



*New York State Archives*

**New York State Department of Public Works Federal-Aid  
Secondary Highway System County Maps 14154**

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## Overview of the Records

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| <b>Repository:</b>     | New York State Archives  |
| <b>Summary:</b>        | The series consists of maps of all the counties in New York, outside of New York City, annotated to show proposed and approved federal-aid secondary highways as of 1945. There are two maps present for each county: one indicates state and county highways that were not considered part of the federal-aid highway system; the other shows the state and county highways that were designated as part of the system. |
| <b>Title:</b>          | Federal-aid secondary highway system county maps   |
| <b>Quantity:</b>       | 0.9 cubic feet   |
| <b>Quantity:</b>       | 1 volume(s)  |
| <b>Quantity:</b>       | 115 map(s)   |
| <b>Inclusive Date:</b> | 1946-1947  |
| <b>Series:</b>         | 14154  |

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## Arrangement

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Arranged by district number and therein alphabetically by county.

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## Scope and Content Note

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The series consists of maps of all the counties in New York, outside of New York City, annotated to show proposed and approved federal-aid secondary highways as of 1945. There are two maps present for each county: one indicates state and county highways that were not considered part of the federal-aid highway system; the other shows the state and county highways that were designated as part of the system.

Also included in the series are whiteprint and photostatic copies of these maps. Designation of secondary highways was important to secure federal funding for the state. These maps show

which routes were included in the federal aid secondary system, and how roads were ranked for inclusion.

The Department of Public Works was responsible for construction and maintenance of the state's highway system, originally through its Department of Highways. Emergency conditions during World War II resulted in a shortage of engineering and other personnel and the critical materials needed for highway construction. The Department used the war years as a planning period during which the state's needs were analyzed, new construction standards were developed, and plans were made for postwar construction. According to the Report of the Superintendent of Public Works for 1944, federal legislation provided for a formula that increased the portion of federal aid distributed to New York State, and the resulting three-year (1945-1947) allocation would aid substantially in financing a portion of the Department of Public Work's recommended construction program.

The Federal Highway Act of 1921 originally set formulas for federal aid in highway projects, and defined two classes of highways: primary (or interstate) highways; and secondary (or intercounty) highways. Preference in aid was given to projects for connected interstate highway systems and the U.S. Secretary of Agriculture could approve designated systems or require changes. The act stated that secondary highways "shall connect or correlate" with the primary highways, that primary highways could not exceed 3/7ths of the total mileage which could receive federal aid (with secondary highways receiving the remainder), and that no more than 60% of federal aid could be expended on primary highways until provision was made for the improvement of a state's entire highway system.

The first of the two maps that appear for each county is annotated in color to show the routes not included in the federal aid secondary system, in order of preference. The scheme includes red, green, orange (or sometimes yellow), and brown colors representing the degrees of "importance" of the roads in the system, according to legends found on the maps. These levels apparently correspond to descending degrees of usage, completion, and/or improvement, but other criteria of "importance" are unclear. Almost all maps contain a variation of the most common handwritten annotation, "It was understood that red, green and orange routes would be included in the federal-aid secondary system and that brown routes would be excluded." These maps also give the mileage for roads within each color designation, and these are often subtotaled and/or totaled. A few of the maps are labeled as the "Main Office Copy". These maps are usually annotated whiteprint copies of the same base map used for the second map included for each county in the series. Some are printed copies of previously issued color maps, usually made by the county highway department. These sometimes include printed text on the back detailing various aspects of county history.

The second of the two maps that appear for each county shows the state and county highways which were designated as part of the system. These printed maps are annotated to show whether routes are "off state system" and the respective number of miles in each category. These maps are clearly labeled as federal aid secondary routes. The colors are usually black and red only, often with the state highway system shown in black and the county road system in red. Different symbols are used for state and county highways, and the roads are numbered with their federal-aid ("F.A") numbers. The maps are often marked with arrows showing the border of the map face that appears on the photostatic copies also found with the series.

The base maps used to prepare these maps are apparently the standard county highway department maps dating from the 1930s and 1940s. Most are dated between 1942 and 1946; at least one was revised in 1947. Information usually includes title (by county), date, scale of miles, legend(s), and name of county superintendent (of highways). There are often dual legends for the state and county systems, which differ primarily in the detail given for material used to build the roads (e.g., concrete, gravel, macadam, light bituminous macadam, etc.). Other less detailed maps supply one legend showing hard surfaced pavement or earth roads and the designations of U.S. highways and state highways.

Generally the base maps show: railroads, railways, and bridges; bodies of water; city, town, and village boundaries; streets, locality centers, and parks; and approximate area of the county, in square miles.

Some also indicate: state, county, and town highways completed, in progress, or projected; the location of the county within the state on inset maps; and notations designating county or state responsibility for snow removal and sanding (in early 1945 unprecedented snows hit the state and crippled transportation facilities).

The maps range in size from 50 x 66 cm to 95 x 79 cm within a volume size of 50 x 66 cm. They are arranged alphabetically by county within Department of Public Works districts numbered 1 through 10.

In addition to these bound maps, the series contains two envelopes placed at the fore of the volume. The first envelope is labeled "Photostat Negatives of Original FAS System on County Maps" and contains photostatic copies of the second of the two maps that appear for each county (showing the state and county highways which were designated as part of the secondary system). They are not annotated. The sheets measure approximately 56 x 43 cm. The second envelope is labeled twice as "Foins for Route and/or Project Maps" and "Dist. 6-10 Poughkeepsie" and contains whiteprint copies of the same maps as in the first envelope, grouped together by district. They are not annotated and are stamped "Approved by PRA 9/24/46" (maps of federal-aid secondary routes for most counties were approved by the U.S. Public Roads Administration on September 24, 1946). There was originally a third envelope labeled "County Maps FA Secondary Routes As approved by U.S. 9-24-46" but it is no longer extant.

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## Use of Records

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### Access Restrictions

There are no restrictions regarding access to or use of this material.

## Access Terms

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- Highway planning
- Public works--Finance
- Federal aid to transportation--New York (State)
- Constructing highways
- Maps (documents)
- New York (State)
- Location maps
- Highway planning--New York (State)
- Roads--Location
- Planning infrastructure
- Whiteprints
- Planning secondary roads
- Roads--Finance
- Road maps
- Stats (copies)
- New York (State). Department of Transportation