

# OUTLINE HISTORY OF VERMONT STATE HIGHWAYS

**NATIONAL HIGHWAY WEEK, SEPT. 19 - 25, 1965**

**PREPARED FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY**

**BY THE**

**VERMONT DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS**

GEORGE WASHINGTON authorized (April 29, 1776) and Congress approved (May 10, 1776) Vermont's first military road between Newbury and St. Johns, Quebec, sending "£250 lawful Money to begin with." The project approximates northerly Route 91 of the National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, 321 miles of which are due for completion in Vermont in 1970 at an estimated cost of \$239 million.



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## THE EARLIEST HIGHWAYS IN VERMONT

Vermont, alone of the six New England states, is without access to the sea, a major factor in the State's history and development. From the time Jacques Cartier glimpsed Vermont in 1535, to the fall of Quebec in 1759, 224 years later, the State's 58 major peaks, ranging in elevation from 3,000 feet to nearly 4,500 feet above sea level, provided effective barriers to easy travel, except along the streams, lakes, and through the passes which created natural "lines of least resistance" for the traffic of those times.

This traffic largely comprised hostile Indians in conflict, or seeking hunting grounds and summer camp sites. As explorers, then traders, missionaries, hunters, and settlers pioneered Vermont's rugged but rich terrain, the area was plunged into continuous conflict. Not until the victory of the Thirteen Colonies and the establishment of the United States in 1789 did Vermont have any true opportunity for peaceful development.

Vermont became the fourteenth of today's 50 states in 1791 as Vermonters laboriously transported "pot and pearl ashes" manufactured from hardwoods to Boston and southerly populated areas, utilizing canoes or rafts along the lakes and streams, or following rough overland Indian trails.

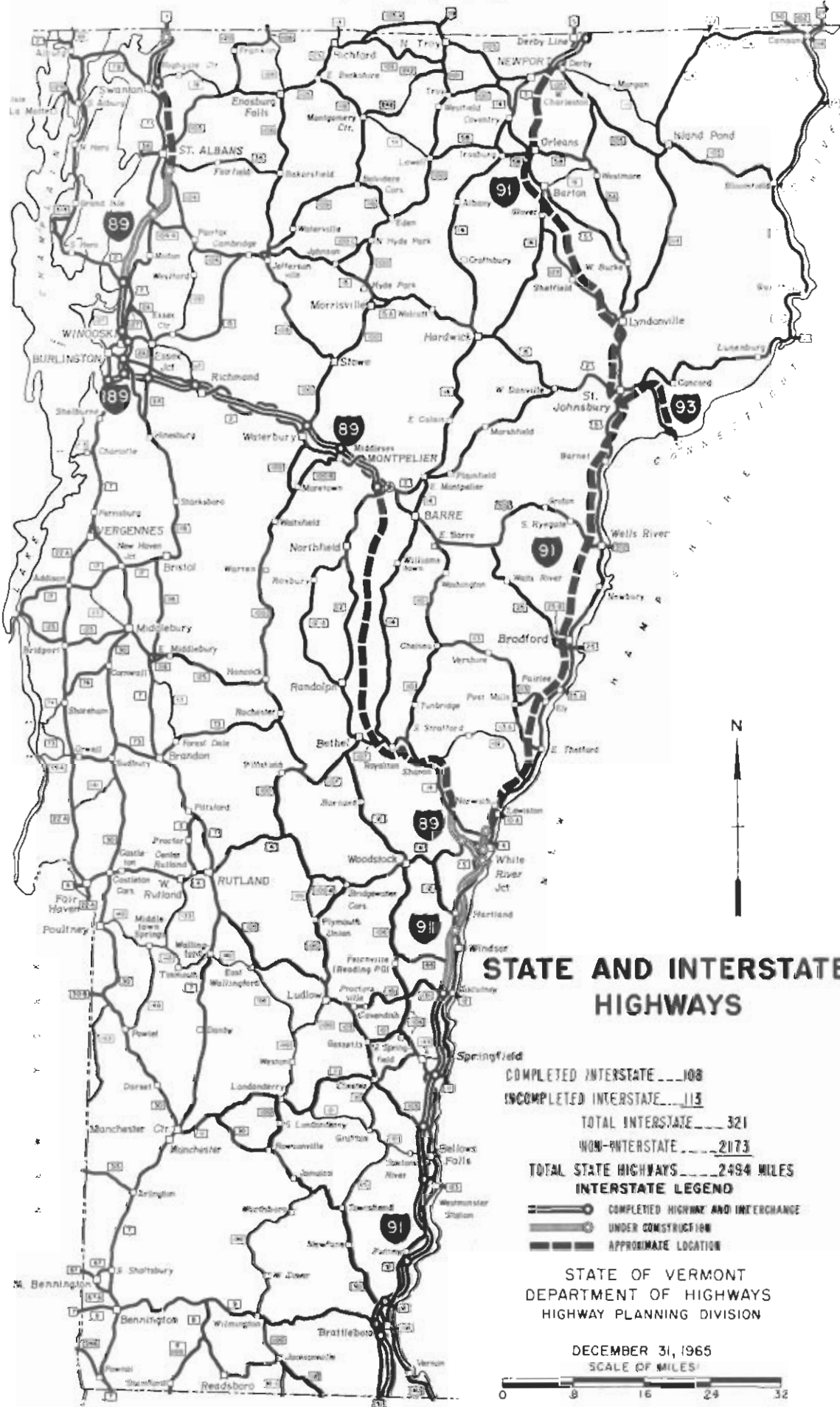
With the passage of years, more and more settlers traveled the widening forest and valley paths, fighting upstream along navigable waters, making new trails along bank sides, and eventually creating villages and towns. Available water power was used to establish grist mills, saw mills, tanneries, and finally paper and woolen mills.

