from the Parkway and from neighboring properties;
- preserve mature trees and other high-quality vegetation, stream corridors and other significant natural resources;
- limit the number of driveways and streets that take direct access from the Parkway;
- limit the amount of grading necessary on slopes above and below the Parkway.

Most of the Parkway corridor is zoned for fairly low-density residential development, but trends in residential construction have recently increased the size of houses to the point where they are beginning to block views from adjacent roads and (on the downslope side) from some overlooks.

The above goals could be achieved through a **view protection overlay district** that would establish standards for building height and bulk, limit grading and encourage siting of new buildings in a context-sensitive manner. To implement such a district, the City would need to review site development plans showing building elevations as viewed from the Parkway, building footprints and driveway locations. Design review could be the responsibility of the Planning Commission, of City staff (with appeal to the Planning Commission) or of a separate design advisory committee like the one that reviews development in the Canal



Houses below the ridgeline block views in a few locations.

Park area (the Downtown Waterfront Mixed Use-Design Review District).

Develop one or more zoning classifications that recognize and protect City parks and open space.

City residents in some neighborhoods have raised the issue of the lack of a designated district that covers the City’s park and forest lands. These areas are generally zoned for residential use. Therefore, lands that are not City-owned, such as the County conservation lands, are potentially developable. Furthermore, there are no restrictions on the types of recreational use that can occur in parks, nor any process for evaluating impacts on fragile environments or historic and scenic corridors like the Parkway.

One alternative would be a **park and open space overlay district**. Such a district could be designed to permit typical park, passive recreation and wildlife management uses. New active uses such as ballfields, community buildings, ice rinks, etc. might be treated as special permit uses.

An overlay district has several advantages compared with a conventional “base” district:

- It can apply to non-City-owned lands, such as conservation lands, without removing all potential for future development and creating a regulatory “taking.”
- It could also apply to privately-managed open space such as Hawk Ridge or to privately-owned recreational areas such as golf courses.
- An overlay could be designed to require protection for key resources as a condition for more intensive development.

COMMERCIAL SIGN CONTROLS

Consider signage controls in the Boundary Avenue area of the City of Proctor.

In Duluth, no large off-premises signs may be posed within 450 feet of the Parkway’s right-of-way (see discussion on page 39). These sign restrictions do not apply within the City of Proctor, where large highway-oriented signs have been erected around the I-35/Boundary Avenue interchange. Although this section of the Parkway obviously has lost its historical integrity, its aesthetic quality could certainly be improved through sign controls and other improvements. Controls on new signs would prevent further visual clutter in this area. Possible aesthetic improvements are discussed in the next chapter.

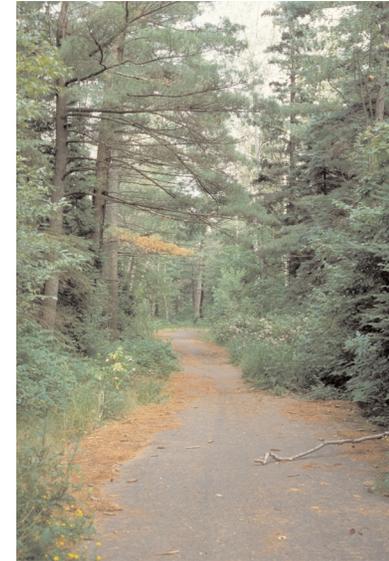
HISTORIC RESOURCES

Historic District Designation

Pursue local and national designation of Skyline Parkway as a single historic district.

Clearly, historic landscapes such as the Skyline Parkway pose much more complex issues than those raised by historic houses. Landscapes are usually much larger, and the property is inherently a growing, dynamic resource rather than a static, fixed, object. Issues of scale, “authorship,” integrity, and resource management are much more complex with landscapes than they are with houses.

That said, there are some advantages to a full and careful historic preservation plan for a property as complex as the Skyline Parkway:



Connecting segments such as Congdon Park Drive, now closed to traffic, are historically significant as part of the original Parkway system.

- Designation is an important recognition of the property’s historic significance. Being listed in the National Register is a “seal of approval” that the property meets recognized standards of significance and integrity.
- A property that is listed has a broader scope for review of projects that may affect it, ensuring a greater sensitivity to design and management issues.

The Parkway has been recognized as eligible for nomination to the National Register, which means that it receives some review of “Federal undertakings” that may affect it. Letters from the Minnesota SHPO office reference eligibility, but make no formal declaration of eligibility; the Parkway is listed in their “Considered Eligible” database, however.

The Parkway is not locally designated as a historic district or resource, although the issue has been discussed periodically. Local designation would reinforce national designation and would provide a means for review of private development projects, which is not afforded by the National Register.

The Skyline Parkway should be nominated to the National Register of Historic Places as a designed historic landscape of statewide significance. Such a designation would elevate the historic character of the landscape to its deserved preeminence in the public eye and would ensure that ongoing management and planning for the Parkway always retain a foundation in the area’s historic character. It is recommended that the landscape be considered a single district, rather than a series of discontinuous districts, because the Parkway’s original intent – providing a driving experience through the varied topographic, scenic, and

built environments of Duluth and the immediate area – can still be achieved despite the loss of integrity in some areas. These areas include the I-35 crossing and frontage road, the Mesaba/Central Entrance section, and the UMD Gap. Both in places where the original Parkway has lost integrity and areas where original plans seem never to have been constructed, the parkway system retains a unity of function that makes it an integrated whole for planning purposes.

The Parkway’s diversity means that for management purposes, there are “districts within a district” with different management and resource protection emphases. This approach allows a context-based approach toward preservation.

Local designation of the Parkway as a historic district should also be considered. The City’s Certified Local Government status means funding might be available for both efforts to move forward simultaneously.

It is further recommended that subsequent historic preservation studies be conducted in the following areas:

Historic Preservation Technical Planning Study: This should be conducted to address technical issues such as boundary demarcations, issues of analytical scale for historic resources, precise delineation of contributing and non-contributing elements of the district, and appropriate themes, areas, and periods of significance per National Park Service Preservation Planning Guidelines.

Historic Resource Management Guidelines: These should be considered as part of a general set of Management Guidelines that also address land use, vegetation management, and roadway design and



Stone gutters in Enger Park are an example of small-scale contributing structures of historic value.

maintenance. Guidelines should be developed in consultation with appropriate state and local agencies to identify particular management strategies for the diversity of historic resources contained in this historic district. The guidelines would deal with issues such as vegetation management, road surfacing, road width, and structural rehabilitation of particular structures on a segment-by-segment basis in order to best address the needs of the resource. A simplistic “one size fits all” is not recommended as a management approach for as varied a resource as the Parkway.

Historic Resources Protection

Continue to restore historic bridges while devoting increased attention to protection and restoration of retaining walls, drainage swales, and other stonework.

