

**REPORT TO
THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES**

**PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH
LOCATION AND DESIGN OF SEGMENTS
OF THE
INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM
IN MAJOR METROPOLITAN AREAS**

**FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**



**BY
THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL
OF THE UNITED STATES**

AUGUST 1967



COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20548

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To the President of the Senate and the
Speaker of the House of Representatives

The General Accounting Office recently reviewed the Federal-aid highway program in five selected States. As the accompanying report on our examination discloses, timely and economical completion of the Interstate Highway System may be hindered by unresolved route location and design problems for segments in major metropolitan areas.

The cause of this situation stems basically from the inability of Federal, State, and local officials to reach agreement on suitable specific route locations or design features.

Although the total mileage associated with these segments is small in relation to the entire system, these segments represent links which must be completed to create a unified national network of highways. Because of the length of time required to complete modern urban freeways, the goal of a completed unified network of interstate highways by the statutory completion date of 1972 no longer may be attainable.

The Bureau of Public Roads, commenting on our report, agreed that location problems existed for certain segments of the Interstate System. The Bureau, however, stated that these segments were not vital links, essential to achieving the goal of a completed unified network of interstate highways. The Bureau's comments, and our evaluation thereof, are discussed in detail in the body of this report.

Our analysis of the Bureau's comments indicates to us that the Bureau's solution to the problems discussed in this report carries with it such consequences that the Congress may wish to examine the approach in detail. Therefore, the General Accounting Office is presenting this information to the Congress for its consideration and use in its continued review of the program.

B-118653

Copies of this report are being sent to the Director, Bureau of the Budget; the Secretary of Transportation; and the Federal Highway Administrator.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "James B. Acheson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "J".

Comptroller General
of the United States

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INTRODUCTION

For many years the General Accounting Office has been making reviews of the administration by the Bureau of Public Roads, an agency of the Federal Highway Administration, Department of Transportation, of various aspects of the Federal-aid highway program. Our reviews have been made pursuant to the Budget and Accounting Act, 1921 (31 U.S.C. 53), and the Accounting and Auditing Act of 1950 (31 U.S.C. 67).

The purpose of this report is to present information pertaining to problems that have developed in connection with the location and design in major metropolitan areas of highway segments which are to be part of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, known as the Interstate System. These problems have a direct bearing on the timely and economical completion of the Interstate System. In addition to making certain general observations, we have discussed in the report specific highway segments in the States of Michigan, Illinois, Maryland, New York, and California. We confined our review of these segments to matters directly related to the problems discussed and did not examine into all aspects or transactions pertaining thereto.

BACKGROUND

The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1944 authorized the designation of a 40,000-mile Interstate System. After a thorough study had been made of suggested routes submitted by all of the States, the selection of the general route location to be included in the system was made by joint action of State highway departments in cooperation with the Bureau of Public Roads and the Department of Defense.

Selection of general route locations was made on the basis of criteria developed to meet the requirements of law that the system be so located as to connect by routes, as direct as practicable, the principal metropolitan areas, cities, and industrial centers; to serve the national defense; and to connect at suitable border points with routes of continental importance in the Dominion of Canada and the Republic of Mexico. The size of the system was increased to the currently authorized 41,000 miles by the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956.

As of March 31, 1967, about 96 percent, or 39,493 miles, of the highways in the system were either completed, improved, or underway; however, final selection of the specific locations for the remaining 1,508 miles was unsettled. The Bureau estimates that the total cost of the completed system will be about \$51 billion. Project costs generally are financed with 90 percent Federal funds and 10 percent State funds; project costs for those States having large areas of public and Indian reservation lands are financed with a greater Federal share, up to a maximum of 95 percent.

Section 101(b) of title 23 of the United States Code, as amended September 13, 1966, provides that the Interstate System is to be completed by June 30, 1972. In this regard, the Federal-Aid

Highway Act of 1966 provides for the authorization of appropriations from the Federal Highway Trust Fund to the States through the fiscal year ending June 30, 1972. Under existing legislation, monies in the trust fund will not be available for making expenditures on or after October 1, 1972.

The existing legislation provides, however, that funds actually apportioned to the States shall continue to be available for expenditure for a period of 2 years after the close of the fiscal year for which such funds are apportioned. Accordingly, there seems to be an incompatibility between the date that expenditures from the trust fund must terminate--October 1, 1972--and that date to which States may be authorized to expend funds--June 30, 1974.

Federal-aid highway law, which has been codified as Title 23, United States Code, places responsibility for the administration of the Federal-aid highway program in the Federal Highway Administrator who, with certain exceptions, carries out this responsibility through the Bureau of Public Roads.

The law prescribes certain requirements which must be met before the Bureau may approve Federal participation in the costs of highway projects proposed by the States. One of these requirements is that the Bureau may not approve proposed projects unless a facility which will meet projected traffic needs and conditions in a manner conducive to safety, durability, and economy of maintenance will be provided thereby and the project will be designed and constructed in accordance with standards best suited to meet these objectives and to conform to the particular needs of each locality.

The law also imposes certain duties and requirements upon States desiring to avail themselves of the benefits of the Federal-aid highway program. The prescribed duties and requirements are

designed to promote the orderly and effective carrying out of the program within the framework of the Federal-State relationship established by the law.

One of the specified requirements for States is designed to ensure that the Bureau, in carrying out its responsibilities, may deal in each State with one agency which is adequately empowered to carry out the State's responsibilities under the program. Section 302(a) of title 23, which was derived from section 2 of the Federal Highway Act of 1921 (42 Stat. 212), provides that:

"Any State desiring to avail itself of the provisions of this title shall have a State highway department which shall have adequate powers, and be suitably equipped and organized to discharge to the satisfaction of the Secretary the duties required by this title. ***"

This requirement has been amplified by the Federal-aid highway regulations which provide that each State highway department shall be authorized by the laws of the State to make final decisions for the State in all matters relating to Federal-aid highways and to enter into, on behalf of the State, all contracts and agreements for projects as may be necessary to comply with the Federal laws and regulations.

Because of the effects which highways may have on the communities or areas through which they pass, section 128 of title 23 requires that, in certain situations, State highway departments submit evidence that this aspect of proposed projects has been considered.

For any proposed project which involves bypassing, or going through, any city, town, or village, the State highway department must certify that it has held, or afforded the opportunity for, public hearings and that it has considered the economic effect of

the location of the project. For each proposed interstate highway project, the State highway department must certify that it has held, or afforded the opportunity for, public hearings at a convenient location to enable persons in rural areas to express any objections they may have to the proposed location of the highway.

Such public hearings serve to inform the affected public concerning proposed highway construction and permit the State highway departments to consider the views of affected parties in reaching a decision as to the most desirable location for each project.

To promote short- and long-range highway and transportation plans that are soundly conceived and developed and are continuously evaluated, the Congress, in October 1962, amended chapter 1 of title 23 of the United States Code by adding the following new section.

"134. Transportation planning in certain urban areas

"It is declared to be in the national interest to encourage and promote the development of transportation systems, embracing various modes of transport in a manner that will serve the States and local communities efficiently and effectively. To accomplish this objective the Secretary shall cooperate with the States, as authorized in this title, in the development of long-range highway plans and programs which are properly coordinated with plans for improvements in other affected forms of transportation and which are formulated with due consideration to their probable effect on the future development of urban areas of more than fifty thousand population. After July 1, 1965, the Secretary shall not approve *** any program for projects in any urban area *** unless he finds that such projects are based on a continuing comprehensive transportation planning process carried on cooperatively by States and local communities in conformance with the objectives stated in this section."

It seems clear from the sections of the law previously referred to that, although it was the intent of the Congress that the

State highway departments be responsible for the formulation of plans, programs, and prosecution of the work on the Interstate System--subject to the required review and approval actions of the Bureau--it was also the intent and desire of the Congress that the needs and views of local communities be given adequate consideration in the formulation process.

TIMELY AND ECONOMICAL COMPLETION
OF INTERSTATE SYSTEM
MAY BE HINDERED BY UNRESOLVED
ROUTE LOCATION AND DESIGN PROBLEMS

Information obtained during our reviews of the Federal-aid highway program in selected States indicates that timely and economical completion of the Interstate System may be hindered by unresolved route location and design problems for segments in major metropolitan areas. The problems stem basically from an inability of the parties concerned--Federal, State, and local--to reach agreement on suitable specific route location or design features.

