

# Pollard Defends Choosing Park Route

By MICHAEL LOLLAR

The president of a Memphis engineering consultant firm testified in federal court yesterday that "life is too short" to waste time driving unnecessarily on freeways built in the wrong places.

William S. Pollard, former partner in charge of Harland Bartholomew & Associates in Memphis, defended the firm's selection in 1955 of the Interstate 40 route through Overton Park and said further studies of alternate routes would be "exercises in futility."

The Citizens to Preserve Overton Park and other plaintiffs in the 16-year-old battle claim that an alternate route utilizing the L&N Railroad right-of-way north of the park would be more feasible than the park route.

Mr. Pollard testified Thursday that the L&N right-of-way is so far north in relation to heavy traffic flow in Memphis that it would be inconvenient for motorists to use a freeway along that route.

**The L&N route would be** about five blocks north of the presently proposed route.

Driving that far out of the way, Mr. Pollard said, "would use valuable time resources of humans. They have only a short life span anyway, and they would be using it needlessly by going out of their way for something that does not serve them."

Under cross-examination by Michael Lackner, a Memphis attorney for the plaintiffs, Mr. Pollard testified that Harland Bartholomew & Associates has spent years studying the location of Interstate 40. And, "every action that has taken

place since our early studies of alternates makes our decision more explicit.

**"If the expressway were** never built, 18 lanes of major streets would have to be built (to compensate)." He said the vehicle capacity of the planned six-lane highway is about 1,500 cars an hour "or three times the capacity of the major streets."

Mr. Lackner asked him late yesterday if his own firm, William S. Pollard Consultants, Inc., is presently engaged in any work involving either Interstate 40 or the proposed Southern Freeway.

The Southern Freeway, still in the planning stages, would

be built along both sides of the right-of-way of the Southern Railroad. Three lanes of the highway would run along each side of the railroad tracks, and trains would thus run along the highway's median strip.

The route, as planned, would take a strip along the north edge of Audubon Park.

**Mr. Pollard said his firm has** been engaged "and is negotiating" to design an interchange which would connect with the Southern Freeway.

The interchange, he said, would be located on the 160-acre site adjacent to Ridgeway Country Club, a site which has been sold to Boyle Investment Co. and Cook Industries, Inc.

Later, he testified that relocation of the Overton Park route "would only cause further disruption in the city," since the community has adjusted to the park route.

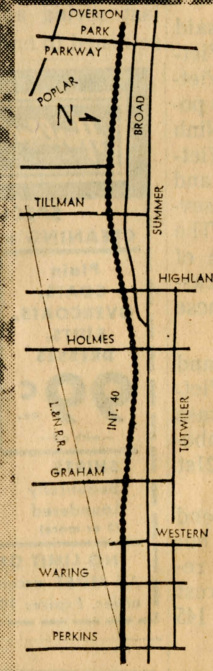
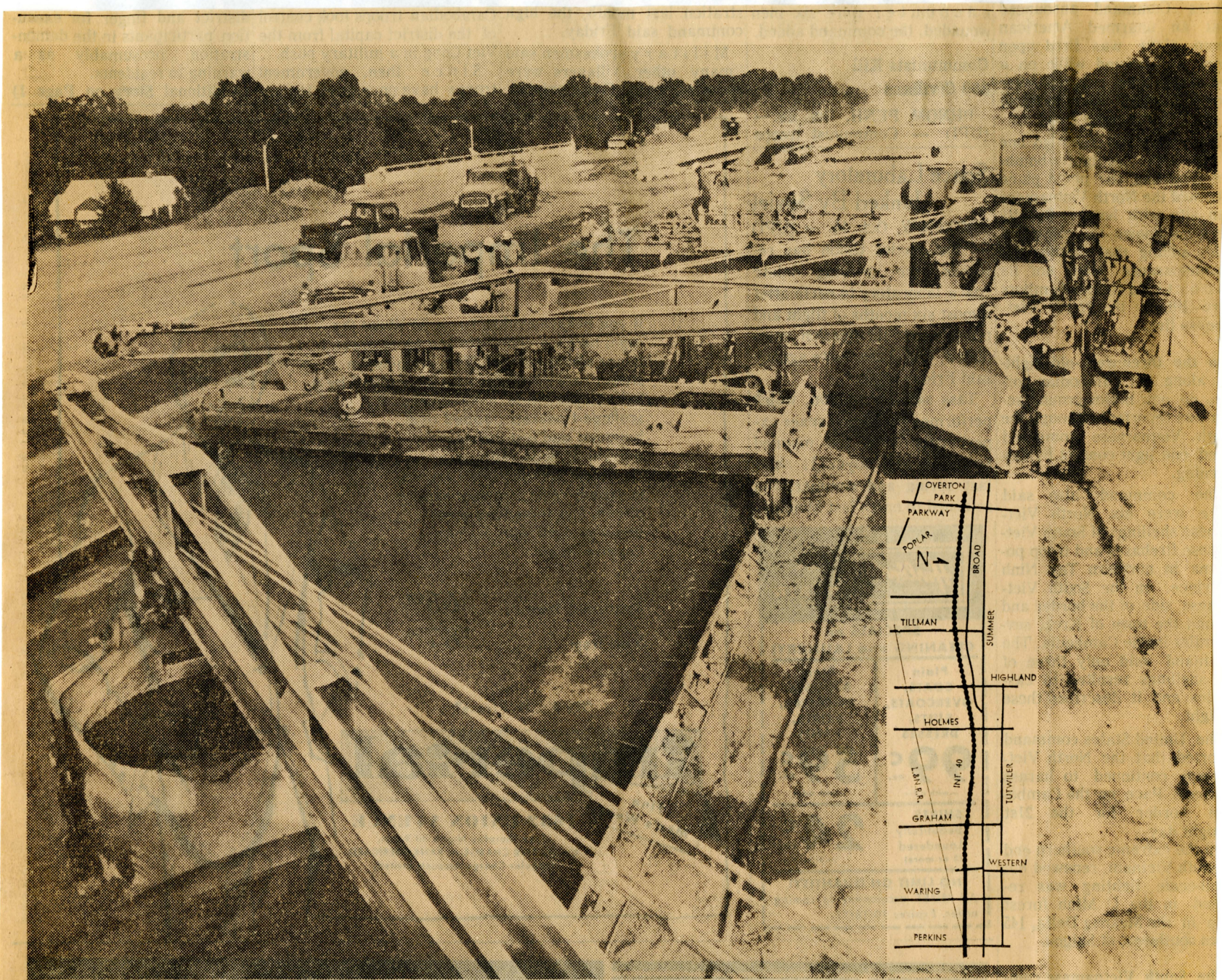
**"For the past 16 years, the** community has moved forward. The park route has been printed in local handouts and maps. Something different now would only be more disruptive. The longer a plan exists, the more public confidence builds for it.

"This very lawsuit is a form of disruption. Each time a new consideration is announced, there is a flurry of calls wanting to know the details."

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Paving Of Interstate 40 Reaches Western Drive As Overton Park Hearing Continues

—Staff Photo by Richard Gardner