Industries continued to grow and populations increased as isolated settlers and communities built two-way roads to communicate with one another, and to reach distant markets with Vermont produce. With the popularity of bicycles complementing these increasing markets, Vermonters demanded roads capable of carrying both two-wheeled vehicles and heavy horse-drawn wagons.

In 1896 the successful trial run of the first automobile foreshadowed gasoline powered transportation. Vermont's highway history was written with fresh impetus in the following series of events:

- 1892 Establishment of town office of Road Commissioner;  
The first State supervised highway finance.
- 1898 Establishment of the State Highway Department.
- 1904 First pledging of motor vehicle funds to highway purposes.
- 1906 Creation of State Aid Roads as trunk lines between towns;  
First appropriation from State Tax Funds.
- 1912 Establishment of State patrol highway maintenance system.
- 1915 Appropriation of special State fund for bridge work.
- 1917 Designation of a Federal-aid Highway System.
- 1919 Established a weight limit for motor vehicles.
- 1923 Authorized gasoline tax for highway purposes only.
- 1931 Creation of the State Highway System.

TITLE 19, VERMONT STATUTES ANNOTATED, SECTION I: "State highways" are those highways exclusively in charge of the state highway board, which shall include limited access highways under the provisions of sections 1861-1862 of this title.



## STATE AND INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS

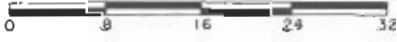
COMPLETED INTERSTATE	108
INCOMPLETED INTERSTATE	113
TOTAL INTERSTATE	321
NON-INTERSTATE	2173
<b>TOTAL STATE HIGHWAYS</b>	<b>2494 MILES</b>

