

1955

Toward a Solution of Bangor's Traffic Problem

Bangor City Planning Department

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toward a solution of
BANGOR'S TRAFFIC PROBLEM
to benefit the

CITY REGION STATE

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Bangor, Maine

The central area street system which accommodates over 25,000 vehicles per day is the same as that which served Bangor in 1800 when the city's population consisted of 277 inhabitants.

PREPARED BY THE BANGOR CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
BASIC SOURCE: UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY — EDITION OF 1948

1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000
FEET
3280 FEET IS EQUIVALENT TO ONE STATUTE MILE.

MADE BY SCHROEDER

MAGNETIC NORTH IS 20 WEST OF TRUE NORTH

THE BASIC PATTERN of highways in Bangor was established 150 years ago, more than a hundred years before the automobile came into popular use. As the layout of streets suggests, all routes were intended to bring traffic into the center of the city.



The central area of the city has been confined in extent by practical limitations since 1800.



Automobile usage in the city has increased at a rate as to have doubled itself in the last decade.

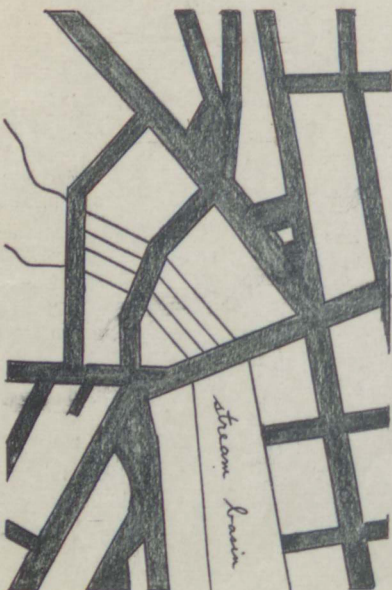
The development of an adequate highway network in and around Bangor has manifestly lagged far behind the needs of the present-day automobile users. In fact little, if anything, has been done, outside of designating a rotary and a few one-way streets, to correct the basic inadequacies of the system. Unless one can predict that the use of the automobile will soon be on the decline, he must conclude that bold measures in highway improvement for this entire area are the order of the day--in the interests of day-to-day driving convenience for the inhabitants, and future economic development for the area.

SOLUTION

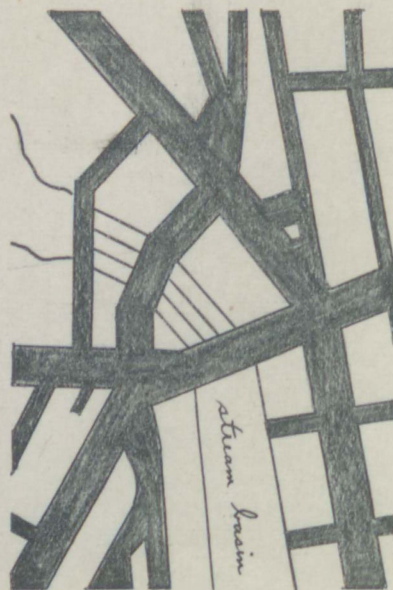
BY WAY OF A TOTAL

The existing down-town traffic arteries could conceivably be widened and widened further to accommodate larger and larger numbers of automobiles, until there would be virtually no space remaining for buildings--and still there would be little, if any, noticeable convenience to the motoring public.

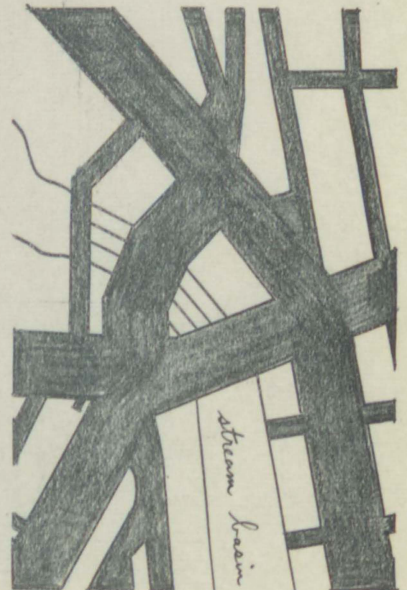
① today...



② tomorrow?

