



New York State Archives

**New York State Department of Public Works State and
federal-aid highway system planning maps B0320**

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Overview of the Records

Repository:	New York State Archives
Summary:	The series consists of copies of maps designating the official state and county highway system and printed maps annotated to show state-aid and federal-aid highways and routes. The chronological arrangement suggests the maps were brought together because they show changes made to the state highway system as routes were corrected or new construction on the system was proposed, perhaps in response to aid formulas for highway development.
Title:	State and federal-aid highway system planning maps
Quantity:	0.6 cubic feet
Quantity:	(10 maps)
Inclusive Date:	1921-1945
Series:	B0320

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Arrangement

Chronological.

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Scope and Content Note

The series consists of copies of maps designating the official state and county highway system, and also printed maps annotated to show state-aid and federal-aid highways and routes. The chronological arrangement suggests the maps were brought together because they show changes made to the state highway system as routes were corrected or new construction on the system was proposed, perhaps in response to aid formulas for highway development.

The maps include copies that show the official highway network as authorized by laws of 1921 and 1925 (as amended to 1930); the federal-aid highway system in New York (ca. 1933 and 1939); proposed multi-lane arterial highways in the five boroughs of New York City (ca. 1945);

and the transportation system in New York City and adjacent areas as published in 1942 by the U.S. Army Map Service for the Metropolitan War Transportation Service.

Chapter 63 of the Laws of 1936, known as the "Highway Law" gave the Superintendent of Public Works responsibility for construction or improvement of state highways and for preparing the necessary maps, plans, specifications, and estimates. He was also authorized to improve, construct, or reconstruct highways with state-appropriated and federal highway improvement funds. Some of the maps in this series are copies of official maps that were mandated by earlier laws, but it is difficult to pinpoint specific authorizing legislation for the remainder of the maps.

Highway legislation was complicated; a footnote to Chapter 330 of the Laws of 1925 states that the amendments effected by the new law "...are so numerous and extensive that it is impracticable to indicate the changes made." A group of maps such as these might have been brought together for retrospection or to plan for future highway construction and financing. Such planning was undertaken by the Department of Public Works during World War II, when lack of manpower and construction materials virtually halted construction on the state highways. In addition, some maps bear colored annotations that are strikingly similar to maps in series 14154, Federal-Aid Secondary Highway System Maps. Although the annotations note that the routes shown are not under that system, this series does contain maps of the counties in New York City that are noticeably absent from the other series.

Fifty state highway routes were designated by Chapter 18 of the Laws of 1921. That act amended the highway law to designated all previously constructed or improved highways as an "ultimate and definitive system of state and county highways..." and stated that the system was to be both constructed and maintained by the state. The act also approved a map officially designating the system. This map, made by the Joint Legislative Highway Committee (which itself was authorized and created by concurrent resolutions of the Senate and Assembly) was to be filed with the Secretary of State, and showed the ultimate system of highways in the state, including those portions yet to be constructed when the act was passed. The act revoked and nullified all previous maps. One of the maps in this series (labeled "Hewitt Map") is an unannotated whiteprint copy of that official map.

Similarly, Chapter 330 of the Laws of 1925 designated construction or improvement of 59 county highways. It too approved a map produced by the Joint Legislative Highway Committee and revoked and annulled all previous maps of the highway system. The act approved the map submitted to the legislature in March of 1925 "which includes the highways added to the present system by this act" and stated that it should be filed with the Secretary of State. One of the maps in this series is an unannotated whiteprint copy of that official map. An additional part of the law was that no contracts for county highway construction projects could be advertised until all other highways in the county that had been indicated for improvement under the 1921 legislation were either contracted or taken over for maintenance by the state.

Information shown on the maps includes routes and proposed routes of state and county highways; route numbers; designation of primary and secondary roads, and their condition(s); the route of the proposed thruway (1939); state-aid arterial and federal-aid routes in Manhattan, Bronx, Brooklyn, Queens, Richmond, and Staten Island; a master plan of arterial highways,

federal-aid routes, and major streets in New York City; and transportation services (roads, railroads, airports) in the New York metropolitan area, and their classifications.

The maps in this series are not original manuscript maps; all are printed copies, and the majority of them have annotations showing state arterial routes and federal aid routes. The dates of annotation are uncertain. Scales, legends, dates, and information on preparers vary with each map, and depend on the base map used. The maps of New York City, for example, are annotated copies of street maps published by the Hagstrom Company (noted for mapmaking, publishing, and lithography in New York). As base maps these "House Number and Transit Guide" maps include subway underground and surface lines; lines of the Long Island Rail Road; locations of subway and railroad stations, parks, and cemeteries; and street and avenue name indexes. Other base maps were printed by the U.S. Geological Survey, the Department of Public Works Division of Highways, and the New York City Planning Commission.

Most map annotations are in ink, but there is no systematic color scheme for marking routes carried over among the maps. Some maps are plain whiteprint copies; others are paper backed on cloth. There is one positive photostatic copy. Size ranges from 63.5 x 77 cm to 94 x 137 cm.

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Related Information

Related Material

B2273Series B2273, New York City Sectional Maps, contains similar maps to those produced by the New York City Planning Commission found in this series.

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Other Finding Aids

Available at Repository

Item list is available at the repository.

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Use of Records

Access Restrictions

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

Access Terms

- Queens (New York, N.Y.)
- Street maps
- Public works--Finance
- New York (State)
- Maps (documents)
- Roads--Location
- Planning infrastructure
- Staten Island (New York, N.Y.)
- Whiteprints
- Highway planning
- Highway planning
- Railroad maps
- Constructing highways
- Brooklyn (New York, N.Y.)
- Bronx (New York, N.Y.)
- New York (N.Y.)
- Roads--Design and construction
- Manhattan (New York, N.Y.)
- Road maps
- Richmond (New York, N.Y.)
- Hagstrom Company
- New York (State). Legislature. Joint Legislative Committee on Highways
- New York (N.Y.). City Planning Commission
- Metropolitan War Transportation Service
- New York (State). Department of Transportation