These segments were originally designated by the Bureau as part of the Interstate System. This designation was made in consonance with the language of the statute (23 U.S.C. 103) which specifies that the system shall be so located as to connect by routes the principal metropolitan areas and cities and to serve the national defense.

The Bureau does not consider that these segments are vital links of a unified national network and/or that failure to complete these segments will prevent the completion of an integrated and completely operational Interstate System. The Bureau does acknowledge, however, that the unresolved locations in metropolitan areas are vital links in metropolitan transportation systems and will improve metropolitan traffic circulation; relieve local street congestion; and provide service through the central district, within the central district, or between the central district and rural interstate highways.

Because of the length of time required to do all that is necessary to complete modern urban freeways--preliminary engineering,

right-of-way acquisition and clearing, relocation of families and businesses, utility adjustments, and actual highway construction-- it appears that, unless the problems are soon resolved, it may no longer be feasible to fully complete the Interstate System by the statutory completion date of June 30, 1972. Further, in view of generally rising construction costs, it is likely that additional costs will be incurred as a result of the delays.

With the passage of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956, the Congress declared that prompt and early completion of the Interstate System was essential to the national interest and specified its intent that the entire system be brought to simultaneous completion. During the early years of the program, there was little indication that the system could not be completed as planned. In 1965, however, the Bureau advised certain States that it was concerned with the slow progress being made in connection with urban segments of the system. Most of the letters to those States having location problems contained the following or similar language.

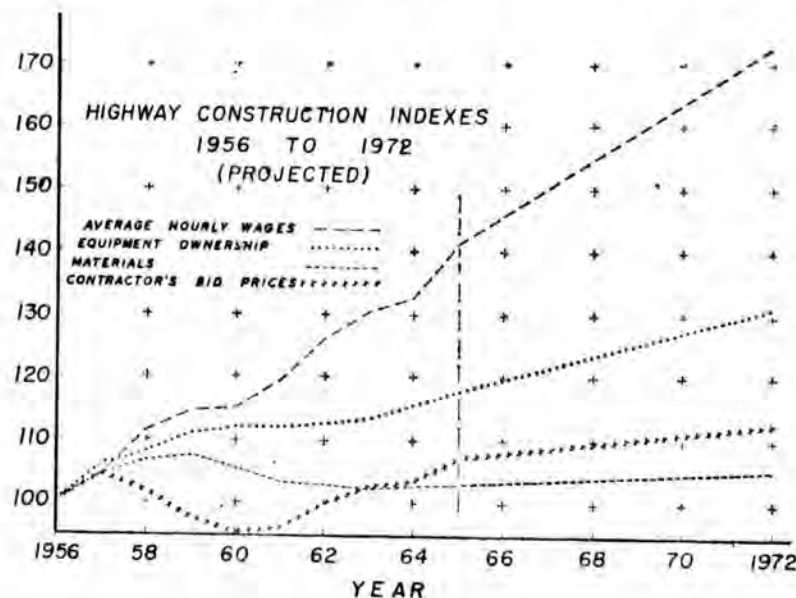
"Our concern must be that there is sufficient time remaining to complete any project once it has begun. This means, moreover, that we can hardly approve starting any project on a route that cannot be completed in its entirety before the Interstate System program comes to an end in 1972. We cannot leave unfinished gaps."

Our review indicated that, because of the many different factors, such as the attitude of the public, the complexity of design and construction, and the weather, that could cause problems at any step in the progress, it would not be feasible to secure information permitting the development of a general statement of the length of time required to complete a typical urban segment of the

Interstate System from the time location studies are completed until the segment is opened to traffic. However, we noted that such time has ranged from 4 years to as much as 12 years in certain cases.

With regard to rising construction costs, we noted that, during the April 1966 congressional hearings before the Subcommittee on Roads, Committee on Public Works, House of Representatives, on the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1966, one of the items discussed was the estimated total cost of the Interstate System.

At these hearings the Federal Highway Administrator stated that, between 1963 and 1966, the cost of work had increased about 2.5 percent a year. He also expressed the opinion that these increases in unit prices of work would continue. With regard to the anticipated increased cost of highway construction, the following graph, presented at the hearings by a spokesman for the Associated General Contractors of America, was made a part of the record.



The following sections of this report discuss specific problems concerning Interstate System segments in major metropolitan areas of five States. Maps of these metropolitan areas are included at the end of the section to which they relate. Although the need for obtaining agreement between the parties concerned is present in each case, the circumstances that create the disagreement may vary from case to case. Problems of location and design of the Interstate System are not confined to these States; the States were selected primarily for illustrative purposes.

MICHIGAN

The State of Michigan has been authorized to construct 1,081 miles of highways as part of the 41,000-mile Interstate System. At March 31, 1967, Michigan had completed and opened to traffic 808 miles. Work was in progress on 273 miles; however, of this 273 miles, specific alignment had not been established for approximately 18 miles.

In May 1965, the Federal Highway Administrator noted that Michigan had made good progress on the development of the rural portions of the system but he expressed concern with the extensive work remaining to be done in the Detroit area and with the ability of the State to monitor the program in such a manner that all system projects would be brought to completion by 1972.

An integral part of the network of freeways in the Detroit metropolitan area is Route I-696 which, generally, will traverse south Oakland and Macomb Counties. This route, illustrated on page 17, will serve as a connecting link between Routes I-96, I-75, and I-94 and is expected to handle an average daily traffic of 63,000 to over 100,000 vehicles by 1975. Route I-696 has been designated to serve national defense needs between Routes I-96 and I-94. Accordingly, the need for, and the national importance of, the route has been clearly established.

In June 1963, a planning and engineering analysis of the location and design alternates for Route I-696 was published by the State highway department. This analysis stated that a precise route location must be determined before the end of 1963 to permit construction to be started by 1967 so that the freeway could be completed by 1972. Although at March 31, 1967, approximately 8 miles of this route were open to traffic and the right-of-way

acquisition was underway for about 2 miles, there were 18 miles for which plans, specifications, and estimates were being prepared. The estimated cost of the 18 miles is about \$138 million, but the State has yet to gain approval of the final location from all the affected communities.

The State has studied alternate locations and held numerous meetings with the respective communities, but it has not resolved the problem. Further, both the Bureau and the State are aware that the right-of-way costs along the path of the proposed route location have been increasing as a result of changes in zoning and the issuance of building permits to developers who are constructing expensive developments. There is a State law which prohibits the condemnation of any property by the State highway commission until the affected cities, by resolution of their governing boards, approve the route location. The State's attorney general, in a letter to the Governor in January 1965, commented on this situation as follows:

"The major problem confronting the highway commission relative to early acquisition of land for city and village penetration routes, stems from the cities' delay in approving route locations, street closures and designations, which *** is a legal condition precedent to the institution of condemnation proceedings."

The proposed alignment for Route I-696 was announced by the State highway department in December 1963 after a 5-year study. The selection was made only after it became apparent that a consensus on any one alternate location was not forthcoming from the communities affected and that any further delay would have an adverse effect on program completion scheduled for 1972. Although the State highway department recognized that the location selected was not free of problems, it recommended the alignment.

"*** because it would be the best location in terms of compatibility with land use, cost, engineering, traffic operation and service, effect upon schools, disruption of families and impact upon local tax bases."

There are 14 communities directly affected by the proposed location of Route I-696, and 13 of these communities are incorporated. This fact is significant because, as indicated earlier, Michigan law requires the State highway commissioner to obtain the consent of the village or city council by resolution before the taking of any property within the limits of any incorporated city or village.

By July 1965, only four of the 13 incorporated communities had given the highway department the required written approval. The major objections raised by the other communities related to the loss of valuable property, reduction of tax ratables, and financial participation required of the community for the construction of the highway. With respect to this last objection, State law requires cities and villages with a population of 30,000 or more to participate with the State in the cost of constructing highways. Community assessments range from 17.5 percent of the State share for a city having a population of 30,000 to 25 percent of the State share for a city having a population of 50,000 or more. As a result, certain communities will be required to contribute from several hundred thousand dollars to over \$1 million.

As indicated, private construction continued along the proposed alignment after it was first announced in December 1963. The effect of this construction will be to increase the cost of right-of-way acquisition by an amount at least equal to the value of such improvements. The Federal Highway Administrator, in January 1965, suggested that the Bureau's Michigan division office conduct an

inventory of all major improvements constructed or under construction along the original alignment. Using January 1, 1964, as a cutoff date, the division office personnel stated that building construction, utility improvements, and damages to remainders, which would result from the disruption of the projects, would increase the cost of the segment by an estimated \$12 million.