### INTERSTATE LEGEND

- COMPLETED HIGHWAY AND INTERCHANGE
- UNDER CONSTRUCTION
- APPROXIMATE LOCATION

STATE OF VERMONT  
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS  
HIGHWAY PLANNING DIVISION

DECEMBER 31, 1965  
SCALE OF MILES



## STATE HIGHWAY HISTORY

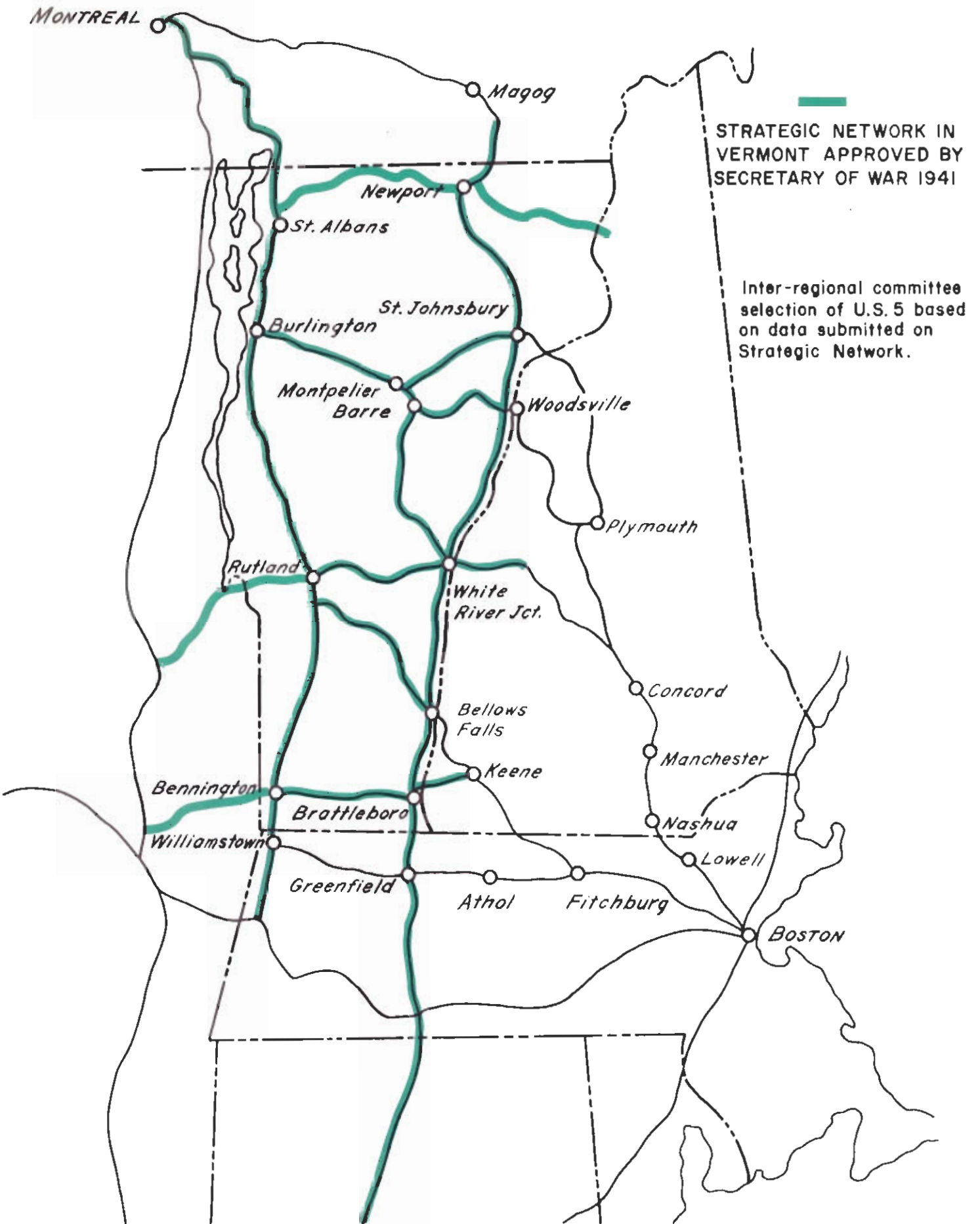
Following the designation of the first "interregional highways" in 1941, both military and civilian leadership fostered the development of high-standard highways to carry more massive military traffic and strategic freight. This development became mandatory within a decade after World War II when the no longer adequate "interregional highways" appeared to require higher standard, four-lane, high-speed paralleling highways to accommodate burgeoning private and commercial highway transportation. This spurred the 1956 authorization of the 41,000 mile National System of Interstate and Defense Highways, reducing existing state highways to a status of essential supplementing networks, in turn supplemented through widespreading, constantly improving systems of rural (town) and "urban" highways under the jurisdiction of the communities they serve.