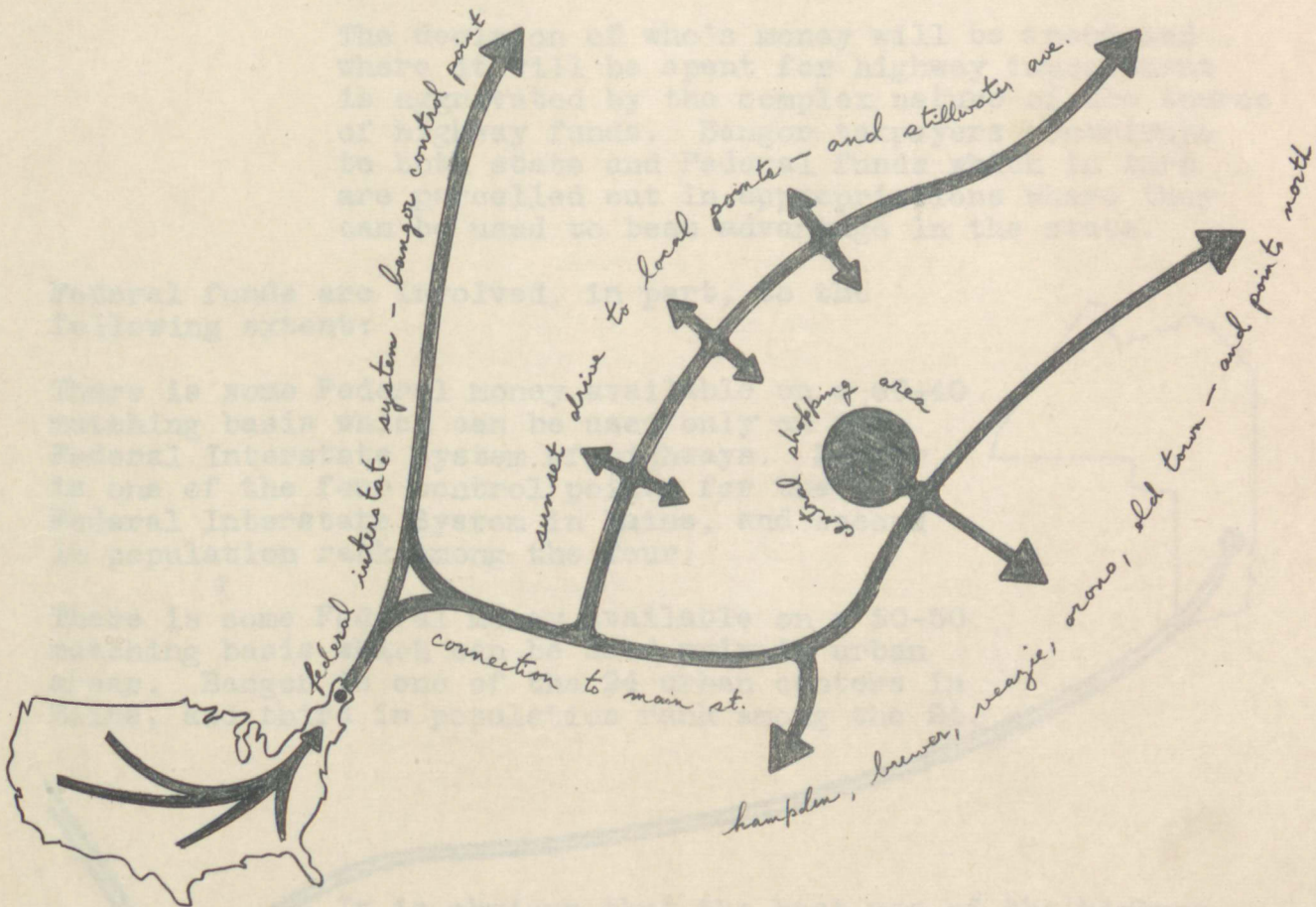


③ after tomorrow?



ON THE OTHER HAND a modest system of express and semi-express routes could be established in such a way as to siphon off the overflow traffic from the local access streets in both the central area and the various residential neighborhoods, thereby providing for the needs of motorists--in addition to improving the utility (for business) of down-town streets and the desirability (for living) of residential streets. This would be a **TOTAL SOLUTION** and should be a goal to be aimed at and attained for the ultimate relief of Bangor's growing traffic problem.

getting to, through, and around bangor from all over the united states and canada.



What Bangor needs today certainly cannot be realized overnight. We are too far behind for that. However, a start can be made toward a **TOTAL SOLUTION** now, keeping in mind that every inch of accomplishment should be aimed at the ultimate goal and not, for the sake of short sighted expediency, at some cross purpose.

