

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT,
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON, JUNE 12, 1946.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives:

For the past quarter century there has been concentrated study on the traffic problem of Metropolitan Boston. The Department of Public Works, the Metropolitan District Commission, the State Planning Board, the City of Boston Planning Board, and the Division of Metropolitan Planning are some of the bodies that have considered the question. In the last few years most of these bodies have made their studies in co-operation with the Post-War Highway Commission.

The amount of study expended has not been out of proportion with the gravity of the problem. The communities in the Metropolitan area grew and expanded in the era before the development of the automobile. The past quarter century has demonstrated that only broad measures carefully calculated will save this area from stagnation and atrophy caused by traffic congestion.

The problem is one that affects the Commonwealth as a whole. It is a truism that the welfare of the Commonwealth is closely interwoven with the welfare of Metropolitan Boston. Going beyond such general propositions, studies have established that two-thirds of the traffic in the downtown Boston area originates outside of the city, while three-fourths of the vehicles passing through the Sumner Tunnel are registered outside the city.

The appropriations I am about to recommend are designed to get under way two of the important links in a chain intended to solve the problem. It should be em-

phasized that these two projects were not selected in haphazard fashion. Out of the long continued study and planning there has arisen substantial agreement on a long-range plan to put a permanent end to the problem. Some of the necessary projects have already been completed. The construction and improvement of Old Colony Parkway, the improvements to Memorial Drive, the Sumner Tunnel, and the Mystic River High Level Bridge, soon to be constructed, are all segments of the whole plan. The main project is the Central Traffic Artery, already well advanced in the planning stage.

The Sumner Tunnel was completed in 1934. It was designed for a normal annual volume of six million vehicles. In 1941 — the peak year for vehicular traffic within the Commonwealth — a total of 7,362,848 vehicles passed through the tunnel. The tunnel is now operating at a substantial profit. During the first five months of the current year, there has been an increase of 24% in the use of the tunnel over the corresponding period in 1941. It is estimated that during this year about nine million vehicles will seek to use the tunnel. This amount of traffic cannot be absorbed. These statistics coupled with observation of congestion at the tunnel mean only one thing: another tunnel is required. As the Logan International Airport develops and expands, the demands upon the tunnels will increase even more. The tunnels and the express highway, for which construction plans are now being prepared, between the East Boston end of the Sumner Tunnel and the Airport will furnish rapid access to the Airport from downtown Boston. The McLellan Highway will carry traffic from the tunnels to the Newburyport Turnpike.

The Sumner Tunnel was designed and built by the Boston Transit Department. The experience gained by this Department makes it the body best qualified to prepare plans for the new tunnel. I therefore recommend an appropriation from the Highway Fund of \$250,000. This sum is to be expended by the Department of Public Works during the current year for the purpose of effecting prepa-

ration of plans for an additional vehicular tunnel between the points designated in the attached bill. The actual preparation of plans will be done by the Boston Transit Department, which will be reimbursed for its expenditures by the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth, and particularly the Highway Fund, will in turn be reimbursed from funds secured from future issue of bonds to pay the cost of the construction. The total amount deemed necessary for the plans is \$500,000, approximately 3% of the estimated total cost. Approximately half of the sum necessary for plans will be expended this year. The expenditure for plans will be reduced about 25% from the normal cost of this item because of the experience with the substantially similar Sumner Tunnel.

The second undertaking for which I now recommend an appropriation may be called Embankment Parkway. This will be a parkway along the southerly bank of the Charles River Basin from Soldiers' Field Road to the present Embankment Road. There should be provision at various points for the interchange of traffic between the new Parkway and such existing arteries as the Fenway, Commonwealth Avenue, and Beacon Street. Since the volume of traffic along the present Embankment Road will be materially increased, this highway should be broadened and reconstructed along its entire length.

It is contemplated that Embankment Parkway will later be connected with the Central Traffic Artery and with the Mystic River High Level Bridge. It can be seen, therefore, that the Embankment Parkway is part of the long range plan. At the same time this project will relieve one of the sorest points of congestion within the city. At present a very heavy burden of traffic is borne by four residential streets: Commonwealth Avenue, Beacon Street, Newbury Street, and Marlborough Street. A traffic count on a typical 1941 day established that these four streets carried, between Massachusetts Avenue and Arlington Street, 38,000, 31,000, 6,300 and 4,300 vehicles respectively. Turning movements at Massachusetts Avenue as well as at other points further aggravate this

serious congestion. The only permanent relief must be sought in the construction of a road along the river.