State bridge funding is available for continuing bridge restoration, but funding for other structures should be explored. The massive stone retaining walls in locations such as Bardon’s Peak and Chester Bowl need preventive maintenance now in order to avoid wholesale replacement in the future. Transportation enhancement funds may be available for restoration of walls and other structures.

PARKS AND RECREATION

Recreational Resource Enhancements

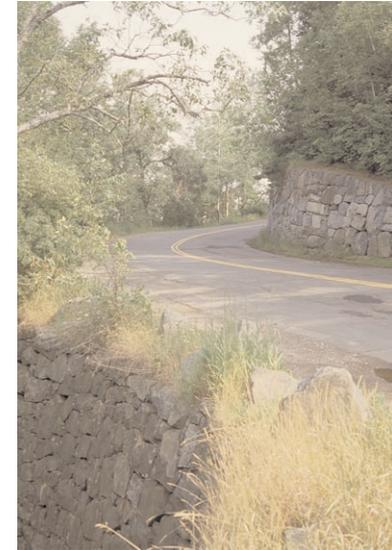
Link the recreational resources of the Parkway itself to the recreational facilities and resources of the City’s many parks and trails that adjoin or cross the Parkway, through improved wayfinding and interpretive signage and pedestrian connections. Improved park signs and integrated visitor brochures would give Parkway travelers a greater range of places to explore and a greater appreciation of the City’s parks and trails.

Consider relocating specific recreational resources or activities that detract from the Parkway’s scenic and historic character. The primary facility in this category is the Lakeview Sports Arena (consisting of ice rink and warming house) in Lester Park on Seven Bridges Road. While the facility serves both neighborhood and regional needs, its appearance and functions are incompatible with the character of this Parkway segment. Bus access to the facility for events is problematic due to the narrow width, shifting alignment, and even narrower bridges that characterize Seven Bridges Road. Bridge rails and abutments are vulnerable to damage by buses, and bus and vehicular traffic to the site accelerates road surface deterioration. Locations in other City parks, City forest or school sites should be explored as alternatives.

If the arena cannot be feasibly relocated, options for its redesign should be explored. Landscape screening of the perimeter, exterior improvements to the warming house, and better-defined and landscaped parking areas would do much to improve the facility’s appearance and compatibility with its natural setting.

Trailhead and Road Closure Improvements

The current use of concrete highway barriers, often in damaged condition, to block seasonal trails, block vehicles from non-vehicular trails, and to provide seasonal road closures, is an unattractive solution that is inconsistent with the Parkway’s scenic and natural qualities. Options might include simple gates or bollards on permanent footings – after the initial expense, these would be easier to manage and maintain on a seasonal basis than the existing barriers. Closure structures need to be sturdy enough to stop large vehicles, but flexible enough to be moved to allow access by park and road maintenance vehicles and emergency vehicles.



These stone walls at Chester Bowl are in need of repair.



The Lakeview Sports Arena hockey rink is an example of a recreational structure not compatible with the historical integrity of Seven Bridges Road.

IMPROVING THE ROAD FOR ALL MODES OF TRAVEL

This section of the Corridor Management Plan covers the following topics:

- Parkway-Specific Design Standards
- Accommodating Pedestrians and Cyclists
- Improving Safety and Aesthetics of Problem Intersections

DEVELOP PARKWAY-SPECIFIC ROADWAY DESIGN STANDARDS

Skyline Parkway encompasses a great variety of County and City roads and streets, ranging in scale from minor arterial to local. Almost none of these streets – and certainly none of the true “parkway” segments – are designed to current road standards. Lane width, horizontal and vertical alignment (the curves, hills and valleys along the route), shoulder width, bridge width, and many other features of the road were designed for an earlier era of travel and are a major part of the road’s historic character. Another positive result of this type of roadway design is that it tends to keep traffic speeds low, although it can result in safety hazards for drivers, pedestrians and cyclists.

One of the main problems for City public works staff is the need for “variances” from state and county road design standards, as typically expressed in the AASHTO “Green Book” (*The American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials – A Policy on Geometric Design of Highways and Streets*). While MnDOT staff have been flexible about granting variances for bridge design, the process would be greatly simplified if the Parkway had its own set of roadway

design standards, to be accepted as an alternative to the “Green Book” standards, based on the road’s historic character. Roadway design standards should be developed as part of the general Management Guidelines discussed above under Historic Resource Protection. Guidelines specific to each roadway segment should be developed by the Public Works Department in consultation with the Minnesota Department of Transportation, the State Historic Preservation Office, and other agencies and interest groups. They should address roadway width and lane configuration, shoulder or sidewalk standards, paving materials, bridge design, and related topics.

PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE IMPROVEMENTS

Existing conditions along the 26-mile primary route vary greatly. Pavement widths range from an average of 18 feet with intermittent shoulder along much of Seven Bridges Road to over 40 feet (four lanes) along roads such as Woodland Avenue. Shoulder width varies from negligible to a full paved shoulder with bike lane (e.g., parts of Snively Road).

The challenge for this planning effort is **how best to retain the Parkway’s historic character while accommodating new uses?** Designed as a scenic carriage road in the pre-automobile era, Skyline was widened, regraded and otherwise improved over the following decades to accommodate motorized vehicles, from private automobiles to motorcoaches. By 1940, the end of the Parkway’s period of significance, many of the central sections of the roadway had been widened from about 16 feet to 24 or 26 feet. Sidewalks were added along some residential blocks as those areas developed.



Bicycle and pedestrian improvements would improve the usability of some segments of the Parkway.

While pedestrians, cyclists or equestrians were not specifically considered as beneficiaries of these improvements, it would obviously have been easier for a variety of modes to coexist in an era of far lower traffic speeds and traffic volumes. At present, motorized and non-motorized recreational users of the Parkway must compete for the same, undifferentiated paved surface or its largely unimproved shoulders.

Later widenings and realignments, notably at Mesaba and Piedmont Avenues, have generally lessened or even eradicated most of the Parkway's character, turning it into just another leg of a busy intersection or a segment of a frontage road. These changes have generally made the roadway less safe and less suitable for pedestrians and cyclists.

Therefore, this plan recommends addressing pedestrian and bicycle needs through **improvements in a limited number of locations with the greatest**

pedestrian usage and/or greatest safety hazards.

These areas are:

- **Mesaba Avenue to Chester Bowl;**
- **Snively Road and Woodland Avenue;**
- **Seven Bridges Road;**
- **Boundary Avenue**, notably the I-35 freeway bridge.

Mesaba Avenue to Chester Bowl: This area has very high pedestrian use on roadway sections that vary from block to block. Improvements would thus vary by location. In the sections where the roadway is widest (e.g., some 36-foot areas between Mesaba and Kenwood Avenues), improvements might include **striped bicycle lanes on both sides and a sidewalk on one side**, as shown in Figure 7.