The following diagrams illustrate how highway development in this area during the next five or six years can, within the limits of practicability, catch up with current needs and how the growing needs can be accommodated in the extended future.

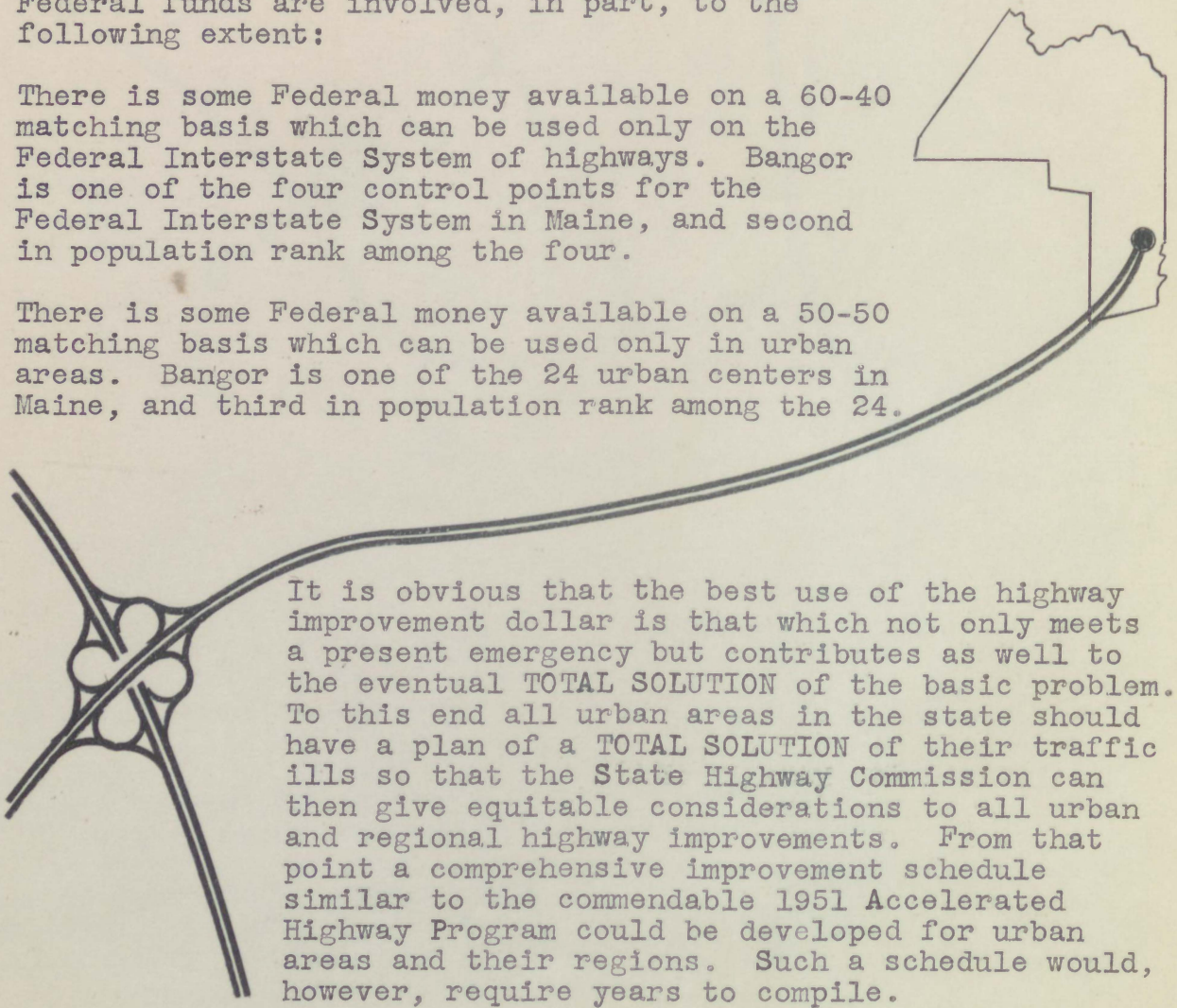
BANGOR IS NOT ALONE in the state in its mounting urban traffic congestion. On the other hand, Bangor is one of the last cities in the state to be given the consideration which its peculiar traffic problem deserves. The relocation of Hammond Street, caused by the expansion of Dow Air Force Base, has precipitated some study of Bangor's grave situation, but it is problematic as to how far these studies will be applied toward a TOTAL SOLUTION beyond the bare needs of the military installation itself.

