Cowan Park & Ravenna Blvd. originally were a deep ravine like Ravenna Park, being cut by drainage from the post-Ice Age "Lake Russell" (formed by melt-off from the "Washon Glacial Ice Sheet") 10,000 years ago. The glacial basin remaining is "Green Lake" which continued to drain through this ravine until about 1913 installation of sewer and first fill in Boulevard, most recent fill Cowen Park in 1964. Drains into Union Bay: shoreline until 1971 is indicated by big curve of railroad.

COWEN PARK: (west of 15th Ave.) named for Charles Cowen, who gave the park believing that men do not live by bread alone; spotless mint; of English birth, spent childhood at family diamond mine in South Africa. Came to U.S. on business, remained as resident on San Juan estate; Haynes-Cowen Real Estate Insurance.

The present 15th Ave. Bridge built (1938), replacing wooden streetcar trestle; a spur track went along Service Drive till 1941.

RAVENNA PARK: named c.1889 by the original owner and developer, W.W. Beck, because ravine reminded him of Ravenna, Italy, famed for its pine trees. (Ravenna, Italy, was a Roman naval base; its port is now capital of Italy under Byzantium Empire; scene of Battle of 1512.) Other names used by Beck were "East Bay Park" after disappears in 1911 to honor Teddy Roosevelt who had died that January. However a popular petition in 1931 restored the name Ravenna. By then the huge trees had died and been removed. By another petition in 1935 a southeast corner was filled for a playground & WPA (1938) built a large, scenic swimming pool fed by Ravenna Creek. It was abandoned in 1950, after a long stagnation caused by drain failure; filled in 1956 by Metro Sewer excavation.
The melt-off of the Vashon Glacial Ice Sheet formed the huge Lake Russell which cut drainage ravines through the new glacial till, one being the Revanna Park ravine. Lake Russell disappeared when the Ice Sheet retreated north of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, but various features remained, including the Green Lake drainage basin, continued to empty thru the Revanna ravine into Lake Washington. The debris pockets of the basin became Bitter, Fuller and Green Lakes. Many creeks broke - and springs red into Green Lake whose outlet was on the east side of the route of Revanna Boulevard, in a deepening ravine becoming Cowen and E Parks. The levels of Green Lake and Lake Washington were higher than Bay claimed the area from the U. W. Stadium thru the University Village. For centuries the Indian tribes had co-existed with forest, creeks, lakes and wilderness settlers coming by wagon and ship brought sawmills and farm equipment - and the wilderness. The Revanna Creek dwindled in volume but still the Olmsted Co. 1904 recommended a boulevard on each bank of the Creek, from the Green Lake Boulevard to Cowen Park hence to connect with the 17th Ave Blvd south the University Grounds (site of the proposed A-Y-P Exposition; 1909) to connect the proposed Lake Washington Blvd at Washington Park. The Revanna/Cowen Ravine with its magnificent Big Trees had been saved from the loggers (as had Park) but other platting by Realtors in the area did not always consider the top contours or features with the result that route of the proposed Revanna Blvd side the Creek necessitated the Condensation across property or the use prismatic chart plotted street properties. Wm. Sapinson, et al., successfully petitioned the Court curving portion of the boulevard from 15th Avenue to the southeast portion of Park.

Then came the development of Green Lake Park and the Engineering Dept. 60 ft diameter brick Trunk Sewer alongside the Revanna Creek! The level of Greencreek was lowered by 7 feet (1') in order to increase the amount of shoreline for recreational purposes of Green Lake. Revanna Creek bed went dry and the new outlet for Lake was into a 24" pipe to Cowen Park, but this was replaced by discharging into the Trunk Sewer. So the Revanna Creek Ravine was filled in, from Green Lake to Cowen Park (half of Cowen was filled in 1966) and in 1912 the center strip Boulevard route was improved with "Dolmarway Pav ing" (4 years later repaved with asphalt. The new plan for the Boulevard was the "New York Plan" i.e. a center strip, with a traffic roadway on each side separated by planting strips. The Engineering Dept. was to construct the two traffic roadways, which they began in 1912 and were complete until 1925. However, improvement of the planting strips included a sidewalk on one and a bridle path on the other.

The Boulevard route had included several "named" streets: Meadow Place, Blvd. and Sarinson Road; so in 1908 an Ordinance established the name of Revanna BOULEVARD for the entire length. (17th Ave was established as University Blvd. and maintained by this Dept. until repealed by Ordinance in 1951.)

In 1915 letters from Chas. Cowen and the Seattle Automobile Club propose to improve boulevard paving because it is part of the "Great Road, the Pacific Hiway, leading from Vancouver, B.C. to San Diego, Calif." (The Budget would permit only grading make.)

The Age of the Auto Tourist had come; the Seattle Auto Club was founded in 1910, the Auto Camp was established in Woodland Park in 1922 and the Transcontinental Auto Congress was maroted at Alki Beach in 1926. Except for gas rationing during WWII Auto Tourism was at the peak of 1925 when faced with the Energy Crisis shortages.

By 1934 requests for a Bicycle Route along the Boulevard had become organized until to be pressured and argued until 1973, following the tremendous rebirth of the bike on a national scale.

The Boulevard between 15th and 17th became the site of a spectacular show in Nov, 1933 a small section in the roof of the old 72" Trunk Sewer fell in and tunneled an enormous hole in the boulevard; no homes were endangered. An emergency by-pass sewer was surfaced round Revanna Park.

Under discussion since 1955, the center paving was replaced with lawn under an Engr. Contract in 1961, the side roadways widened. Construction of the Freeway over the appeared to present an ideal cover for Tennis Courts but the "pilot" court was not popular.

History: RAVENNA BLVD.
Area north of 65th, known as "Meadow Place", was filled in 1911; adjacent prk @ Green Lake also filled about this time; lake originally drained thru hilly Ravenna Pk to Union Bay 1911, Boulevard consists of center portions; trees, spirals, Parking strips are maintained by abutting owners. Entire boulevard maintained by Engr. Dept. (1942)
Until 1902 the boulevard had consisted of 2 roadways. The center one being the 4 lanes of the center road was removed. (See above)

Roosevelt Way

Brooklyn Ave.

COWEN PARK

COVENNA TUNNELS (Corman St. - 86 Ave. NE)

E.C.B.

E.C.B.

E.C.B.

98th Av. NE

85th Av. NE

OFF RAMP

ON RAMP

Bus #22


dimensions: 612.0x1008.0
Lot 1 Block 3 Alder Park Add., Owned: King Co. Assessed Value = $200
Lot 4 + 1/2 blk 1
Lot 6 + 1/2 blk 1
Lot 7 (6.84') blk 1
Lot 7 (W. 35') blk 1

Owned: D.P. Legman & M. McLean/D.W. Cook A.V. = 1750/13,500
Owned: REC. 137 Fed, S + E. B. M. Carne A.V. = 2300/12,500
Owned: Union Fed. Sil Z. F. M. Carney A.V. 3100
Owned: J. F. M. Carney