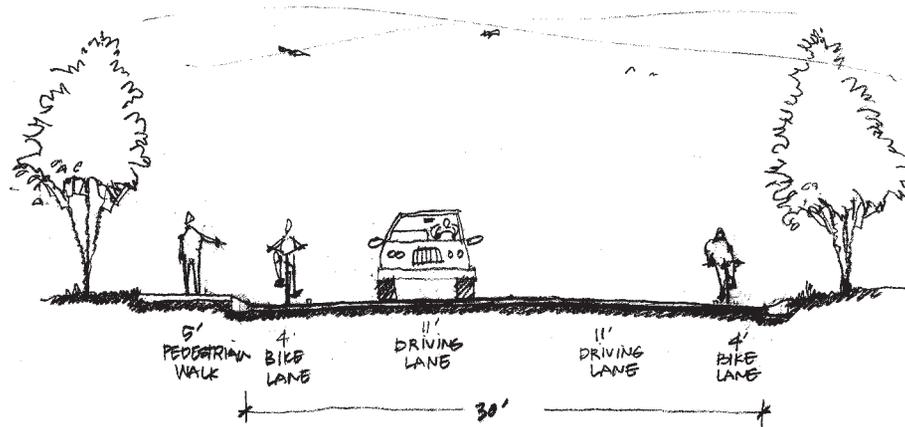


FIGURE 7: Skyline Parkway 30-foot roadway section. Example with bike lanes and sidewalk.

Where the roadway is narrowest, as in the area between Kenwood and Chester Bowl, improvements could include a **curb-separated sidewalk on one side**, replacing the existing shoulder, as shown in Figure 8. Travel lanes could be narrowed slightly to 11 feet. Signs could indicate that cyclists and motorists must “share the road” in these constrained areas.

More detailed analysis and engineering studies would be needed before undertaking any improvements.

Snively Road and Woodland Avenue: An alternate pedestrian and bicycle route is proposed and shown on Figure 3, bypassing parts of Snively and Woodland in the UMD Gap area. This route would follow St. Marie Street to Lakeview Drive, a traffic-calmed local street, and uphill to Snively Road. (Vehicular access between Lakeview and Snively Road is limited, but pedestrian/bike access could be provided.)

Seven Bridges Road: This segment, one of the narrowest on the route, should receive priority for **pavement upgrading**. Failing pavement should not be relied upon as a traffic calming device, since it essentially makes the segment unpleasant and hazardous for cyclists. Traffic can be calmed through the already narrow roadway profile and frequent curves; improved signage and enforcement are also needed.

Boundary Avenue: This road corridor will be the subject of a study in the next several years, and the I-35 freeway bridge will eventually warrant replacement. It should be planned to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians and to convey some elements of the Parkway’s aesthetic character, as exemplified by the new Piedmont Avenue bridge design.

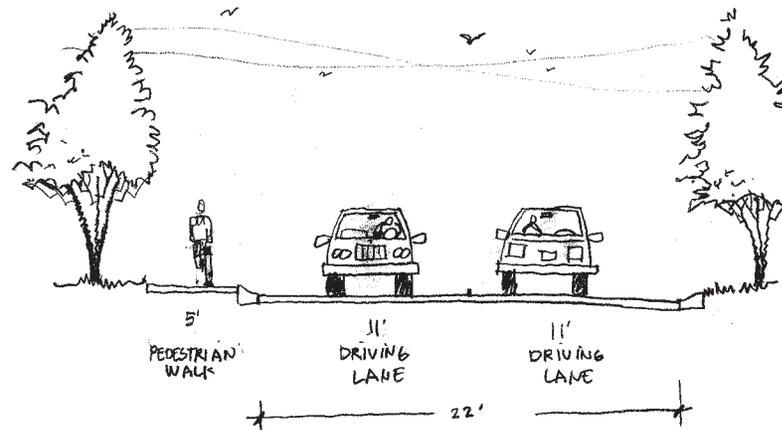


FIGURE 8: Skyline Parkway 22-foot roadway section. A curb-separated sidewalk could be added to replace the current shoulder.

IMPROVE THE SAFETY AND AESTHETICS OF PROBLEM INTERSECTIONS

Initiate traffic calming or safety improvements at intersections between Skyline Parkway and higher-classification routes. Typically, traffic on the intersecting roads is moving rapidly up and down the hill, and there are few visual signals for the motorist on either route as to the location of the crossing. Many of these intersections are overly wide, encouraging high traffic speeds. Improvements might include narrowing of the intersection through planted islands or medians, as well as improved signage.

Specific locations and recommendations are as follows:

- The need for a **pedestrian crossing at Mesaba Avenue** has been discussed for some time. Traffic volumes here are daunting to cyclists and pedestrians, and many Parkway users simply avoid the area. The image below shows an example of how the Parkway could cross this segment from east to west, crossing the lower parking area

of the Coppertop Church and the small triangle of land between Central Entrance and Mesaba. (The City already holds an easement across the parking area for view protection.) This would bring pedestrians and cyclists to the end of 10th Street, the original Parkway alignment (later relocated to 9th Street.)

There is also a need for a north-south crossing in this area, to serve the Harborview public housing complex located north of the highway. This issue needs to be explored in greater detail. However, a project of this nature should be included whenever improvements to Mesaba Avenue/Central Entrance are contemplated.

- Another potential safety improvement at this intersection that could be undertaken immediately would be to divide the Parkway route west of the intersection, so that the **east-bound route follows 7th Street** (a signalized intersection) while the **west-bound route remains on 9th Street**. This realignment would solve safety and sight distance problems for east-bound traffic.



A pedestrian bridge over Mesaba Avenue/Central Entrance would significantly improve bike and pedestrian mobility through this high-traffic area.



The Kenwood Avenue intersection is confusing and hazardous.



The Highland/Getchell Road intersection offers an opportunity for a traffic-calming roundabout and an interpretive rest stop.

- The **Haines Road/40th Avenue West** will eventually be reconstructed by St. Louis County to eliminate the hairpin turn just downslope from the Parkway intersection. A narrower, more pedestrian-friendly intersection design should be discussed in conjunction with that realignment.
- The **Highland/Getchell Road** intersection, excessively wide with poor sight distance, has been proposed for reconstruction with a traffic roundabout – a small landscaped island that channels and calms traffic on the intersecting roads. This approach would greatly improve the aesthetics and safety of this intersection. The central island could be used for Parkway signage and landscaped to complement its surroundings. A group of volunteers from the Skyline Planning and Preservation Alliance has begun working with County transportation planners and City staff to plan for a **full interpretive rest stop** at this location, to include parking, interpretive signs, picnic facilities and a trailhead for the Superior Hiking Trail. As an entry point to a relatively little-used Parkway segment, this site would be ideal. It may also provide an opportunity to restore and interpret the large concrete-arch relic bridge that crosses Keene Creek just south of the Parkway (see Appendix A, Segment Profiles: Western Boulevard Extension).
- The **Kenwood Avenue** intersection should be studied for improvement in conjunction with a pending City traffic study of the East Hillside neighborhood. Possibilities might include a small roundabout (landscaped traffic circle) to slow and channel traffic from the multiple intersecting streets.
- The **Glenwood Street** intersection should be traffic-calmed. Options to be considered include lowering posted speeds on Glenwood from 40 mph to 30 mph and realigning the Parkway route to intersect with Glenwood slightly to the west, below the crest of the hill, to improve sight distances.

