

This is not admitted by the city people. Therefore, if you want to achieve the first goal (that of preserving the central business district) you must not build highways and parking. We have now made the decision to build highways. Therefore, what are the consequences which we have to face in our central districts, and how can we persuade the central district businessman to accept them? This is an important question, which is going to show up sooner or later.

We have made a decision, and it is going to be a vital one in terms of what happens to our central properties. This is one of the major impacts of the program—that of a rearrangement of land values.

## **Detroit's Use of Expressways for Transit**

### **Glenn Richards, National Committee on Urban Transportation**

Perhaps highway people have not properly stressed the use of expressways as a medium for mass transit use. A decision was made in Detroit years ago to eliminate the street cars and interurban cars in an attempt to prove that highways could be used as a means of moving mass transit. Every expressway planned for Detroit was designed with the idea of making it easier for buses to operate. Every mile opened up was more and more convincing that for a city like Detroit this was the answer to handling mass transit.

In 1956 the National Committee on Urban Transportation and its consultants met in Detroit. During the meeting, use of expressways as a means of mass transit was discussed. The group was invited to take a ride on the expressways at 5 P.M., when the traffic was at its peak. Many of them, after seeing the local buses as well as the suburban buses traveling at high speed on the expressways to all parts of the city without any tie-ups, were convinced that full use should be made of expressways in helping to solve the transit problem of cities.

It is hoped that the National Committee on Urban Transportation will come up with the factual information needed as to whether or not cities can have a good mass transit system on the express highways, which can be used then not only for personal cars and trucks, but for mass transit as well.

## **The Transit Problem and the Central Business District**

### **J. Edward Johnston, U. S. Chamber of Commerce**

There has been considerable confusion about this matter of transit and the effect that freeway planning is having or may have on the central business district.

All we are actually doing in the new road program is trying to catch up, and then keep up, with the increased use of the automobile. There is still a basic demand for transit riders. The transit problems and the central business district problems are tied closely together.

Many people believe that the central business district is deteriorating because it is not expanding at the same rate as the suburban areas. This is not true, however, and the central business district is and always will be the most important factor in the health and welfare of every city. The problem is to get the maximum possible number of people into the central business district. Of course, some central business districts seem

to have reached a saturation point, and where such saturation exists it is a mistake to build freeways into the heart of the central city, thereby adding not only more people but also more automobiles.

The problem is static as far as the business district is concerned, but is dynamic as far as the private automobile is concerned. Underlying these opposites is the basic demand to move people, and transit more nearly fits the needs. There must be greater emphasis on the development of transit in keeping with greater use of the automobile.

The matter of paying for transit is a terrific problem. Thought must be given to how transit facilities can be financed without public subsidy. It certainly is most important that the transit problem be taken into consideration during the design of these expressways and freeways.

There is no need to fear losing mass transit completely; it will survive and must survive. Some radical adjustments may be needed to keep it, but it certainly is an integral part of maintaining the health of the central business district.

## GENERAL ECONOMIC ORIENTATION

### The Broad Approach to Highway Impact—National and Regional Edward A. Ackerman, Resources for the Future, Inc.

The comments addressed in the direction of a broader highway impact picture than a locality, or a very small region are most interesting. However, it seems that one profitably could start at the other end. This is a Federal highway program and perhaps such planning is the responsibility of an agency of the Federal establishment. Whatever the agency, outlining a framework within which planning can be undertaken at the national or regional level should be helpful.

Of course there are decided imperfections in looking at so large an area as the United States over the period during which one would want to plan, say, 25 or 30 years hence. Even recognizing the imperfections that exist in techniques, in data, in outlook, it still seems that an effort in that direction is desirable. In its absence we have, at best, impressions. And all of us, even when we seek to be accurate, make certain assumptions which may be based on impressions.

There are other forces influencing growth in this nation than the direction that highway construction takes, although that is very influential and one of the ways in which the other forces are channeled.

I think, for example, of resource development. What has been done in the development of water resources over, say, more than one-half of the geographical area of the country, is extremely important as far as the future is concerned. What is done about reforestation, although possibly not as important as water resources, still can influence the direction that development takes.

The balance of the energy resources indicates certain trends. Let's take the matter of rising prices of petroleum products as against new forms of energy that are coming in, or of coal compared with petroleum products, and so on. Those who specialize in these subjects consider them to be significant factors in the future economic development and settlement in most parts of the country.