The Bureau approved the State's proposed locations for the segment of I-696 in Macomb County and the remaining segment of I-696 which lays primarily in Oakland County on April 20 and December 22, 1965, respectively. In commenting on the Bureau's approval of the portion of Route I-696 in Oakland County, the Michigan State highway director stated that:

"I do not interpret the Bureau action as meaning we can proceed to acquire right of way and build the route without the approval of the governing bodies of the communities involved."

Because of its inability to obtain the necessary approval of the affected communities, the Michigan State Highway Commission adopted a resolution on March 3, 1966, rescinding its previous approval of the proposed location for Route I-696 and ordered the director of the State department of highways to study and submit alternate proposals for a similar route in the general corridor. Although the State highway department began undertaking new location studies, it also continued survey and design work on the previously approved location "to avoid loss of critical time in case the proposed route is eventually agreed upon."

On March 16, 1966, the Governor of Michigan held a meeting with representatives of the communities along proposed Route I-696. At this meeting, all 13 communities involved affirmed the need for locating the highway within the corridor; however, at that time

only six communities had approved the State's proposed location, five had disapproved it, and two communities were uncommitted. At the meeting various communities submitted alternate proposals for the location of Route I-696. At the conclusion of the meeting, it was determined that further study and discussion among the affected communities would be required on the proposed alternate locations and that further analyses and consideration of the alternate locations would be made by the Governor and the State highway department.

On March 21, 1966, the State held a meeting with the communities involved in the eastern segment between Routes I-94 and I-75. At this time, two alternate locations were submitted for State consideration. On April 6, 1966, the State again met with the eastern communities to present its evaluation of the two alternates. The State indicated that the alternates would cost \$10 to \$12 million more than the recommended location and would displace more families and businesses.

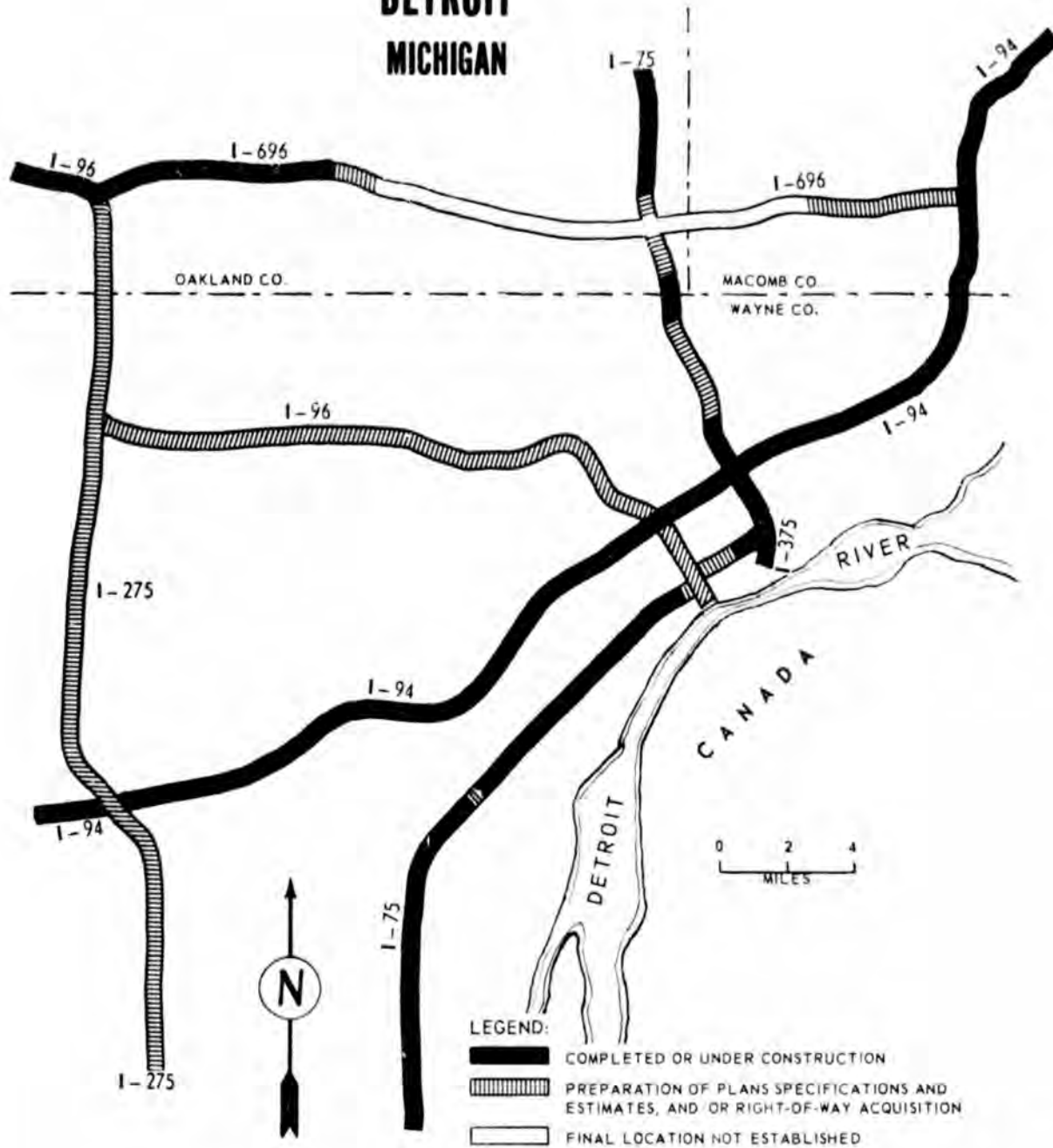
On April 21, 1966, the Governor met with the western communities affected by Route I-696. At the meeting the State highway department compared the recommended location through the western segment with three proposed alternate locations. The State pointed out that the recommended location would basically follow community boundaries and major thoroughfares, would be compatible to residential living and not jeopardize local traffic, would divide only two elementary school attendance areas, would not seriously affect a golf course, would in no way physically affect the city zoo, and would be the most economical (about \$6.5 million less than the cost of the next highest alternate location). The State concluded that its recommended proposal "is best when all factors are considered."

No significant decisions or agreements resulted from any of these meetings with the affected communities and the Governor has indicated that additional meetings will be held.

Bureau records showed that, as of March 31, 1967, there had been no progress relative to approval by local communities of the proposed location of I-696. These records showed also that State legislation, which was proposed to establish an arbitration board to resolve this matter, was still before the Michigan State House Committee on Roads and Bridges.

STATUS OF INTERSTATE SYSTEM AT MARCH 31, 1967

**DETROIT
MICHIGAN**



ILLINOIS

The State of Illinois has been authorized to construct 1,641 miles of highways as part of the Interstate System. As of March 31, 1967, Illinois had completed and opened to traffic 927 miles of its authorized mileage, including 156 miles of toll facilities which were approved by the Bureau as part of the system. Of the remaining authorized mileage, 675 miles were under construction or in the right-of-way acquisition and design stages and work on 39 miles was in a preliminary stage or had not started.

The city of Chicago has been authorized to construct 66.5 miles of the system mileage designated for the State of Illinois. At March 31, 1966, 44.5 miles of the system within the city were completed or underway. The remaining 22 miles were designated for the proposed Crosstown Expressway (Route I-494). The general location for Route I-494 was approved by the Federal Highway Administrator in November 1963; however, the specific alignment of the expressway has not yet been determined.

The general location for Route I-494 was approved to provide a link connecting Routes I-94, I-55, and I-90, as shown in the illustration on page 22. By 1975, I-494 is expected to handle an average daily traffic of over 100,000 vehicles.

To develop a specific location for Route I-494 that could be recommended at public hearings, representatives of the State and Cook County highway departments and other interested departments of the city of Chicago formed the Crosstown Expressway Task Force to perform the necessary studies.

In a letter to the State's chief highway engineer dated June 22, 1964, the Bureau division engineer made the following statement with respect to the studies of the task force.

"*** To the best of our knowledge, this is a unique approach to the problem of affording the fullest consideration to potential land use, urban renewal programs and impact on existing communities while planning the location of a major artery to provide improved service for vehicular traffic. This joint study reflects great credit to the continuing cooperative spirit of the public bodies in developing a solution based on maximum utilization of the available planning skills. We are confident that the location finally selected will receive the best possible public acceptance. Further, it is believed that the work of this 'Task Force' might well provide an invaluable example for future freeway location studies in densely urbanized areas, under the continuing, cooperative transportation planning process."