IMPROVE THE AESTHETICS OF ALTERED OR NON-PARKWAY SEGMENTS

As discussed earlier in this report, a number of segments of the Parkway route were never constructed as “parkway” or have been altered to the point that their parkway character has been lost. These include the I-35/Boundary Avenue area and the UMD Gap.

The **Boundary Avenue area** may appear to have limited potential for improvements, given the character of existing commercial development and plans for additional development. However, a redesigned bridge over I-35, discussed above under “Pedestrian and Bike Improvements” could do much to change the character of the area. The City of Proctor intends to undertake a corridor study of Boundary Avenue. This study should closely involve the City of Duluth and the ARDC and should focus on the aesthetic enhancement of the entire interchange area as a true regional gateway. Examples of freeway and interchange enhancements can be seen along the I-35 corridor in downtown Duluth, along I-94 in Saint Paul’s Capital area, and at other locations along Minnesota highways.

The streets around the UMD campus are utilitarian in character and dominated by heavy traffic, but still offer some attractive views of the campus and the lake. University’s *Campus Master Plan Update* (2000) calls for several changes that could affect the Parkway route in the Gap area. The Master Plan calls

for an expansion of the campus north of St. Marie Street to create a new student housing complex just west of Carver Avenue. A new main entry from Woodland Avenue a short distance north of College Street would provide a clearer image and direct access to the heart of the campus. The plan specifically refers to the Parkway (mis-named “Skyline Drive”) with the following recommendation: “a cooperative effort should be undertaken to design a road which reflects both interests” [those of UMD and the City]. “The new road should be residential in scale with intermittent parking pullouts. The area near Rock Hill must be as unobtrusive as possible with parking moved downhill. The road should introduce curves to slow traffic and allow nature to dominate the image.”

This type of redesign would be consistent with the goals of the Corridor Management Plan, as a means of creating a “parkway” character on this segment of roadway. Specifically, the Parkway route around the campus (Junction and St. Marie Streets) should be redesigned with the following features:

- narrower roadway width (preferably 2 lanes throughout);
- parking pullouts, interspersed with curb extensions at corners;
- continuous street tree plantings;
- continuous sidewalks on at least one side;
- Parkway signage; including an interpretive sign or marker directing Parkway travelers to Rock Hill trails and overlook.
- addition of stonework elements such as the guard stones found along other segments of the Parkway.

CONDUCT A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR MISSION CREEK SEGMENT REOPENING

Many Fond du Lac residents and others have expressed a desire to see the Mission Creek segment reopened as a road segment of the Parkway. Others have stated a desire to maintain the remote wilderness qualities of that segment, which they fear would be



View from Rock Hill of the UMD campus down St. Marie Street, part of the UMD Gap segment.



Entrance to Mission Creek trail (a city hiking trail) as well as the parkway remnant in Fond du Lac.



View at 11th Ave. E. illustrates the attractiveness of existing vegetation, as well the extent to which it blocks views. Photo by Brian Fredrickson.

lost if it were opened to vehicular traffic. Many also favor improving it for trail use by reconstructing bridges and re-opening the landslide-damaged section. These issues can best be resolved by conducting a feasibility study that would evaluate the actions needed to accomplish either objective and the estimated costs of these. There is no doubt that either course of action would be costly – the area’s very steep and rugged topography is conducive to the kind of spring freshets that have washed out the road in the past. However, either road or trail reconstruction might be eligible for highway enhancement funding. Under either scenario, the existing stone-faced concrete arch bridges should be restored to the extent feasible, while the missing bridges could be replaced by simpler but compatible structures.

RECOGNITION, STEWARDSHIP AND IMPLEMENTATION

DEVELOP A PERMANENT MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

In order for the recommendations of this plan to be carried forward, the Parkway needs advocates at a variety of levels in City, County and State government as well as the private non-profit community. Currently, one advocacy group exists: the Skyline Planning and Preservation Alliance. The Alliance was originally organized to focus on the most neglected western segments of the Parkway, but has now broadened its focus, in conjunction with this planning effort, to take in the entire corridor. The group organizes monthly hikes and periodic clean-ups, screenings of films about the Parkway and talks on various

aspects of its history and environment. Other environmental advocacy and recreational user groups have a strong interest in various aspects of Parkway management, but no others focus on the route as a whole. The Hawk Ridge Management Committee of the Audubon Society focuses intensively on that segment and has been actively involved through the planning process.

Clearly, the Alliance will continue to play an active role in promoting stewardship of the Parkway and advocating for its improvement. The group should be included in any future decision-making process that involves the road.

Many other byway organizations have developed a **formal non-profit structure** and now receive state funds to conduct byway improvement projects. There may be interest in expanding the Alliance's role in this manner, including project administration, fund-raising and grant-writing activities. This will depend on the Alliance's goals, its capacity and resources. Whether or not the Alliance chooses to expand its role, it should continue to work in close partnership with all levels of government to further the goals of this plan and others that may emerge.

At the government level, the picture is more complicated. While the City’s Planning Department has taken the lead role in obtaining State Scenic Byway status and in the development of this plan, many other City departments and commissions and other governmental agencies have been involved to varying degrees and should continue to be involved in the future. These include:

City Departments:

- Public Works and Utilities: City Forester, Street and Park Maintenance

- Engineering
- Parks
- Police (not heavily involved so far, but should be brought in to coordinate enforcement efforts)
- Duluth Convention and Visitors Bureau

City Boards and Commissions:

- Planning Commission
- Heritage Preservation Commission
- Parks and Recreation Commission
- Environmental Advisory Council
- Tree Commission
- Neighborhood Planning Districts

City of Proctor: Planning Commission and Council

Midway Township: Board of Supervisors

St. Louis County:

- Land Commissioner’s office
- Historical Society
- Public Works

Regional:

- Arrowhead Regional Development Commission

State:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Department of Transportation
- Minnesota Office of Tourism

Other:

- Spirit Mountain Recreation Area
- University of Minnesota – Duluth
- Duluth Preservation Alliance
- Hawk Ridge Management Committee
- Skyline Planning and Preservation Alliance

How can these multiple agencies and organizations work together to implement the actions outlined in this Corridor Management Plan and ensure continued stewardship of this resource? Several options exist, but all seem to involve the creation of some type of **intergovernmental partnership**.

- The City could take the lead in creating a **Skyline Parkway Commission** that would include representatives of the above-listed organizations, including Proctor and Midway Township. A commission should also include members of the Citizens Task Force for the corridor management plan. Many of these members represent boards or commissions or are interested and knowledgeable citizens. Their background and level of commitment should be carried forward in any new organization.