The decision of who's money will be spent and where it will be spent for highway improvement is aggravated by the complex nature of the source of highway funds. Bangor taxpayers contribute to both state and Federal funds which in turn are parcelled out in appropriations where they can be used to best advantage in the state.

Federal funds are involved, in part, to the following extent:

There is some Federal money available on a 60-40 matching basis which can be used only on the Federal Interstate System of highways. Bangor is one of the four control points for the Federal Interstate System in Maine, and second in population rank among the four.

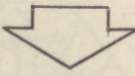
There is some Federal money available on a 50-50 matching basis which can be used only in urban areas. Bangor is one of the 24 urban centers in Maine, and third in population rank among the 24.



It is obvious that the best use of the highway improvement dollar is that which not only meets a present emergency but contributes as well to the eventual TOTAL SOLUTION of the basic problem. To this end all urban areas in the state should have a plan of a TOTAL SOLUTION of their traffic ills so that the State Highway Commission can then give equitable considerations to all urban and regional highway improvements. From that point a comprehensive improvement schedule similar to the commendable 1951 Accelerated Highway Program could be developed for urban areas and their regions. Such a schedule would, however, require years to compile.

WE HAVE PRESENTED HERewith our concept for a TOTAL SOLUTION to Bangor's traffic problem which, in our judgment at least, embodies a logical and, therefore, economical approach to the problem. The emergency presented by the relocation of Hammond Street can and, we feel, should be met not simply by re-routing all through traffic back to Hammond Street, and thus compounding an existing problem, but rather by an extension to Main Street--placing the heavy volume of traffic on one of our few existing streets capable of handling it. By so doing, the first and most urgent step toward the TOTAL SOLUTION will have been accomplished.

The necessity of undertaking construction of the subsequent portions of the highway complex must logically await evaluation by state and Federal officials as to their urgency with relation to available funds. However, measures can be taken now toward this end without construction costs. We feel that in the very near future, as soon as statistical data now in the possession of the State Highway Commission has been tabulated and evaluated, detailed consideration should be given to the feasibility of Sunset Drive. Even if present traffic volume would not justify its construction at once, and indeed all evidence indicates that it would, a reasonable projection of increased traffic certainly will, in our judgment, indicate a necessity for some such highway within the next five or six years. To mitigate land damage at that time, agreement in principle as to the desirability of this phase of our solution should be arrived at, and a detailed survey to establish the engineering and economic feasibility of our proposed location thereof should be undertaken. In this connection it should be observed that the City Planning Board can effectually prevent excessive damage by having the route delineated on the Official Map of the city, thereby preventing construction of any kind within the limits of the right-of-way.



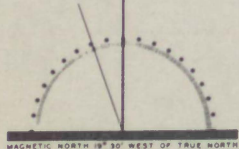
It should be kept in mind that Sunset Drive apart from filling a municipal need, which it clearly will, will also and primarily serve a regional purpose and particularly so since the construction of the Federal Interstate System to and beyond Bangor is highly problematic as to time of accomplishment.

HAVING THUS ESTABLISHED THE BASIC CORE OF A TOTAL SOLUTION, THE SUBSEQUENT PHASES CAN, AND IN SIMILAR FASHION AS TRAFFIC NEEDS DICTATE, BE ACCOMMODATED IN THE MOST ECONOMICAL AND DESIRABLE MANNER POSSIBLE.