However, the division engineer pointed out that:

"*** Bureau of Public Roads has repeatedly urged that the final location of all Interstate routes be fixed by the end of 1964 in order to permit adequate time for completion and still allow proper consideration of the needs and desires of the affected property owners and general public."

He urged the task force to accelerate its studies so that a final recommended location could be developed for presentation at public hearings before the end of 1964. Also, the division engineer suggested, on the basis of past experience with similar projects in the Chicago area, a schedule which would allow the completion of Route I-494 before October 1972. The schedule called for the State to begin preliminary engineering in early 1965, with right-of-way acquisition activities and the execution of utility agreements to start in early 1966.

The task force, however, did not issue its report on the Crosstown Expressway study until November 30, 1965. It recommended that Route I-494 be located on an elevated structure, generally over railroad right-of-way, from a point near the intersection of the Edens and John F. Kennedy Expressways, south to approximately

75th Street, and then east to a connection with the Dan Ryan Expressway and the Chicago Skyway.

The report indicated that the elevated alignment would cost \$300 million to \$500 million (about twice the cost of the previous estimate for the route) and would affect, in varying degrees, 470 residential, 135 industrial, and 80 commercial structures. The task force report stated that the selection of the route location had been based on a comprehensive analysis of seven alternate locations within the general corridor; however, the report presented no information on the alternate locations.

Public hearings on the proposed elevated route were held on December 15, 1965, and on January 5 and 19, 1966, before the Chicago Plan Commission, an integral part of the Chicago city government, which had the authority to make the city's decision as to the location of Route I-494. During and after the hearings, many local groups opposed the elevated location and/or criticized the task force for not presenting detailed information on alternate locations.

Special interest was expressed in an alternate proposal for a depressed highway in the vicinity of Cicero Avenue. The supporters of the depressed highway--mainly homeowners, associations, and architects--stated that an elevated expressway would be unsightly, more expensive to construct and maintain, and depressive to land values in neighborhoods adjacent to it. They believed that a depressed expressway with improved mass transportation facilities would be scenic, less expensive, and more conducive to urban redevelopment. However, proponents of the elevated alignment, principally city officials and business organizations, believed that any other location would require the taking of at least 2,000 more structures and thus would further reduce the city's tax base.

In addition, the Bureau indicated that, before it could approve a detailed location for Route I-494, a more definitive comparison between the elevated alignment and the alternates would be required. Consequently, the Bureau requested the State and city to develop more complete information on the Cicero Avenue alignment.

Upon conclusion of the public hearings, the chairman of the Chicago Plan Commission appointed a subcommittee of private citizens to consider the proposals for building Route I-494. On April 4, 1966, the State transmitted a progress report of the subcommittee to the Bureau's division engineer. In the report, the subcommittee, in describing its task, stated that it was studying all testimony given at the public hearings and additional information furnished them since the hearings. The subcommittee stated also that it had given "intensive consideration" to both the elevated railroad alignment and the depressed Cicero Avenue alignment, but it pointed out that:

"It appears from the volume of material this sub-committee has been furnished for its study, that any alignment which could be recommended at this time presents a series of serious problems."

As of March 31, 1967, the city of Chicago was still gathering data relative to the Cicero Avenue proposal and had not formally recommended a location for Bureau approval.

STATUS OF INTERSTATE SYSTEM AT MARCH 31, 1967



MARYLAND

The State of Maryland has been authorized to construct 354 miles of highway as part of the Interstate System. As of March 31, 1967, Maryland had completed and opened to traffic 266 miles of its authorized mileage, including 53 miles of toll facilities which were approved by the Bureau as a part of the system. Of the remaining authorized mileage, 35 miles were under construction, 34 miles were in the right-of-way acquisition and design stages, and work on 19 miles was either in a preliminary status or had not started.

The authority to designate and construct arterial highways, freeways, parkways, and expressways within the State of Maryland is vested in the Maryland State Roads Commission. Although the commission has the overall authority to designate and build all public highways within the State, an agreement with the city of Baltimore permits the city to assume the responsibility for the construction of all public highways within the Baltimore city limits. As of early 1966, however, Baltimore relinquished to the State roads commission authority to construct the sections of the Interstate System that come within the city limits.

Within the city of Baltimore and adjacent urban areas surrounded by the Baltimore circumferential highway (Route I-695), about 68 miles of connecting links were planned and approved by the Bureau as a part of the Interstate System in September 1955. In addition to Route I-695 and the toll facilities (Route I-895), Routes I-83, I-70N, and I-95 are intended to serve Baltimore. Routes I-83 and I-70N enter the city from the north and west, respectively, and terminate near the center of the city where they connect with Route I-95. (See map on p. 29.) Route I-95 enters

Baltimore from the general direction of Washington, D.C., continues through the city, and proceeds in a northeasterly direction toward the State of Delaware. The Baltimore segment of I-95 will provide continuity of the Interstate System through Baltimore. It will handle an average daily traffic of over 80,000 vehicles by 1975.

As of March 31, 1967, approximately 47 miles of the connecting links were open to traffic. In connection with the remaining 21 miles, about 8 miles either were under construction or were in the process of having plans, specifications, and estimates prepared or rights-of-way acquired. Final locations have not been determined for the remaining 13 miles, of which about 9 miles is on Route I-95 and about 4 miles on Route I-70N.

Both the city and the State have made studies on several different locations for the planned section of Route I-95 between DeSota Road and the point of junction with Route I-70N. This section of Route I-95 was the subject of a public hearing on January 30, 1962. The location discussed at the 1962 hearing had been recommended by the expressway consultants for the Baltimore City Department of Public Works and was to pass through the Carroll Park area of the city.

Another study of the Carroll Park location was prepared in early 1962 for the Maryland State Roads Commission, with particular emphasis on the socioeconomic impact of the proposed expressway on the city of Baltimore. This study concluded that the Carroll Park location for Route I-95 would cause limited disruption of existing neighborhoods because it crossed undeveloped land and followed existing community boundaries; that the location would take a total of approximately 495 dwelling units, of which 390 were in sound condition and 105 were either deteriorating or dilapidated; and

that it would also take about 25 acres from Carroll Park and Carroll Park Golf Course, for which compensatory land would have to be provided.

The study concluded also that, for the most part, the location would have little adverse visual impact, except where it would cross residential developments, and that it would not have any significant adverse economic effect because no significant tax-producing uses were involved along the proposed location.

Following the public hearing, the city recommended the Carroll Park location to the chairman of the State roads commission. The chairman did not act on the recommendation nor did he submit it to the Bureau for approval because he did not consider the traffic data used to support the proposed location to be adequate. Instead, he initiated a comprehensive restudy of the total Baltimore transportation situation.

In late 1962, the Department of Planning of Baltimore City conceived a plan to realign this section of Route I-95 generally through the Gwynns Falls area of the city. This location was the subject of a 1963 report, prepared for the Maryland State Roads Commission, in which the Carroll Park and the Gwynns Falls locations were compared. The following observations were made.

1. Although the route for the Gwynns Falls location would be considerably longer than that for the Carroll Park location, it would require the taking of 17 percent fewer dwelling units. Of the units which would be taken, approximately 61 percent were either deteriorating or dilapidated.
2. The Gwynns Falls location would take little park land and would have little effect on other community facilities because the proposed route lays in industrial

and vacant areas; however, it would involve the taking of about 40 percent more taxable property than the Carroll Park location.

The preliminary report of the Baltimore Metropolitan Area Transportation Study, dated January 1964, recommended that the proposed location of Route I-95 be through the Gwynns Falls area.

Both the Carroll Park and Gwynns Falls locations were submitted to the Bureau for consideration. In the latter part of 1964, the Bureau advised the State that the location of the section of Route I-95 through the Carroll Park area would be acceptable to the Bureau. The Bureau advised the State that it had considered the alternate proposed location through the Gwynns Falls section but was rejecting the alternate because the interchanges between it and Route I-70N and the interchange with Route I-83 were too closely situated to provide adequate weaving distance and to allow any intermediate local connections.

When the location acceptable to the Bureau was submitted to the representatives of the city for consideration, the city officials were of the opinion that the Carroll Park location would not be attainable because of the strong local opposition. Therefore, the city paid for a study and preliminary plan for another alternate location lying over the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) Railroad between the Carroll Park and Gwynns Falls areas. This location would not dislocate as many residences as the Carroll Park location, but it would disrupt a large number of industries.