The Commission could be staffed by the Planning Department, but ideally it would draw from the resources of its constituent groups to seek funds and initiate and manage improvement projects. One advantage of this arrangement is that it seems most likely to coordinate the efforts of the City agencies that are the “front line” of Parkway maintenance and improvements.

- Alternatively, the City could broaden its scope to create a **(Greater) Duluth Scenic Byways Commission** that could take in the North Shore Scenic Drive, the Evergreen Memorial Highway (23) and Highway 210 in Fond du Lac and Carlton. Such a commission would have a broader mandate and could perhaps do more to integrate and link these routes. However, it would have correspondingly less of a focus on Skyline Parkway, which appears most in need of improvements.



This sign is installed seasonally by the Hawk Ridge Management Committee.



Typical street conditions west of Chester Bowl.

- Any commission established should be closely coordinated with the **ARDC**, since that agency works closely with all scenic byways in the Arrowhead Region and may have additional funding sources.
- As mentioned above, the role of the **Skyline Planning and Preservation Alliance** is still in the formative stages. It may be that the Alliance could eventually evolve to become the “umbrella” organization that coordinates city, county, regional and state efforts. However, this will likely not occur in the short term.

In deciding on an appropriate management organization, the following factors should be considered:

- **Flexibility:** Any management entity should be able to form strategic relationships with partners in the public, private and non-profit sectors.
- **Public Involvement:** A management entity should represent the interests of a broad range of stakeholders, as well as agencies, potential funders, and individuals who understand the issues. An “entrepreneurial” perspective can help to move projects forward.
- **Decision-Making Protocol:** Because of the multi-jurisdictional nature of the Parkway and its resources, it will be key to establish open, clear decision-making protocols and rules of organization.
- **Resource Availability:** The resources needed for implementation are dispersed among multiple agencies, organizations and individuals. However, some initial commitment of staff time



Dumping near Keene Creek. Photo by Brian Fredrickson.

or funds will be needed to maintain momentum for plan implementation.

PURSUE NATIONAL SCENIC BYWAY NOMINATION

This Corridor Management Plan fulfills one of the prerequisites for National Scenic Byway designation. There is ample evidence that the Parkway has intrinsic features of national significance, presented in this report and in previous extensive historical research. This information, combined with the library of slides compiled for this and other studies, and the collective expertise of Parkway advocates, should contribute to a credible application.

There are currently six national scenic byways in Minnesota: Edge of the Wilderness, Great River Road, the Grand Rounds, Historic Bluff Country, Minnesota River Valley, and the North Shore Scenic Drive (an All-American Road, the highest designation). Designation has brought with it not only higher visibility but a guaranteed source of seed money for byway organizations, as well as the assistance of the America’s Byways Resource Center, headquartered in Duluth. The next call for nominations may not occur until 2004 or 2005, and progress on implementation of the Corridor Management Plan by that time may help increase the likelihood of designation.

IMPROVE ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS AND VOLUNTEER MONITORING AT OVERLOOKS

As with many of Duluth’s other visitor attractions such as Canal Park and the Lakewalk, physical improvements tend to encourage increased “legitimate” use by visitors, with a corresponding decrease in undesirable uses. The remoteness of many Parkway overlooks,

however, will require an increased level of vigilance by police and concerned residents. Problems with dumping and vandalism at Parkway overlooks, while of long duration, could be alleviated through a combination of efforts:

- Establishing regular police patrols of parks and overlooks along the Parkway;
- Arranging for occasional trash pick-ups of large items that might otherwise be dumped;
- Organizing neighborhood watch patrols in residential areas;
- Organizing “Adopt-an-Overlook” or similar programs that would involve residents, associations and businesses in overlook improvements and monitoring.

IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK

Implementation of the Corridor Management Plan will be an ambitious and long-term undertaking that will involve efforts by many public agencies, organizations and individuals. The projects and initiatives listed in Table 7 are organized by topic area as a way to summarize the many recommendations in this plan. Primary and secondary responsibilities for each initiative are noted, although it is possible that responsibilities will shift as the management structure for the Parkway becomes better defined.



Small commercial districts like this one at Woodland and St. Marie could be enhanced to attract Parkway visitors.



View from Keene Creek bridge illustrates the wilderness character of much of the corridor. Photo by Brian Fredrickson.

TABLE 7: Implementation Framework

Priority	Action	Lead and Coordinating Agencies
Management Framework		
1	Adopt Plan as official guidance for City policies and actions. Plan adoption is not intended to commit the City to funding or implementing every recommendation in the plan, but rather to provide a policy foundation for further implementation actions.	Duluth City Council
1	Create a Skyline Parkway Commission. A Commission, if provided with sufficient support and technical assistance from its membership, may take on primary responsibility for many of the actions listed below.	Duluth City Council Planning Department Partner agencies and SPPA (see previous discussion under "Management Structure")
Interpretation and Recognition		
1	Pursue National Scenic Byway nomination. Use this plan, other studies and selected images of the Parkway to prepare a credible and well-supported nomination.	Skyline Parkway Commission Planning Department ARDC SPPA
1	Initiate Interpretive Framework Plan. This plan could encompass a variety of improvements, including overlook design, wayfinding sign design, creation of a single map/brochure, and better integration of Parkway information with other visitor resources.	Planning Department Dept. of Public Works and Utilities Duluth Convention and Visitors Bureau Partner agencies
2	Pursue nomination to the National Register of Historic Places, while also considering the benefits of local historic district designation. Duluth's Certified Local Government status may provide an opportunity for funding of both efforts.	Skyline Parkway Commission Heritage Preservation Commission Duluth Preservation Alliance St. Louis County Historical Society State Historic Preservation Office
Management Guidelines		
2	Develop a comprehensive set of management guidelines for the Parkway's natural and built resources, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · vegetation management · historic resources management 	Planning Department Public Works & Utilities Dept. City Forester Skyline Parkway Commission

TABLE 7: Implementation Framework, cont.

