

# Park Route Foes Shun Convenience

By MICHAEL LOLLAR

An attorney for opponents of the Overton Park expressway said in federal court yesterday citizens should tolerate inconvenient traffic patterns to preserve park land.

John W. Vardaman of Washington argued that two specific alternatives to the park route should not be discarded

even though they are slightly longer than the park route and might be inconvenient to some motorists.

Those routes utilize the L&N Railroad right-of-way about five blocks north of the park.

**William S. Pollard Jr.**, president of his own engineering consultant firm here, testified for

the state Highway Department yesterday that one L&N route is .16 miles longer than the park route and the other is .28 miles longer.

He had testified Friday that an L&N route also would be so far north in relation to heavy traffic flow in Memphis that it would be inconvenient for

many motorists to use an expressway along such a route.

Mr. Pollard, a former partner in Harland Bartholomew & Associates which selected the park route in 1955, said that although the L&N routes are just barely longer than the park route, the differences are substantial.

"It is not just one car that will have to go the extra distance," he said, "it's many, and forevermore."

"It is not sound engineering to make people travel any distance that they don't have to," Mr. Pollard argued.

**However, Mr. Vardaman** said, "When you get into some of these areas like Overton Park, you should tolerate somewhat inconvenient or reduced traffic service so long as it is not extraordinarily inferior."

United States Dist. Judge Bailey Brown had interrupted testimony in the 13-day-old trial, asking attorneys for both sides to clarify their positions on the possible use of an L&N alternative. "I just wanted to know exactly which side of the fence you were on," he said.

"Do you see anything that takes the place of trees and grass?" he asked J. Alan Hanover, attorney for the state Highway Department.

"Yes," Mr. Hanover said. "I think sound engineering and safety do."

**Michael Lackner, also an attorney** for the plaintiffs, had questioned Mr. Pollard earlier yesterday, maintaining that the present park route design is inadequate to handle the volume of traffic which would use it in 10-20 years.

**However, Mr. Pollard** argued that Mr. Lackner's claims are based on 1955 figures. "Standards are in constant change," he said.

Mr. Pollard also testified that the present design was chosen in order to take as little park land as possible — "to try to be on the esthetic side. The awareness of that park and the possible consequences to the public were always in the forefront of our minds."

He said federal environmental protection standards employed in the past are "not the same as in the present jargon."

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NA

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