In the latter part of 1965, the city's alternate plan was submitted (without cost estimate) by the State to the Bureau's division office with a request for review. The State at that time did not make any formal recommendation as to the city's proposed

alternate. After careful review of the city's alternate plan, the Bureau's regional and division offices concluded that the B&O location would cost as much as \$50 million more than the 1965 estimate of about \$128 million for the Carroll Park location.

The Bureau's regional office had previously taken the position that the problem of route location in Baltimore had been adequately studied and that no more Federal funds could be used for any further preliminary studies of the Interstate System in Baltimore. However, the Bureau's regional office indicated that it would not object to providing the State an additional \$7,500 for the preparation of a cost estimate for the B&O location if the State would submit valid reasons for further study of this section of the system.

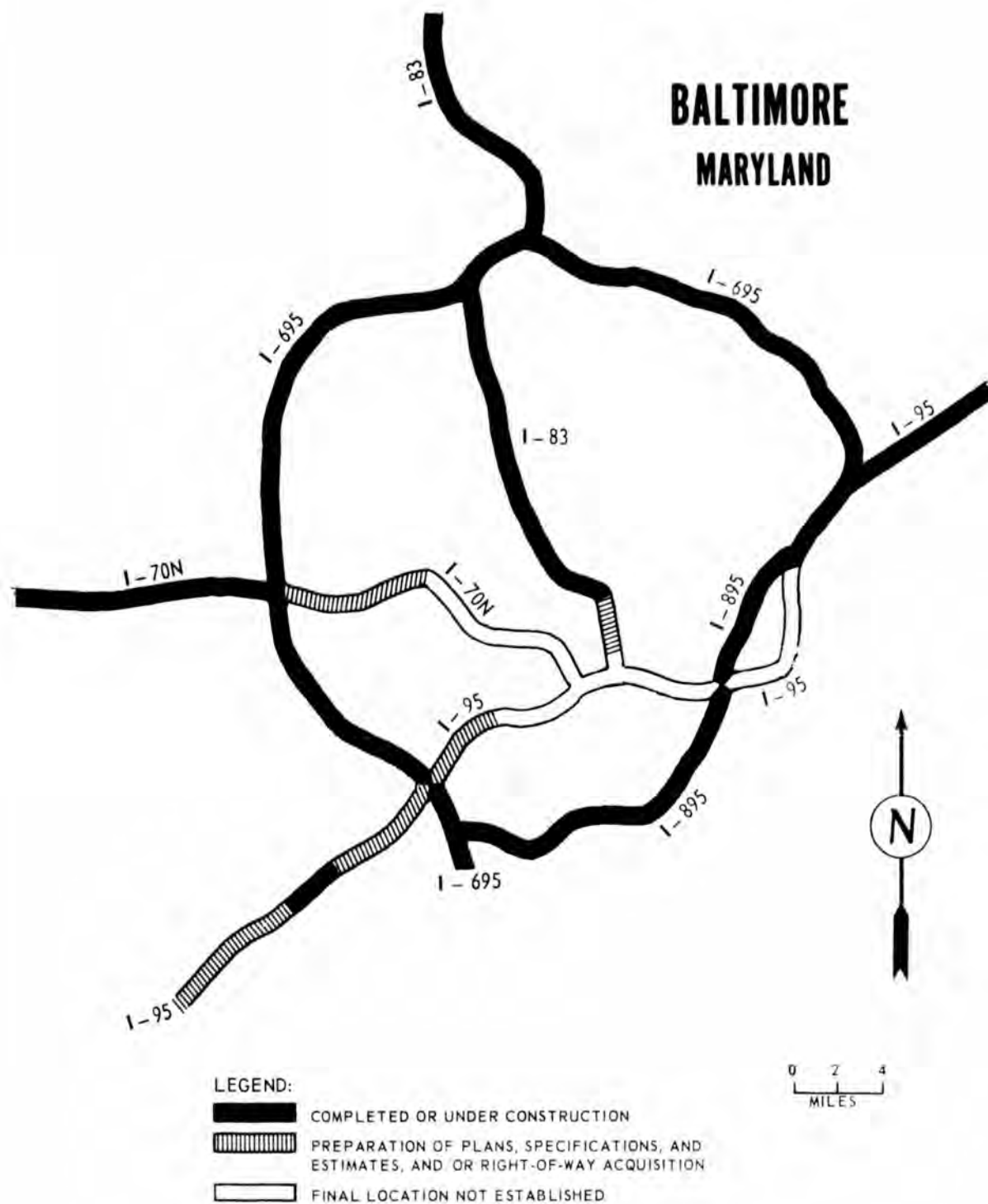
The Bureau informally advised the State in November 1965 that, before the Bureau could take any action on the proposed B&O location, it would be necessary for the State to submit a definite recommendation or request for the funds. The Bureau expressed concern at this time that, if the Interstate System in Baltimore were to be finished by 1972, the deadline for mutual agreement between the State and the city as to definite locations for the complete system in Baltimore was rapidly approaching.

On May 3, 1966, a meeting was held between Bureau and State officials to discuss acceptance of the State's proposed location (B&O) of Route I-95 and Route I-70N. A Bureau official pointed out that the Bureau had not yet accepted the State's proposed location primarily because the State had not demonstrated that the increased expenditure of \$50 million for the B&O location was justified and in the public interest. The Bureau official indicated that it would be inappropriate for the State to go forward on a proposed

alignment that could not be accepted by the Bureau. The State indicated that some information on the social and cultural effects of the location had been submitted to the Bureau division office and that more would be made available soon.

The proposed location of I-95 over the B&O railroad tracks was submitted by the State to the Bureau for approval. In September 1966, the Bureau determined that this route was not acceptable. The State has since formulated plans to provide a location which will be acceptable to the Bureau; however, as of March 31, 1967, the State had not presented an alternate route location to the Bureau.

STATUS OF INTERSTATE SYSTEM AT MARCH 31, 1967



NEW YORK

The State of New York has been authorized to construct 1,225 miles of highways as part of the Interstate System. At March 31, 1967, New York had completed and opened to traffic 981 miles of the system. Of this mileage, 437 miles met acceptable construction standards for the Interstate System but about 52 miles required additional work to comply with the standards. Toll facilities which had been approved by the Bureau as part of the system represented the remaining 493 open miles. Work was in progress on 220 miles and was in a preliminary status or had not started on 24 miles. Most of the 24 miles represent segments of the Interstate System within New York City.

State legislation confers certain authority on the city of New York in regard to highway projects. The following interpretation of this authority was given by the counsel for the New York State Department of Public Works, in a letter dated January 22, 1964, to the Bureau's division engineer.

"*** the State has no authority to acquire lands in the City of New York for arterial highway purposes since by statute, this power has been conferred solely on the City.

"*** Section 349-c, Subdivision 3.3 of the Highway Law provides that any property which is deemed by the Superintendent of Public Works and the City of New York to be necessary for the project shall be acquired by the City of New York *** if the City of New York does not agree with the Superintendent of Public Works as to the property necessary for an arterial highway or if it does not proceed with the acquisition of such property *** the project cannot be advanced."

Furthermore, the State law authorizes the State to proceed only on those sections for which approval as to design, plans, specifications, and estimates of cost has been obtained from the city.

One of the segments of the Interstate System within New York City which has been the center of much controversy is the Lower Manhattan Expressway (LME), a segment of Route I-78. This 2.4-mile segment of I-78 will provide for continuing Route I-78 across Manhattan and will connect the Holland Tunnel and West Side Highway on the west with the Manhattan and Williamsburg Bridges on the east, as shown on the map on page 36. This connecting link is expected to handle from 100,000 to over 158,000 vehicles a day by 1975.

The LME was described in March 1960 by the director of the New York State Bureau of Highway Planning, as providing:

"*** the most direct connection from all points in Manhattan and Northern New Jersey to the Brooklyn Navy Yard and the several miles of waterfront facilities on both shores of the East River in this area as well as being a connection to all of the Brooklyn shorefront on Upper Bay.

"*** It is thus an extremely strategic and urgently needed element of the New York - New Jersey Metropolitan Interstate System."

Since the original public hearings, the location of the LME has been under debate. Opponents stated mainly that the proposed elevated location would cause major dislocation of families and businesses, reduce the city's tax base, and blight adjacent areas. They suggested either canceling the expressway or constructing a depressed roadway along the recommended line. On the other hand, the Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority (TBTA)--the agency which coordinates Federal, State, and city actions with respect to arterial highways in New York City--indicated that the project was based on sound planning studies and was necessary to relieve congestion.