Priority	Action	Lead and Coordinating Agencies
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · roadway design guidelines · roadway maintenance standards (seasonal closures, barriers, grading, etc.) 	Heritage Preservation Commission
3	Develop zoning districts for view protection and park and open space protection, as part of comprehensive Zoning Ordinance update.	Planning Department
3	Initiate Boundary Avenue Corridor Study, to include consideration of aesthetic, pedestrian and bike improvements, land use and signage.	Cities of Proctor and Duluth ARDC
Physical Improvements		
1	Continue to pursue bridge reconstruction, maintaining the historically-appropriate design standards developed for Seven Bridges Road and other bridge replacements.	Public Works & Utilities Dept. Mn/DOT
1	Establish priorities and seek funding for pavement, wall and other structure reconstruction.	Public Works & Utilities Dept. Skyline Parkway Commission Heritage Preservation Commission
2	Pursue clearing of vegetation at overlooks and reopening of closed overlooks, if continuing maintenance and monitoring can be put in place.	Public Works & Utilities Dept. SPPA and neighborhood organizations Police Department
1	Seek funding for pedestrian, bicycle and intersection improvements, in conjunction with planned road improvements, bike route plans or neighborhood safety improvements.	Public Works Department Planning Department ARDC
Maintenance and Enforcement		
2	Improve enforcement against dumping and vandalism at overlooks; reduce dumping through community policing, large item trash pickups, neighborhood watch programs, and public awareness campaigns. An "Adopt-an-Overlook" program may offer opportunities for neighborhood residents and businesses to improve the level of maintenance and monitoring at overlooks.	Police Department SPPA and neighborhood organizations/ Planning Districts

APPENDIX A

SEGMENT PROFILE: **MISSION CREEK SEGMENT**

Endpoints	Fond du Lac/ TH210 (2 branches) to Beck's Road
Character-Defining Features	Numerous stone-faced concrete arch bridges over Mission Creek, many washed out or in disrepair
Adjacent Land Use	Forest park, undeveloped
Land Ownership	Public, city and county-owned Fond du Lac Forest
Spatial Organization	Sense of enclosure, relative isolation, shifting visual perspectives
Circulation Patterns and Road Condition	Closed to automobile traffic; some bridges out across Mission Creek; used by snowmobiles, hiking
Major Intersections and Entry Points	Beck's Road, 131st Street in Fond du Lac, State Highway 210 (Jay Cooke SP)
Structures and Objects	Series of bridges (similar to Seven Bridges Road)
Topography / Grade	Graded through Mission Creek valley
Vegetation	Regrowth forest of mixed species
Views and Vistas	Shifting views of creek valley
Water Features	Mission Creek; numerous crossings
Era of Construction; Historic Resources	Built in 1920s to complete regional parkway system; abandoned to vehicular traffic in 1960s (approximate)
Recreational Resources and Uses	Snowmobiles, horseback, hiking, mountain bikes, ATVs
Resources in Proximity	Jay Cooke State Park to west; Willard Munger bike trail
Adjacent Neighborhoods and Planning Districts	Fond du Lac (District 1); Midway Township
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Desired level of use; automobile or recreational; motorized or non-motorized -Extent and cost of improvements -Desire for improved linkage to Jay Cooke State Park

SEGMENT PROFILE: BARDON'S PEAK SEGMENT

Endpoints	Beck's Road to I-35 interchange
Character-Defining Features	Wall and major overlook at Bardon's Peak, Stewart Creek Bridge, old-growth hardwood forest
Adjacent Land Use	Largely forested parkland; recreation area at north end; scattered rural residential at either end
Land Ownership	Public (Magney-Snively Park, Spirit Mountain Recreation Area) and private
Spatial Organization	Shifting pattern of enclosure and openness
Circulation Patterns and Road Condition	Narrow gravel road, rural in character, closed seasonally. Original alignment crossed current ski slopes; new alignment is uphill through recreation area
Major Intersections and Entry Points	Beck's Road, I-35 and frontage roads
Structures and Objects	Stone arch bridge at Stewart Creek listed on National Register; massive mortared stone wall at Bardon's Peak; ruins of Snively Monument at Stewart Creek
Topography / Grade	Constructed roadway prism, some cut and fill at Bardon's Peak overlook
Vegetation	High-quality old-growth mixed hardwood forest, aspen, northern hardwoods
Views and Vistas	Bardon's Peak overlook offers wide view of St. Louis River, Morgan Park, Gary/New Duluth
Water Features	Crosses Stewart Creek; small wetland north of alignment near Becks Rd.
Era of Construction; Historic Resources	Constructed 1920s; Spirit Mountain segment extensively altered
Recreational Resources and Uses	Cross-country ski trails, mountain biking, horseback riding, camping
Resources in Proximity	Spirit Mountain Recreation Area; Willard Munger Trail; planned communities of Riverside and Morgan Park; Lake Superior Zoo, DWP railroad r.o.w. with tunnel
Adjacent Neighborhoods and Planning Districts	Norton Park, Riverside, Smithville, Morgan Park, Gary, New Duluth and Fond du Lac (all District 1). Small areas of City of Proctor, Midway Township
Key Issues	-Vegetation management, accessibility, maintenance (trash dumping), interpretation. -No directional signs from I-35 (Midway Road) -Restoration of Snively monument? Use of abandoned DWP rail line?

SEGMENT PROFILE: WESTERN BOULEVARD EXTENSION

Endpoints	I-35 (Boundary Ave.) to Lincoln Park Drive
Character-Defining Features	Sweeping views of harbor, rock retaining walls and bridges over creeks, rock outcrops
Adjacent Land Use	Some urban residential areas, aspen woodland, mostly rocky slopes and forests cut by small creeks. I-35 area to US Hwy 2 largely altered, developed
Land Ownership	Forest park lands (tax-forfeit open space) and private lands; Oneota Cemetery
Spatial Organization	Generally open perspectives, shifting road alignment
Circulation Patterns and Road Condition	Paved road, varying width; intermittent curb and sidewalk. Junctions with county roads and some city streets
Major Intersections and Entry Points	Haines Rd., Highland St./Getchell and Stebner Roads, US Hwy 2 and I-35
Structures and Objects	Several substantial stone retaining walls (some dry-laid), stone-faced culverts and bridges. Large concrete arch bridge across Keene Creek for unbuilt subdivision
Topography / Grade	Cut and fill to create roadway along general line of glacial beach ridge
Vegetation	Residential lawns to east; second growth forest and woody undergrowth, many rock outcrops
Views and Vistas	View from overlook west of 28th Ave. W; other paved turnouts w. of 40th are blocked by guard stones or views are blocked by tree growth
Water Features	Crosses several small creeks: Merritt, Kingsbury, Keene
Era of Construction; Historic Resources	Built 1904-1914; substantial changes near I-35
Recreational Resources and Uses	Walking, biking. Cross-country ski trails north of road
Resources in Proximity	Forest parks; Thompson Hill Information Center, Brewer Park
Adjacent Neighborhoods & Planning Dist.	Lincoln Park, Piedmont Heights (District 3); Bayview Heights, Cody, Fairmont (District 2)
Key Issues	-Suitability of street segments for walking and biking -Vegetation management to enhance views -Potential for continued land development - Need for aesthetic and pedestrian improvements, Boundary Avenue area -Use of overlooks -Maintenance, dumping