The Metropolitan District Commission has jurisdiction over the land involved and is therefore the logical agency to prepare plans for this Parkway. It is estimated that the cost of construction plans will be \$150,000. The plans should be completed within a year. I recommend an appropriation from the Highway Fund in the amount of \$150,000 for this purpose.

Respectfully yours,

MAURICE J. TOBIN,

Governor.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty-Six.

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE PREPARATION OF PLANS
FOR A VEHICULAR TUNNEL BETWEEN BOSTON PROPER
AND EAST BOSTON.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives
in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the
same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. The department of public works,
2 hereinafter called the department, is hereby authorized
3 and directed to provide for the preparation of plans
4 for an additional vehicular tunnel from a point at
5 or near the intersection of Cross street and North
6 street in the city of Boston, hereinafter called the
7 city, to a point at or near the intersection of Porter
8 street and Paris street in the East Boston section
9 of the city and for the preparation of plans for all
10 facilities and appurtenances incidental thereto. Said
11 vehicular tunnel shall be of such width as may be
12 determined by the department as will permit the safe
13 movement of two lanes of traffic and shall be so
14 located as to conform to an adequate system of ap-
15 proach highways as may be determined by the
16 department. For the purpose of carrying out the
17 provisions of this act, the department shall arrange
18 to have the Boston transit department, hereinafter
19 called the transit department, acting under the

20 supervision of and in behalf of the department,
21 perform the work hereinafter authorized.

1 SECTION 2. Immediately after the effective date
2 of this act the transit department shall make such
3 preliminary investigations, surveys, borings and com-
4 plete final plans, estimates and specifications as the
5 department may deem expedient and to that end the
6 department or the transit department, their em-
7 ployees or any other parties acting with their au-
8 thority, may enter upon any lands or places without
9 being liable in trespass, in order to make surveys and
10 investigations and may place and maintain marks
11 and monuments thereon, and make borings and
12 excavations and do all other acts necessary for the
13 preparation of plans, specifications and estimates
14 for said tunnel and other facilities and appurtenances;
15 provided that compensation shall be recoverable
16 from the commonwealth under chapter seventy-
17 nine of the General Laws for any actual damages
18 caused by such acts.

1 SECTION 3. To meet the cost of the work herein
2 authorized there may be expended such sums not
3 exceeding five hundred thousand dollars as may
4 hereafter be appropriated therefor from the highway
5 fund. From such sums the commonwealth shall
6 reimburse the city for such portions of transit depart-
7 ment administrative expense and salaries or wages of
8 employees of the transit department as are charge-
9 able to the work herein authorized and for such
10 expenses for service and materials as are incurred
11 by the transit department in carrying out the provi-
12 sions of this act. Said reimbursements shall be made

13 monthly upon presentation by the city of statements
14 approved by the department. Of the sums to be
15 appropriated under authority of this act one-half
16 shall be made available on the first day of July in
17 the year nineteen hundred and forty-six and one-half
18 on the first day of July in the year nineteen hundred
19 and forty-seven.

1 SECTION 4. Any obligation or expense incurred
2 by the commonwealth for the highway fund under
3 this act shall be reimbursed to the extent of such
4 obligation or expense from funds hereafter made
5 available from any source to meet the cost of said
6 tunnel.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty-Six.

AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE PREPARATION OF PLANS FOR EMBANKMENT PARKWAY.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The metropolitan district commission,
2 herein called the commission, is hereby authorized
3 and directed to prepare plans, estimates and specifica-
4 tions and all other things necessary and proper as a
5 prerequisite to the actual construction of a parkway
6 over public and private lands and public and private
7 ways in the city of Boston substantially on the
8 following location: — Beginning on Embankment road
9 in the city of Boston, thence along the southerly
10 bank of the Charles vie to Soldiers' Field road,
11 with provisions for the interchange of traffic between
12 the said parkway and existing ways within the city
13 of Boston.

1 SECTION 2. For the purpose of carrying out the
2 provisions of this act there may be expended by the
3 commission such sums not exceeding, in the aggre-
4 gate, one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, as may
5 hereafter be appropriated therefor from the Highway
6 Fund.

1 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon its
2 passage.