TBTA conceded that the proposed location would require relocation of families and businesses but indicated that most of the buildings in the area were old and in poor condition. The TBTA stated that it would cooperate with the city in providing low income housing for the dislocated families, contribute to relocation costs for commercial tenants, and spread the relocation over a 44-month period to minimize its effect. Moreover, TBTA stated that a depressed alignment would cost \$50 million more than the recommended proposal and would displace the same number of properties.

Public hearings were held on the proposed location of the LME in 1959. In 1960 the New York City Planning Commission approved the location of the LME. Later in the same year, the New York City Board of Estimate included the route in the city map.¹ No agreement, however, was made between the State highway department and the city regarding right-of-way acquisition for the LME.

On the same day that the board of estimate took action on "mapping" the LME, it approved construction of the Chrystie Street Subway underpass, a portion of the LME. The construction work for the underpass was authorized in January 1961 by the Bureau, and the construction contract was awarded in March of that year.

Despite its previous actions to advance construction of the LME, the board of estimate, on December 11, 1962, unanimously rejected a proposal to commence the acquisition of the right-of-way

¹In New York City, the planning commission is the custodian of the city map. Requests regarding map changes are sent to this agency which has, by law, a specified period to act on a change. After the commission makes its recommendation on the change, the requested change is sent to the board of estimate which, for all practical purposes, is the final approving authority.

for the project. The mayor, in explaining the action, stated that the board was rejecting the LME because:

1. It felt that the present traffic congestion would be relieved by other expressways, planned commercial relocations, and installation of improved electronic traffic systems.
2. It feared the effects of economic and social blight in the shadow of an elevated expressway and the loss of tax revenues from properties being demolished and from properties adjacent to the expressway decreasing in value.
3. In view of the above, it did not regard the LME to be in the urgent public interest which would justify the expenditure of \$100 million and the uprooting and dislocation of 2,000 families and 800 businesses employing about 10,000 people.

The city planning commission, in April 1963, held a public hearing to consider eliminating the LME from the city map. However, the Commission did not subsequently demap the route. In January 1964, the chairman of the TBTA, in a letter to the mayor, identified the LME as the keystone of the city's entire future federally aided arterial program and stated that "If the City will not proceed with this project now it might as well abandon the entire program."

On December 22, 1964, the board of estimate, at the request of the mayor, held a public hearing on initiating the project for acquisition of the right-of-way for the LME. The board, on March 11, 1965, approved the city's capital budget for 1965-66 which included funds required for acquiring the right-of-way.

In May 1965, the mayor approved the route and, in the following month, he issued the required certificate to initiate

proceedings for right-of-way acquisition.¹ This certificate is an order directing the city's corporation counsel to obtain title vesting for the property. The corporation counsel's office, however, suspended proceedings for acquisition pending the resolution of three court actions filed by private local groups requesting the court to restrain the governmental agencies involved in advancing the LME. In November 1965, two of the court actions were decided in favor of the governmental agencies. However, the city took no measures toward advancing the LME.

In addition to the legal complications, another factor may affect the progress on this route. Officials in the corporation counsel's office believe that the certificate issued by the mayor is revocable prior to title vesting. This is significant because the present mayor, who was elected in November 1965, has indicated that he is not in favor of the LME as presently planned.

On April 11, 1966, city officials informed us that the LME was still legally mapped and that the funds for the LME were included in the city's capital budget for fiscal year 1966-67. However, a Bureau official informed us that, as of March 31, 1967, the city had not initiated action to acquire rights-of-way for LME.

In addition to the LME, other significant routes within New York City have not been started. At March 31, 1967, the following projects were still in a preliminary status.

¹In the present New York City charter, the mayor can authorize acquisition after the route has been included in the city map.

<u>Project</u>	<u>Route</u>	<u>Length in miles</u>	<u>Estimated cost (millions)</u>
Mid Manhattan Expressway	I-495	2.0	\$111.1
Sheridan Expressway	I-278	3.0	50.1
Astoria Boulevard	I-678	2.5	31.2
Bushwick Expressway	I- 78	7.0	155.4
Clearview Expressway Extension	I- 78	<u>4.9</u>	<u>59.7</u>
Subtotal		19.4	407.5
Lower Manhattan Express- way	I- 78 and I-478	<u>2.4</u>	<u>109.2</u>
Total		<u>21.8</u>	<u>\$516.7</u>

Although the combined routes included in the above tabulation total only about 22 miles, which is less than 2 percent of the New York Interstate System mileage (1,225 miles), the related estimated cost of about \$517 million represents almost 21 percent of the estimated total system cost in the State (\$2,462 million) submitted to the Congress in January 1965.

STATUS OF INTERSTATE SYSTEM AT MARCH 31, 1967



LEGEND

- COMPLETED OR UNDER CONSTRUCTION
- PREPARATION OF PLANS, SPECIFICATIONS, AND ESTIMATES, AND OR RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION
- FINAL LOCATION NOT ESTABLISHED

CALIFORNIA

The State of California has been authorized to construct about 2,165 miles of highways as part of the Interstate System. As of March 31, 1967, California had completed and opened to traffic about 1,163 miles, or 54 percent, of its authorized mileage, including about 10 miles of toll facilities which were approved by the Bureau as part of the system. Of the remaining authorized mileage, 356 miles were under construction and 646 miles were in the right-of-way acquisition and design stages.

State statutes vest authority in the California State Highway Commission for determining the actual location of a State highway; the Division of Highways of the California State Department of Public Works (State highway department) is responsible for the design and construction of the highways. The statutes also provide, however, that no city or county highway may be permanently closed because of freeway construction, except pursuant to an agreement between the city or county and the State highway department. Thus, unless the State is able to obtain a so-called freeway agreement, the local governing authorities in California can exercise a veto power over the functions vested in the State highway department.

Substantial achievement has been made by California in constructing its portion of the Interstate System. However, virtually no progress was made toward gaining local approval of three segments of the system designated for the city of San Francisco. On March 22, 1966, the Federal Highway Administrator officially deleted two of the segments from the system and approved a rerouting of the third segment. (See maps on pp. 42 and 43.) The specific routes involved and their estimated cost, according to the cost estimate submitted to the Congress in January 1965, were as follows:

<u>Project</u>	<u>Route</u>	<u>Length in miles</u>	<u>Estimated cost (millions)</u>
Western Freeway (note a)	I-280	4.6	\$103.2
Panhandle, Park Presidio Freeways	I-80 and I-280	4.9	123.0
Golden Gate Freeway	I-480	<u>4.3</u>	<u>106.2</u>
Total		<u>13.8^b</u>	<u>\$332.4</u>

^aThe portion of the Junipero Serra Freeway within the city limits.

^bAbout 1 mile of this total length involved work on existing locations, such as widening the approach to the Golden Gate Bridge on I-480.

The proposed Panhandle, Park Presidio, and Golden Gate Freeways were to form a loop in northern San Francisco which would connect with the Golden Gate Bridge in the northwest and with the Bay Bridge in the east. The Western Freeway was to originate at the southern city limit and proceed northward to connect with the southwest corner of the loop. It is expected that by 1975 various portions of these routes will handle from 48,000 to over 176,000 vehicles a day.

The plan for the freeway loop within the city of San Francisco was approved by the Bureau as a part of the Interstate System in September 1955; however, specific route locations were never determined and approved. Although the State made numerous studies, its proposals for specific locations for the three routes were never accepted by the city of San Francisco.

In January 1959 (reaffirmed in July 1961), the city of San Francisco, by resolution of its board of supervisors, declared as official city policy, its opposition to certain freeway routes

contained in the city's master plan. Among the routes specifically opposed were the proposed Western Freeway, the entire Park Presidio Freeway (the Western Freeway and the Park Presidio Freeway constitute Route I-280 within San Francisco), and the entire Golden Gate Freeway from the Embarcadero and Bay Street to the Golden Gate Bridge (Route I-480). As a result of the board's action, the State ceased planning early in 1959 pending action by the city of San Francisco. For some time thereafter, little effort was directed toward the development of Interstate Routes 80, 280, and 480 within the city.

The board of supervisors, by resolution in June 1962, reaffirmed its opposition to various freeway routes, as declared in the earlier resolutions. However, in the June 1962 resolution and in subsequent negotiations with the State, the board indicated its interest in having freeways constructed in the city of San Francisco and requested the State highway department to perform location studies. In accordance with these agreements, studies were undertaken.