SEGMENT PROFILE: ROGERS BOULEVARD / TERRACE PARKWAY SEGMENT

Endpoints	Lincoln Park to Chester Park
Character-Defining Features	Rock-faced bridges at Chester Creek and Twin Ponds, several overlooks, rock outcrops, street sections, with broad views of city and harbor
Adjacent Land Use	Varied: urban residential streets, parks, some areas of steep rocky slopes, several overlooks
Land Ownership	Private and public - Chester Bowl Recreation Area, Enger Park, Lincoln Park; residential lots commercial and institutional parcels
Spatial Organization	Generally open perspective with many long views, rapidly changing character, shifting perspectives from road alignment
Circulation Patterns and Road Condition	Paved road, intermittent parking lane, shoulders, sidewalks. Many intersections with city street system
Major Intersections and Entry Points	Mesaba Ave./Central Entrance; TH 53 (Piedmont) and Lincoln Park Drive, Kenwood Ave.
Structures and Objects	Stone-faced concrete arch bridges at Chester Creek and Twin Ponds (both rebuilt), massive stone retaining walls at Chester Bowl
Topography / Grade	Cut and fill to create roadway along general line of glacial beach ridge
Vegetation	Urban lawns, open brushy lots, forested parks
Views and Vistas	Marked overlooks at Observation Road and Enger Park; several additional overlooks, some with guardstones
Water Features	Twin Ponds (artificial construction), Chester Creek, Miller Creek, Coffee Creek, Buckingham Creek
Era of Construction; Historic Resources	Oldest segment, constructed 1889-1904
Recreational Resources and Uses	Park facilities - swimming, trails, golf, skiing, picnicking, etc. Walking, biking along city street segments
Resources in Proximity	Many park resources - Chester Bowl Recreation Area, Enger Park (tower, gardens, golf course), Lincoln Park
Adjacent Neighborhoods & Planning Dist.	East Hillside (District 6); Central Hillside (District 5), Lincoln Park (District 3), Piedmont Heights (District 4)
Key Issues	-Suitability of street segments for walking and biking -Dangerous confusing intersections with local streets -Mesaba/Central Entrance intersection - Pedestrian safety and wayfinding -New development west of Chester Park - Variances for driveways, clearance and grading on slopes -Oversized houses detract from views in some areas - Vegetation management

SEGMENT PROFILE: UMD GAP SEGMENT

Endpoints	Chester Creek to Glenwood Street
Character-Defining Features	Urban residential streets and major thoroughfares; abuts University campus
Adjacent Land Use	Urban residential, limited commercial and campus uses
Land Ownership	Private and university
Spatial Organization	No overall organizational pattern
Circulation Patterns and Road Condition	Variety of road widths and conditions - minor arterials (Snively Road, Woodland Ave.), major and minor residential streets; many intersections
Major Intersections and Entry Points	Snively Road at Glenwood; Snively and Woodland
Structures and Objects	None
Topography / Grade	City street grading; bluff line is downslope of Snively Road
Vegetation	Wooded hillside (Rock Hill) north side of UMD campus
Views and Vistas	Overlook at Rock Hill above St. Marie Street
Water Features	Tischer Creek
Era of Construction; Historic Resources	Not historically constructed in this section
Recreational Resources and Uses	Walking, biking along some streets
Resources in Proximity	University, Rock Hill (Bagley Nature Area) ski trails, open space and overlook, historic planned neighborhood of Morley Heights north of Snively Rd.
Adjacent Neighborhoods and Planning districts	UMD / Chester Park (District 10); Congdon Park and Endion (District 7) south
Key Issues	-Might alternate routes be preferable? Feasibility of alternate routes -Wayfinding -Adding "parkway character" to city streets

SEGMENT PROFILE: HAWK RIDGE SEGMENT

Endpoints	Glenwood Street to Maxwell Road
Character-Defining Features	Long bluff with sweeping views from overlooks; enclosed by forest at either end
Adjacent Land Use	Sparsely to heavily forested nature preserve; residential development downslope; a few homes upslope near Glenwood
Land Ownership	Public - City forest - and private. Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve is city-owned; managed by committee of Duluth Audubon Society
Spatial Organization	Generally straight road with progression from enclosure on east to open vistas in center
Circulation Patterns and Road Condition	Gravel road from Maxwell to near west overlook; closed seasonally. Paved between west overlook and Glenwood
Major Intersections and Entry Points	No major thoroughfares
Structures and Objects	Guard stones at overlooks, bridge over Amity Creek
Topography / Grade	Widened roadway grade on steep hillside
Vegetation	Primarily aspen, upland brush, pine plantation, maple woods
Views and Vistas	Two designed overlooks provide broad views of lake and residential neighborhoods, wooded ridge
Water Features	Amity Creek
Era of Construction; Historic Resources	Constructed 1935-36; replaced Amity Creek Segment
Recreational Resources and Uses	Major fall migratory bird observation and research area. Walking, running, biking; overlooks used for picnics, gatherings. Marked hiking, cross-country ski, snowmobile trails
Resources in Proximity	Lester Park, Northland Country Club (private), trails link to other open space resources
Adjacent Neighborhoods & Planning Dist.	Lakeside / Lester Park (District 9) south; Morley Heights / Parkville (District 8) north
Key Issues	Prevention of vandalism; Improve safety of Glenwood intersection. Is seasonal closing necessary?

SEGMENT PROFILE: SEVEN BRIDGES ROAD SEGMENT

Endpoints	Maxwell Road to London Road
Character-Defining Features	Narrow, winding road; stone-faced concrete arch bridges
Adjacent Land Use	Urban park, forested; residential at southern end
Land Ownership	Public - Lester Park and City forest land - and private, residential and limited commercial, southern end
Spatial Organization	Shifting views of woods and creek as road turns; short visual perspectives; semi-enclosed feel
Circulation Patterns and Road Condition	Narrow paved road without curb, gutter or sidewalk; occasional pull-outs; intersections with city streets at lower end; route beginning can be difficult to find
Major Intersections and Entry Points	Superior Street, London Road
Structures and Objects	Eight stone-faced concrete arch bridges, one culvert
Topography / Grade	Gentle slope at bottom of hill becomes steep ascent
Vegetation	Mixed species, primarily aspen associations
Views and Vistas	Occasional views down Amity Creek
Water Features	Amity Creek - multiple crossings
Era of Construction; Historic Resources	Constructed 1901-03; donated to city 1905; bridges by Morell & Nichols, 1910
Recreational Resources and Uses	Trails, fishing, overlooks at south end. Ice rink at mid-point detracts from scenic character
Resources in Proximity	Lester Park trails and golf course
Adjacent Neighborhoods & Planning Dist.	Lakeside / Lester Park (District 9)
Key Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Wayfinding around eastern terminus, Superior Street to London Road -Dumping, deteriorating pavement conditions. -Bridge maintenance and reconstruction. -Compatibility of ice rink use?

APPENDIX B: REFERENCES

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APPENDIX C: OPEN HOUSE COMMENTS

The following summaries reflect comments and discussion among small groups at an Open House on the preliminary Parkway plan, held in May 2002.

Group 1: Chester Park Neighborhood

Traffic volumes and speed: 8th Ave. E. at Skyline – no sight distance for driveways

Vegetation control: residents are paying a “view tax” – need policy on citizen trimming – should city-owned property on downslope side be trimmed as a rule?