CITY OF BANGOR · MAINE · AND ENVIRONS



942 BY SCHROETER



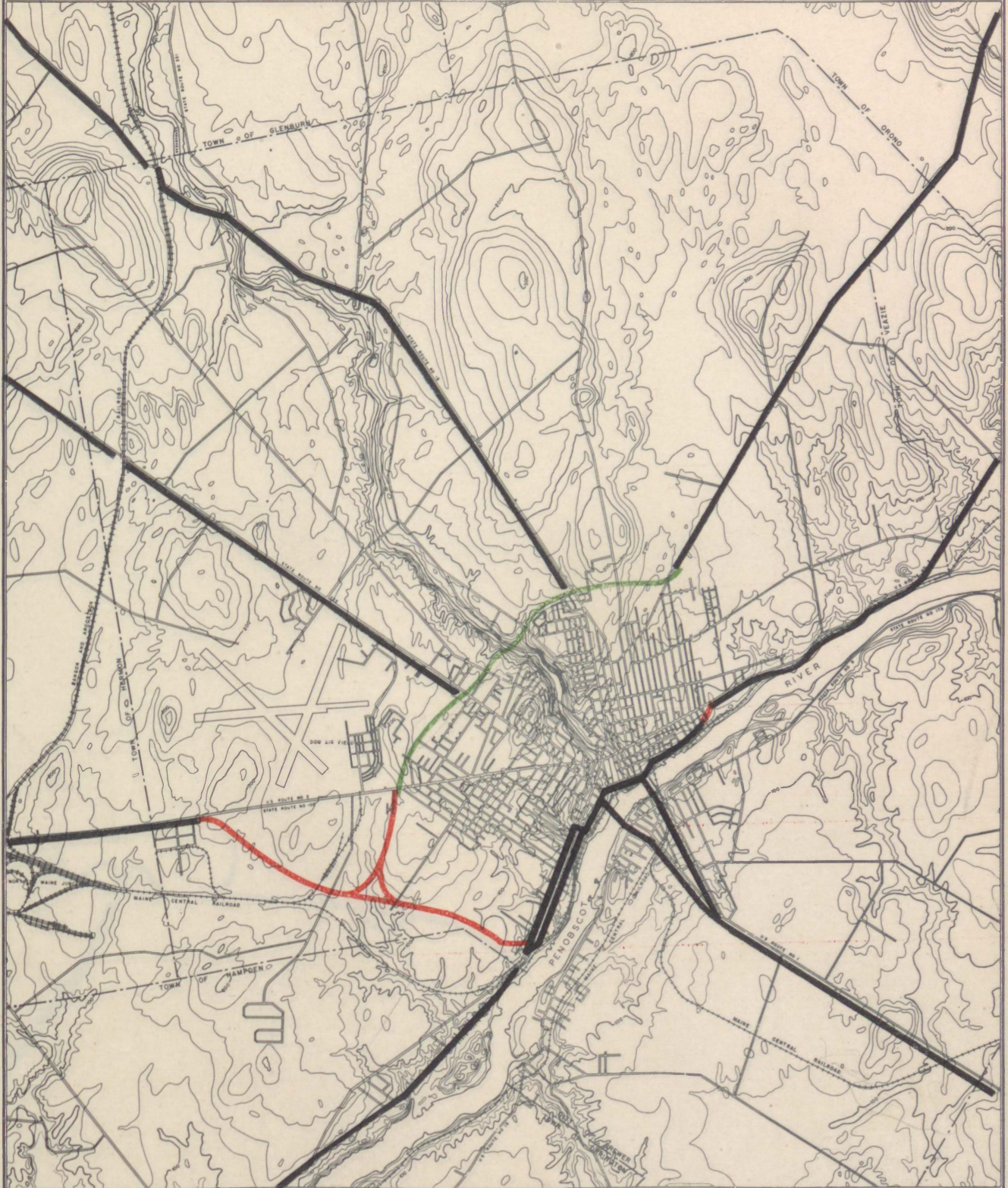
MAGNETIC NORTH 18° 30' WEST OF TRUE NORTH

1955: Relocation of Hammond Street with the connection to Main Street (4 miles) and extension of Hancock Street to State Street (1/6 mile).

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BASIC SOURCE: UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY — EDITION OF 1948

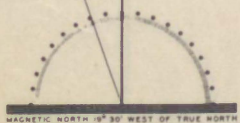
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1280 FEET EQUIVALENT TO ONE STATUTE MILE

CITY OF BANGOR - MAINE - AND ENVIRONS



1960: Sunset Drive from relocated Hammond Street to outer Stillwater Avenue (3 miles, 2 underpasses, and 1 bridge).

MADE BY SCHRÖETER



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BASIC SOURCE: UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY - EDITION OF 1948

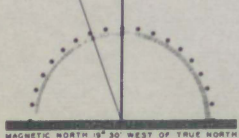
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1280 FEET EQUIVALENT TO ONE STATUTE MILE

CITY OF BANGOR • MAINE • AND ENVIRONS



1970: Federal Interstate System with terminus at Bangor (65 miles of super-highway) and the expanded local connection (3 miles and 3 underpasses).

MADE BY SCHRÖETER



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BASIS SOURCE: UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY — EDITION OF 1948

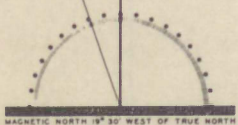
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5280 FEET EQUIVALENT TO ONE STATUTE MILE

CITY OF BANGOR • MAINE • AND ENVIRONS



1980: Federal Interstate System with terminus at Houlton (110 miles of super-highway).