The completed studies presented various alternate route locations and possible design treatments for Routes I-80, I-280, and I-480 and indicated that certain locations and designs would be feasible. Recommendations for adoption of what were considered the most feasible alternates were made by the State. However, the board, in October 1964 and July 1965, rejected these recommendations and made alternate suggestions which, for the most part, involved the construction of tunnels to carry the freeways. The State, in turn, rejected the board's suggestion for a tunnel design for the Panhandle and Park Presidio Freeway corridor (Routes I-80 and I-280), on the basis that such construction would involve the

expenditure of excessive sums of money while rendering relatively poor traffic service.

In regard to the Golden Gate Freeway (Route I-480), the board rejected the State's proposed location and design treatment of the route and proposed a tunnel as the alternate. In addition, the board resolved that, as a matter of policy, it would not "execute any agreement with the State as required by the provisions of Section 100.2 of the Streets and Highways Code" in connection with any freeway to be constructed along the I-480 routing unless the plan for such freeway basically conformed with the intentions, designs, and concepts of the subsurface tunnel design.

Upon learning of the board's action, the Federal Highway Administrator, in a letter dated July 30, 1965, to the State highway engineer stated that:

"It is my considered judgment that the latest action by the Board of Supervisors closes the door on any reasonable development of the presently constituted Interstate freeway system for San Francisco within the period available for completion of the system. Accordingly I urge that the Division take immediate steps to reexamine the problem of system continuity in the San Francisco area ***."

The State highway engineer, in a letter dated August 5, 1965, agreed with the Federal Highway Administrator and recommended that the Panhandle, Park Presidio, and Golden Gate Freeways be deleted from the Interstate System. He recommended also that I-280 be rerouted--originating at the southern city limit and proceeding northerly and easterly along existing highways--to form the Southern Freeway that would connect with existing approaches to the Bay Bridge.

While recommending deletion of the described routes from the Interstate System, the State highway engineer recommended that these routes remain on the Federal-aid primary system as they were still considered essential elements of California's ultimate highway network.

In commenting on the State's proposals, the Bureau's division engineer stated in a letter dated August 6, 1965, to the Bureau's regional engineer that:

"It is to be noted that the State's proposal provides for retention of the deleted San Francisco Interstate segments on the Federal-aid Primary System. I consider this proper, as these segments or variations thereof must be constructed in the future if San Francisco is to ever have adequate traffic distribution in the northern and western portions of the City."

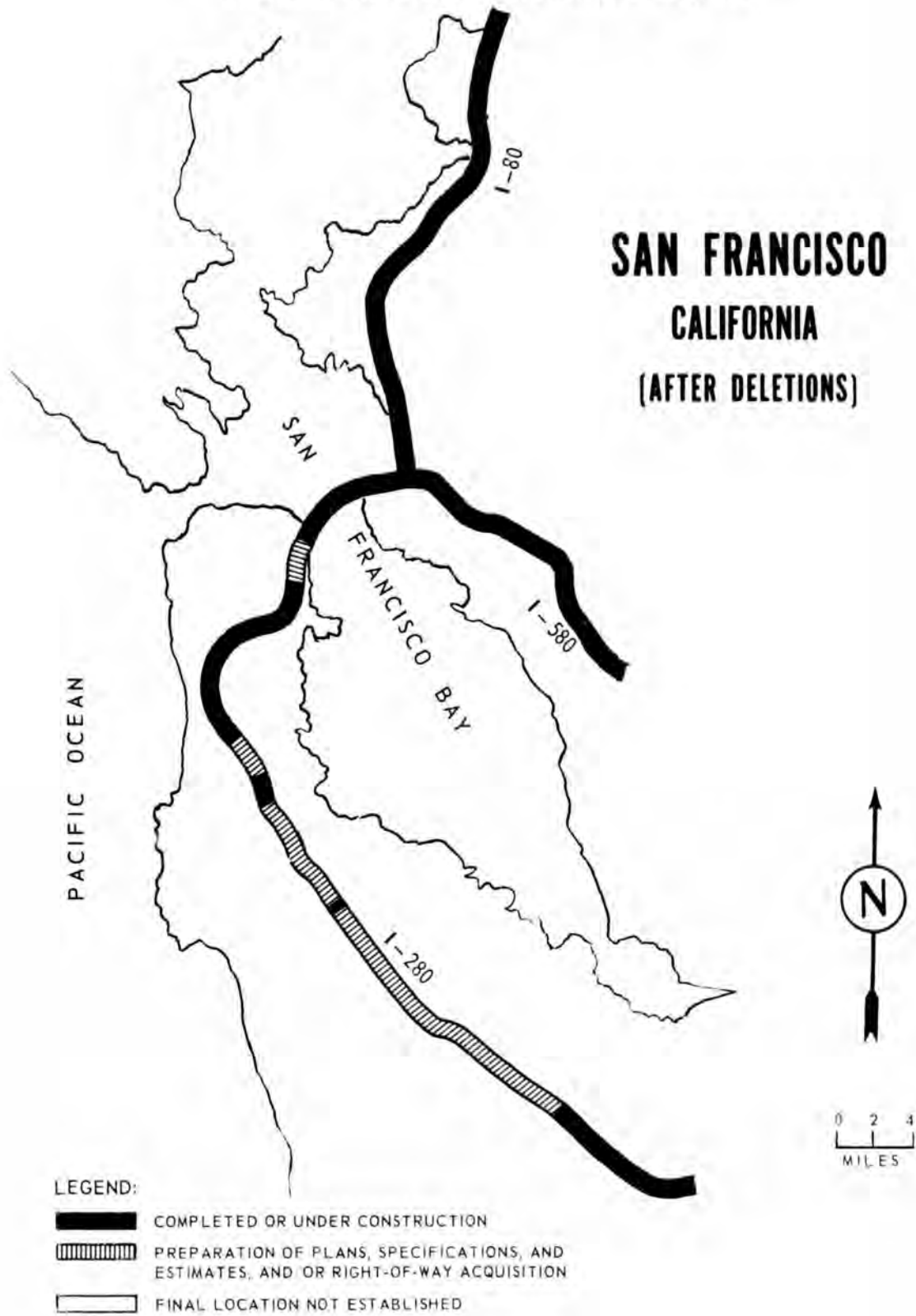
The division engineer also stated that, by taking the routes out of the high priority Interstate System, the city supervisors would have the additional time they considered necessary for planning and discussing the matter.

On August 30, 1965, in a letter to the State highway engineer, the Federal Highway Administrator concurred with the route adjustments. However, the routes were not officially deleted from the Interstate System until March 22, 1966. In June 1966, an official of the Bureau informed us that, if the city of San Francisco could demonstrate to the Bureau that the deleted routes could be reestablished and built before the 1972 deadline, the Bureau might still consider giving its approval and redesignating portions of these deleted routes as a part of the Interstate System.

STATUS OF INTERSTATE SYSTEM AT AUGUST 31, 1965



STATUS OF INTERSTATE SYSTEM AT MARCH 31, 1967



AGENCY COMMENTS AND OUR EVALUATION THEREOF

The Assistant Secretary of Commerce, by letter dated January 10, 1967 (see app. II), furnished us with the Bureau of Public Roads' comments on our draft report. The Bureau stated that our report was factual in all essential elements and that the problems set forth in the report "must be resolved since highway construction is badly needed." The Bureau pointed out that it was meeting or anticipated meeting strong and determined local opposition to the location of about 23 segments of the Interstate System.

The Bureau contended, however, that these unresolved segments were not vital links in the unified national network of the Interstate Highway System but rather were vital links only in metropolitan transportation systems and would serve to improve metropolitan traffic circulation, relieve local congestion, and provide service through the central district. In this regard, the Bureau stated that failure to complete these segments would not prevent the completion of an integrated and complete Interstate System.

The Bureau stated also that the route location problems could be resolved by deleting the route segments entirely from the Interstate System and substituting other interstate connections. The Bureau pointed out that this approach had been used in San Francisco without any adverse effects on the unified national network of the Interstate Highways System. As noted on page 41, the problems in San Francisco were resolved by eliminating the controversial route segments from the Interstate System and constructing an abbreviated segment.

With regard to the Bureau's solution to the problem in San Francisco, we noted that, although the Bureau approved, as a special case, the deletion of the established segments and the

substitution of a new connection, State and Bureau officials recognized that the deleted segments or substitutes therefor would eventually have to be constructed in order for San Francisco to meet its traffic needs.