“Chainsaw Massacre” from Chester Park Drive east to 8th or 9th – reasons for cutting vegetation?

Safety at Chester Bowl vicinity: could retaining wall be moved outwards to fit in a bike/ped lane? (Some say gravel is in character, more natural, historic). Current problems with closure of 9th Street bridge – all traffic diverted to parkway

Need for parking enforcement in ped. lane

Traffic calming at Chester Parkway, Kenwood and Kent – speed humps, stop signs – 4-way – at Kenwood and Kent

View protection – could heights of trees be controlled?

Informal pullouts – Peace Church – 11th Ave. E. – formalize

Confusion following route – try a stencil?

Logo – needs update of color, font; increase size, but basically sound

Note existing pedestrian route – paper street? – leading from Chester Park up to Aftenro property, connecting to UMD (College and 19th)

Group 2

Maps: future extension of Lakewalk should be linked to Skyline

Concerns: speed limits reduced around curves – pedestrian caution (signs)

Introduce legislation to allow parkways to reduce speeds to 25 mph

Hiking trails could be developed below parkway

Lincoln Park Drive washing out – close to automobiles?

Vegetation: clear overlooks – Duluth Vo-tech could clean out and replant to avoid overgrowth – potential Eagle Scout project

Bike trail connection between Zoo and Spirit Mountain

Lighting: limit so that lights shine down and out to lake. Reflective markers could be used at intersections

Don't place any improvements that can be vandalized.

Enforcement against dumping needed. Off-road vehicles an issue

Historic designation: may impose demands that people don't want – need to see pros and cons laid out - proceed with caution

Logo: like the historic logo – plant more white pine, spruce, to enhance that character

Bridge over Mesaba – may be needed. May need more work; this is a good start. Wind on bridge will be a problem. High cost may not be worth the improvement.

Need to improve pedestrian, hiking and biking opportunities – parallel trail?

Oppose one-way idea.

Group 3

Vegetation:

- neighborhoods should determine degree of clearing
- view is most important aspect of parkway
- may need height limit on some trees
- most byways (national) have a veg. management plan

Pedestrian/bike use:

- improvements should include pedestrian paths
- dangerous or inaccessible
- incorporate route in marathons, etc.
- no change at Hawk Ridge
- intersections with Haines are serious safety issues

Overlooks:

- proposed overlook over-designed
- view speaks for itself
- lights would interfere with night view; would be shot out
- simpler the better – wide enough for bus pull-off
- need bike racks, especially at trailheads
- keep character, stonework, etc.

Preservation:

- National Scenic Byway would be preferable to historic district
- City spent \$200,000 on Lakewalk – would go a long way on Skyline
- scenic view overlay
- limit development to protect integrity
- retain character

Logo:

- keep original logo
- use small logo signs or stencil to designate
- use signs sparsely, where needed at intersections
- need a really good brochure

Goal should be to be able to bike entire route

Oppose one-way designation

Group 4

The City of Duluth should:

- keep up what we have – maintain logical approach to upgrades
- narrow their focus – just fix/repair just like 30 years ago
- focus on road surface, keep it simple
- repair bridges and roadways
- make this safer for children
- trim overgrown areas – plant more white pine above (as before?)
- keep road width as is – keep signage standard
- plant more low growing greens in overlook areas
- plant more indigenous trees that attract birds
- restore what is there (bridges) – do not widen road – move hockey rinks
- keep accessibility in mind; high walls restrict views

- keep roads at similar width - and add bike lane
- go for “designation” if it can help with funding

Frustration with congestion at Mesaba

Liked green stripe idea for making boulevard

Concern large overlooks will be hangouts for kids (bottles)

Concern about vandalism, dumping of garbage

Believe Skyline is a natural resource – glad city continues to improve it

Mission Creek should be kept open – even developed

Boy Scouts can help with planting projects

Logo Reviewed by Group: Keep similar, maybe less trees, more stonework, and possibly include the lake

Final Thoughts:

- Create “Skyline Watch” neighborhood approach to monitoring – have a phone number?
- Don’t overdo the lighting

Group 5

1) Introductions & major interest/concern

Tim – preserve aesthetic quality, natural resources, and access to recreation (e.g. birding, skiing).

Roger – believes the authentic “rustic” beauty is best; concerned that tour buses stop for extended periods and fill areas with exhaust fumes; has concerns about littering.

Randy – walks to work on it every day; sees boulevard as multi-modal – driving, biking, access to trails and recreation.

Jodi – Agrees overgrowth has led to diminished views; likes painted line showing you're on blvd.

Doug – likes hiking trails off Skyline – concerned they should be marked better; believes Mission Creek should become a nature/hiking trail, perhaps link to the Superior and/or Munger Hiking Trail systems.

Luke – Believes many tourists use Lakewalk – but that Skyline is the “spine” for Duluth’s citizens – he wants to be able to walk and bike on it safely.

Margaret – Believes the buses are OK (they go slow - that’s good) but that we don’t need to cater to them. Make it safer for all to walk & bike, as well as drive.

Wayne – lives near Mesaba, moved here for the greenspace – jogs on Skyline, likes the rustic road; has concerns about resident tree cutting that creates erosion – replanting important

Wendy – most concerned that historical significance of Skyline be maintained.

2) Issues we missed?

Desire for non-polluting lighting (eg. vapor lights, pointed down – as in Tucson, AZ)

Need for speed limits – “Take your Time” zones; believed narrow lanes made for slower driving & could provide for needed pedestrian lanes in certain areas especially west of Twin Ponds area.

Perhaps have Skyline be “No cars on Sundays”

Aesthetics need more consideration when replacing retaining walls

Sidewalks near Chester Creek and Twin Ponds are too narrow.

Comprehensive plan vital – keeping historic considerations a high priority

Boundary Avenue by exit 249 very unsafe for bikes/pedestrians.

One member not in favor of lights being added west of Twin Ponds.

Logo Reviewed by Group: Nearly everyone agreed the logo should be kept close to its original design

Pedestrian Bridge at Mesaba Avenue: Almost perfect balance between those in favor, those opposed, and those undecided about a pedestrian bridge over Mesaba. Concerns were raised about how it would interrupt people's lake view. Consensus much greater towards building a tunnel – which meets both needs for safety and preserving aesthetics.

3) Final Thoughts

It's believed many properties are in foreclosure on West Skyline, and that the city should help protect these from becoming developed. In addition, city should keep greenspace a priority.

More connection routes to the lake are needed.

More educational literature needed that outlines the historical significance of Skyline.

Cement barriers used around edge of roadways need to be anchored better – some are being pushed over.



Duluth, Minnesota is situated on the far western edge of the greatest of the Great Lakes, Lake Superior. A busy port city since the 19th century, it has an exceptionally rich cultural heritage in a dramatic natural setting. Skyline Parkway, winding for some 25 miles along the hillsides above the city, is a historic road designed in the picturesque tradition, combining the best aspects of an urban and a wilderness experience.