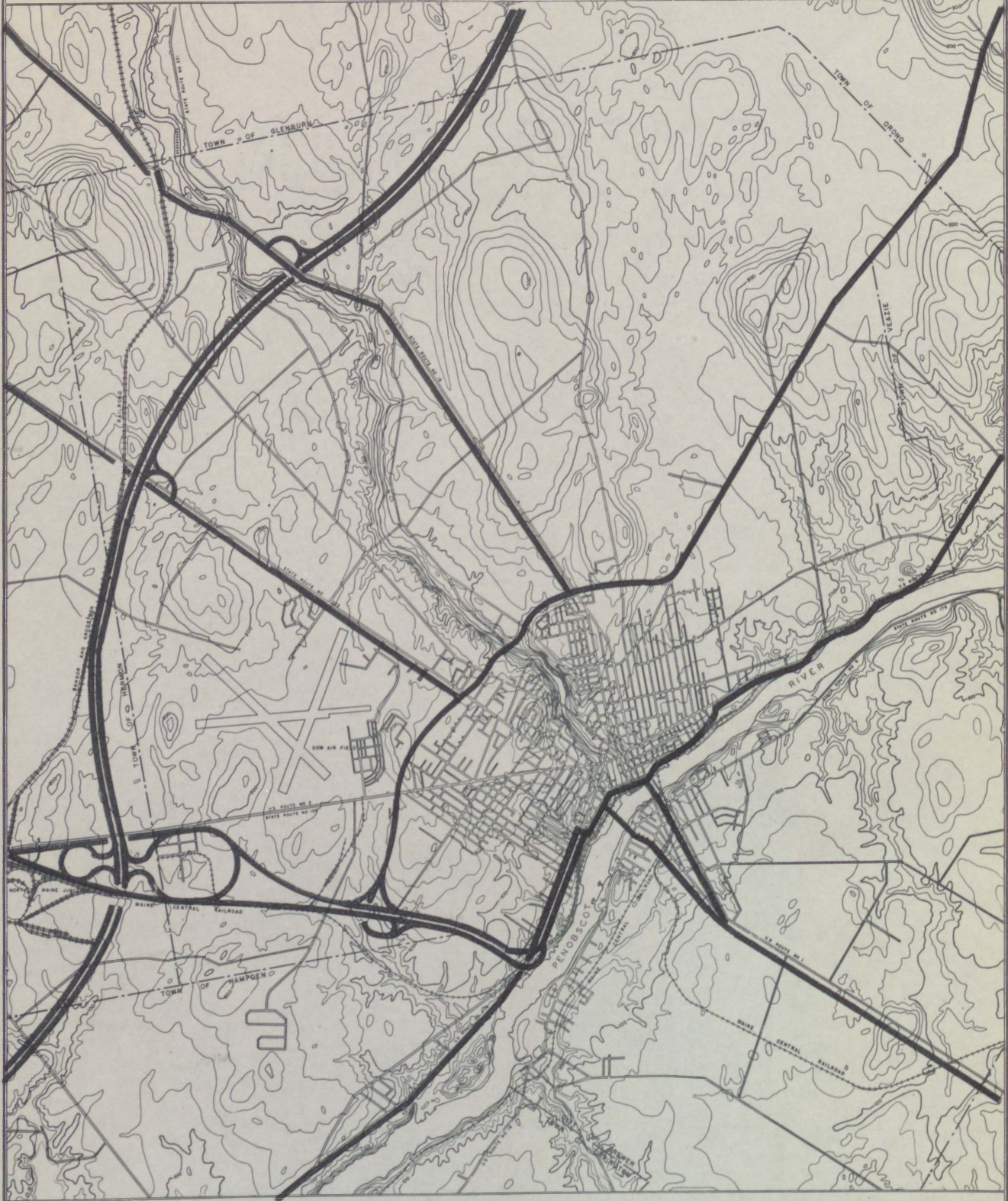
1952 BY SCHMIDT



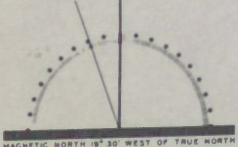
PREPARED BY THE BANGOR CITY PLANNING DEPARTMENT
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1000 0 1000 2000 3000 4000 5000 6000
5280 FEET EQUIVALENT TO ONE STATUTE MILE

CITY OF BANGOR • MAINE • AND ENVIRONS



1942 BY SCHROETER



A modest system of express and semi-express routes comprising a **TOTAL SOLUTION** of Bangor's traffic needs for the next 25 years--to benefit the city, region, and state.

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FEET
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