Moreover, Bureau officials informed us that, if the State could demonstrate to the Bureau that the deleted segments could be reestablished and built before 1972, the Bureau might redesignate portions of the deleted segments as part of the Interstate System. Therefore, it appears that the Bureau's approach to the route location problems in San Francisco was an expedient solution. In this regard, it should be noted that portions of the deleted route have already been constructed. (See pp. 42 and 43.)

With regard to the importance of the segments which the Bureau stated could be deleted, we note that, in answer to an inquiry from a Congressman from California concerning the possible transfer of that mileage deleted from the San Francisco Interstate System segment to another city within the State, the Federal Highway Administrator, in a letter dated April 12, 1966, stated that:

"The 41,000-mile National System of Interstate and Defense Highways was designated after a thorough study of suggested routes submitted by all of the States. The selection of the system was made by joint action of the State highway departments of each State and the adjoining States, in cooperation with the Bureau of Public Roads and the Department of Defense. Selection was made on the basis of criteria developed to meet the requirements of law that the system be so located as to connect by routes, as direct as practicable, the principal metropolitan areas, cities, and industrial centers, to serve the national defense ***."

* * * * *

"From the above background, it is apparent that this is a 'system' nationwide in character, selected to meet previously established criteria, and that uniformity in the distribution of mileage and money among the States was not a determining factor. The approval of the Bureau of Public Roads was for designated routes, as clearly specified by the legislation. The intended function of the Interstate network would be seriously impaired if substitution of new routes were to be permitted ***."

From the Administrator's comments and the facts presented in this report, it is apparent that each segment or link that was designated to form the Interstate System is an integral part of the system and that each segment or link was designated for the purpose of best serving the needs of the nation by providing a complete and unified network of highways. In accomplishing this purpose, each segment, as a matter of course, will benefit the communities of the areas in which the segments are established, by reducing traffic on local and arterial streets. Such benefit is in complete consonance with the intent of section 134 of title 23 of the United States Code, which provides that the needs of local communities be given adequate consideration in the formulation of the Interstate System.

The Bureau stated that our report did not cover certain unresolved financing problems relating to (1) the insufficiency of funds being accumulated in the trust fund to complete the Interstate System by 1972 and (2) the recently established ceiling of \$3.3 billion on total project obligations to be incurred during fiscal year 1967. The Bureau implied that these financing problems might extend the completion of the Interstate System beyond 1972. As noted earlier (p. 3), however, the legislation now in effect prohibits expenditures being made from the highway trust fund on or after October 1, 1972.

Our analysis of the Bureau's comments indicates to us that the Bureau's solution to the problems discussed in this report carries with it such consequences that the Congress may wish to examine the approach in greater detail. Therefore, we are presenting this information to the Congress for its consideration and use in its continuous reviews of the Federal-aid highway program.

APPENDIXES

PRINCIPAL OFFICIALS OF THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT
RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF
THE FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY PROGRAM
DURING THE PERIOD COVERED BY OUR REVIEW

		<u>Tenure of office</u>	
		<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
<u>DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION</u>			
SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION (note a):			
Alan S. Boyd	Apr. 1967	Present	
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATOR (note a):			
Lowell K. Bridwell	Apr. 1967	Present	
DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC ROADS (note b):			
Francis C. Turner	Jan. 1967	Present	
Rex M. Whitton	Feb. 1961	Dec. 1966	

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

SECRETARY OF COMMERCE (note c):			
Alexander B. Trowbridge	Jan. 1967	Present	
John T. Connor	Jan. 1965	Jan. 1967	
Luther H. Hodges	Jan. 1961	Jan. 1965	

^a Position created by the Department of Transportation Act (Public Law 89-670).

^b Title changed from Federal Highway Administrator, Department of Commerce, in April 1967.

^c All functions, powers, and duties of the Secretary of Commerce under certain laws and provisions of law relating generally to highways were transferred to and vested in the Secretary of Transportation by the Department of Transportation Act.



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF COMMERCE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20230

JAN 10 1967

Mr. E. W. Stepnick
Assistant Director
Civil Accounting and
Auditing Division
General Accounting Office
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Mr. Stepnick:

This is in reply to your letter of October 21, 1966, requesting comments on a proposed report to the Congress entitled "Problems Associated With the Location and Design of Interstate Highway System Segments in Major Metropolitan Areas, Bureau of Public Roads, Department of Commerce."

We have reviewed the comments of the Bureau of Public Roads and believe that they are appropriately responsive to the matters discussed in the audit report.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "David R. Baldwin", is positioned above the typed name.

David R. Baldwin

Enclosure



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20235

JAN 10 1967

IN REPLY REFER TO:

31-10

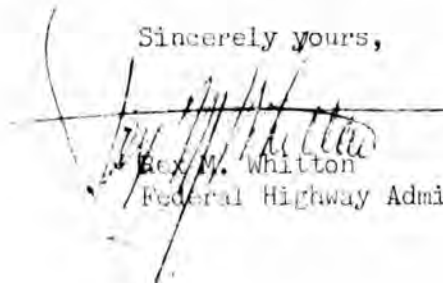
Mr. E. W. Stepnick
Assistant Director
Civil Accounting and Auditing
Division
U. S. General Accounting Office
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Stepnick:

I am transmitting herewith our comments on your draft report titled, "Problems Associated with the Location and Design of Interstate Highway System Segments in Major Metropolitan Areas."

I appreciate the opportunity afforded the Bureau to review the report.

Sincerely yours,



Rex M. Whitton
Federal Highway Administrator

Enclosure

COMMENTS ON GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
DRAFT REPORT TITLED,
"PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH
THE LOCATION AND DESIGN
OF INTERSTATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM SEGMENTS
IN MAJOR METROPOLITAN AREAS"

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS
OFFICE OF AUDITS AND INVESTIGATIONS

DECEMBER 1966

TIMELY AND ECONOMICAL COMPLETION OF INTERSTATE SYSTEM MAY BE HINDERED BY UNRESOLVED ROUTE LOCATIONS AND DESIGN PROBLEMS (pp. 6-41)

We believe that the location and design problems as discussed in the report are factual in all essential elements. On September 30, 1966, Public Roads hearings had been held and the route locations approved for all but 1933 miles of Interstate System. The location of only about 158 miles involving 23 segments are meeting or we anticipate will meet strong and determined local opposition. Resolution of these problems will require patience and understanding by highway officials local representatives, and the citizens involved. Difficulties in selecting specific locations usually involve displacement of people and disruption of the community life as well as the community tax base. It takes patience and time to work out these difficulties. Eventually, the difficulties must be resolved since highway construction is badly needed.

The unresolved locations in metropolitan areas are vital links in "metropolitan transportation systems" and will improve metropolitan traffic circulation, relieve local street congestion, and provide service through the central district or between the central district and rural Interstate highways. However, these segments are not vital links of a "unified national network" and failure to complete these segments will not prevent the completion of an integrated and completely operational interstate system. It is possible to either delete the controversial route segments from the Interstate System entirely or to make substitute Interstate connections. The problems with the segments in San Francisco were resolved in this manner and will not hinder the timely and economical completion of the Interstate System as indicated in the heading and first sentence on page 6 of the report.

APPENDIX II

Page 5

On report page 1, GAO pointed out that its review was confined to the matters directly related to the location and design problems discussed and did not cover all aspects or transactions pertaining thereto.

Apparently, the GAO review did not cover unresolved financing problems, which, when resolved, may give us additional time in which to resolve the location and design problems discussed in the report. Because of the following problems, those discussed in the report may not actually hinder the timely and economical completion of the Interstate System as stated on page 6 of the report.

1. On the basis of current tax rates and cost estimates for completing the Interstate System, it appears that sufficient revenues will not be available to complete the Interstate System by 1972. While it is impossible to speculate as to how this problem will be resolved, the possibility of extending the completion date is being considered.

2. The Administration recently had to reduce non-military Federal expenditures as a contribution to the Viet Nam effort and the resulting program to reduce inflationary pressures. As a result, the Federal-aid Highway Program is to be limited to \$3.3 billion in total project obligations that can be incurred during fiscal year 1967. It is anticipated at this time that this rate of obligation will continue into at least the first quarter of fiscal year 1968 and this slow-down in the rate of obligations might have an effect on the duration of the Interstate Program.

GAO note: Page 6 referred to in the agency's comments on our draft report has been changed to page 7 in the final report.