

The Future of Parkways in the Landscape

by Leehu Loon

Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Master of Landscape Architecture

Approvals:

Ron M. Kagawa, ASLA
Associate Professor, Chair

Brian Kane, ASLA
Visiting Assistant Professor
Committee Member

Patrick A. Miller, FASLA
Professor
Committee Member

April 24, 2003
Alexandria, Virginia

Keywords: parkways, landscape, views, horizontal alignment, vertical alignment, vegetation, natural features, cultural features, road details.

Copyright Leehu Loon 2003



Abstract

The Future of Parkways in the Landscape

by Leehu Loon

Since the Depression era there has been an evolution in parkway usage. Parkway have outlived their recreational function and now must also serve as routes to recreational facilities. Since the elemental use of parkways has drastically changed, questions of how and why beg to be answered. How has parkway design and construction changed from the Depression era to today in terms of views, alignment, vegetation, natural and cultural features, and parkway details. How is parkway design and construction different from that of typical roadways; and how does this information effect the future design and construction of parkways? In addition, why can parkways no longer serve the same purpose that they did in the past?

This thesis examines these questions through the creation of the Lorton - Laurel Hill Parkway. The main characteristics studied in this thesis will continue to be vital in future parkway design and construction. This thesis expresses that parkways can no longer serve as a destination, but instead must become an introduction to a recreational facility.

Parkways will become increasingly important in the future as they can provide relief to congested roadways while simultaneously providing the motorist with an aesthetically pleasing entrance to recreational facilities. In the future, the components studied here must be instituted into highway and road engineering. The construction of motorways that incorporate parkway design principles will create more successful and vibrant routes between urban centers and their surrounding communities, and in so doing will increase the quality of life of its population.