### Chronological Listing 1906--1964


<u>Year</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Mileage</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Mileage</u>
1906-1910	Sand Bar Bridge and Road	2.170	1955	Alburg State Highway (Petition)	2.944
1929	Peru Turnpike in Winhall	4.310	1956	South Alburg State Highway (Relocation)	0.375
1931	Original 1,000 mile addition (State System Officially Initiated)	1,006.930	1956	McCullough State Highway, Fayston-Waitsfield (Petition)	3.341
1933	Vt 17, US-7 to Champlain Bridge (Petition)	12.200	1956	Vt 36, St. Albans-Fairfield-Bekersfield (Petition)	14.787
1934	US-5, Wells River (1931 Act)	0.250	1957	Vt 58, Lowell-Irasburg-Barton-Brownington (Legislature)	18.498
1935	700 mile addition	735.840	1957	Vt 36, St. Albans (Legislature)	2.872
1937	Brookfield State Highway	3.200	1957	Vt F-3, South Hero-Grand Isle (Legislature)	5.582
1939	Canaan, All America Route (Relocation)	3.300	1957	US-5, Wells River Village (Legislature)	0.550
1939	Vt 286, Fair Haven (Petition)	1.350	1957	Groton-Marshfield State Highway (Legislature)	13.550
1941	Jay Mt. (Reselection of F.A.--1931 Act)	8.953	1957	Wells-Poultney State Highway (Legislature)	4.957
1941	Vt 3--Rutland, Proctor, & Pittsford (Petition)	6.446	1958	Norwich State Highway (Petition)	1.150
1941	Vt 67-A, Bennington (Petition)	1.931	1958	Vt 44, Reading-West Windsor-Windsor (Petition)	8.878
1941	Vt 11, Chester-Springfield (Petition)	7.205	1959	Jay-Troy State Highway (Petition)	4.097
1944	Vt 8, Stamford-Readsboro-Whitingham (Petition)	21.426	1959	US-302, Wells River Village (Legislature)	0.288
1944	Vt 104, Alburg-Swanton-Missisquoi Bay Bridge (Legislature)	0.813	1959	Berlin State Highway (Legislature)	2.256
1946	Vt 129, Isle La Motte-Alburg T/L west including Isle La Motte Bridge (Petition)	0.406	1960	Vt 105, Richford (Relocation of former 105-A)	3.784
1949	Maidstone, Vt 102 to N.H. Line (Petition)	0.601	1961	Vt 122--Lyndon, Wheelock, Sheffield, Glover (Legislature)	14.801
1949	Canaan, Vt 114 Canaan-N.H. Line (Petition)	0.181	1961	Vt 142, Brattleboro and Vernon (Petition)	9.800
1949	Canaan, Vt 27 Canaan-Canadian Line (Petition)	2.155	1961	Vt 50, Canaan (Legislature)	0.493
1949	Cambridge, Vt 109 Waterville T/L to SA-5 (Petition)	2.998	1961	Vt 120--Franklin, Berkshire, Sheldon (Legislature)	11.893
1949	Vt 109, Waterville-Belvidere (Legislature)	11.300	1962	Vt 100-B, Duxbury and Moretown (Petition)	7.132
1950	Vt 109, Cambridge (Petition)	0.800	1962	Vt 116, Middlebury (Petition)	0.172
1950	Vt 127, Colchester (Petition)	0.147	1962	Vt 25-A, Bradford (Petition)	1.597
1953	Brookfield, extension to Vt 14 (Legislature)	2.300	1963	Randolph State Highway (Petition)	7.192
1953	Vt 12-A--Northfield, Roxbury, Granville, Braintree, & Randolph (Legislature)	18.600	1963	Vt 105, St. Albans (Petition)	0.168
1953	Vt 101, Troy (Petition)	5.770	1963	Putney State Highway (Petition)	0.362
1953	Troy (Reselection of F.A.--1931 Act)	0.430	1964	Coventry State Highway (Legislature)	2.543
1954	Norton State Highway (Relocation)	0.573	1964	Montgomery State Highway (Legislature)	3.832
1955	Vt 131, Cavendish-Weathersfield (Legislature)	15.197	1964	Vt 100, Wilmington-Dover (Petition)	9.489
1955	Coventry-Newport (Legislature)	5.098	1964	Vt 8, Readsboro-Searsburg (Petition)	5.210
1955	Plainfield-North Montpelier (Legislature)	2.069		All Interstate Highway as completed. See listing opposite Map 4 for mileages and opening dates through 1965.	
1955	Montpelier-Morrisville (Legislature)	21.796		* * *	
1955	Vt 116, Middlebury-Bristol (Petition)	12.085		The foregoing historic mileages do not reflect the constant changes occurring on the State Highways, and so may differ from current certified mileages.	
1955	Vt 116-A, St. George-Williston (Petition)	5.704		* * *	

## SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE EVOLUTION OF INTERSTATE HIGHWAYS

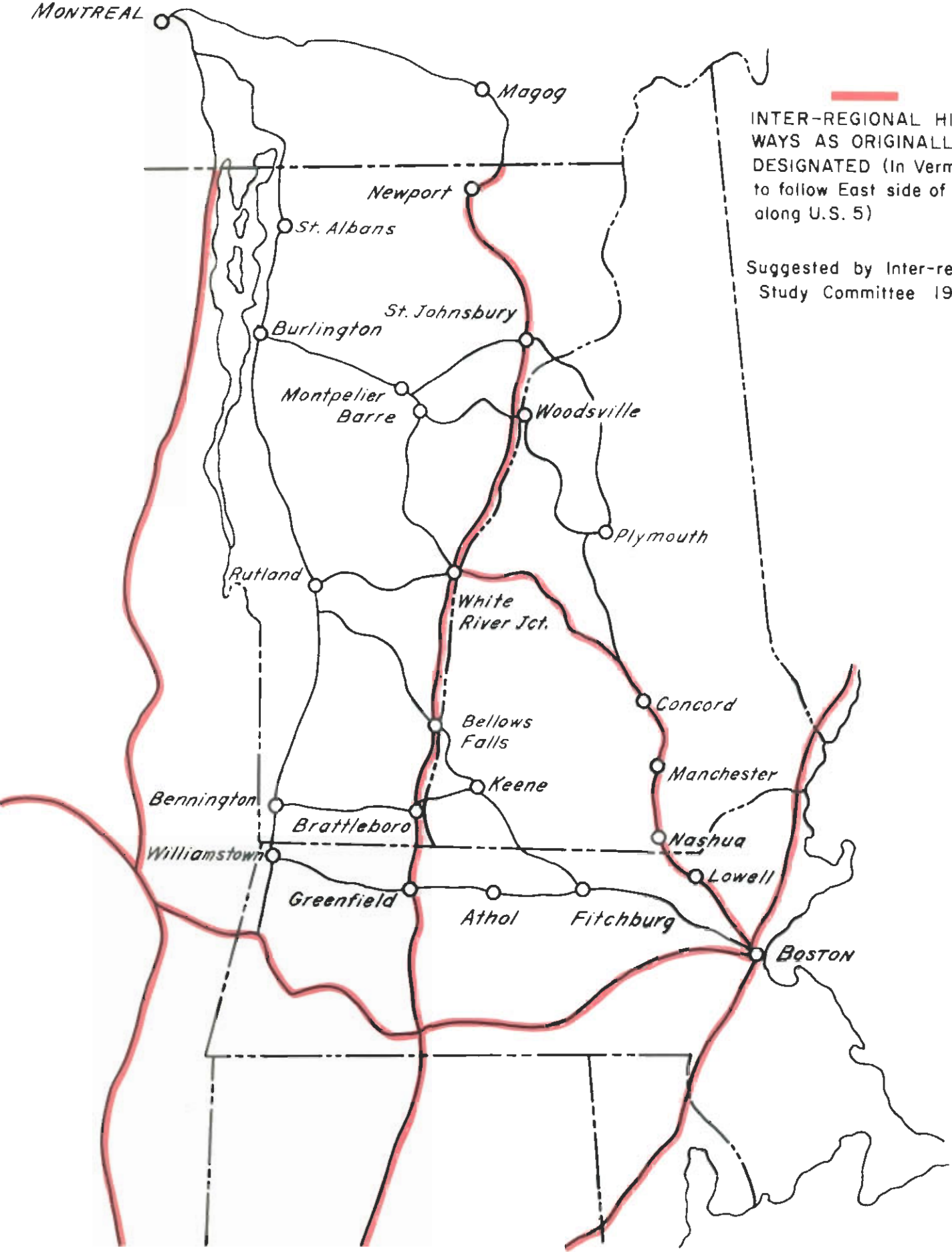
- 1922 "Pershing Map." General Pershing approves map of U.S. highways of military importance; Federal-aid System being set up and includes these in the Federal-aid System.
- 1939 Publication of report Toll Roads and Free Roads concludes toll roads are not feasible; proposes free interregional 26,700 mile system.
- 1941 Public Roads Administration recommends two programs in report Highways for the National Defense. One, the more important, provides reservation, access, and tactical roads for military and naval installations; the other, a 74,600 mile strategic network, includes routes in Toll Roads and Free Roads. This map, approved by Secretary of War with strategic network, brings total mileage to 78,800. Interregional highways in Toll Roads and Free Roads regarded of greatest military importance (See Map 1).
- 1944 National Interregional Highway Committee report Interregional Highways recommends 33,900 mile interregional system; Route U.S. 5 designated as interregional north-south Vermont highway (See Map 2). Federal-aid Highway Act of 1944 approved, provides for joint state action to designate a 40,000 mile system connecting at suitable Canadian and Mexican border routes.
- 1945 Vermont designates U.S. Route 7 first choice; Massachusetts denies connection, preferring U.S. 5 (See Map 3). Vermont formulates initial designation of the System of Interstate Highways in Vermont (See Map 4 routes in order of preference, should the entire system not be approved):
- Route 1: U.S. 5 from Vermont State Line to Vermont Route 14, Hartford; Route 14 to U.S. 302; U.S. 302 to U.S. 2; U.S. 2 to Vermont Route 117; Vermont 117 to U.S. 2-A; U.S. 2-A to U.S. 7; U.S. 7 to Canadian Border at Highgate.
- Route 2: U.S. 4 at Hartford to New York-Vermont State Line at Fair Haven.
- Route 3: U.S. 5 at Hartford to Derby Line at Canadian Border. Agreements reached: Interstate Highways of Vermont and Massachusetts to be connected at U.S. 5 at Bernardston-Vernon; New York refuses Interstate System connection between New York and Vermont at Fair Haven; New Hampshire agrees to connect at White River Junction; Vermont designates U.S. 2 and Vermont Route 18, St. Johnsbury and New Hampshire State Line, as second connection with New Hampshire.
- 1946 Highway Board approves present system of Interstate Highways.
- 1947 National System of Interstate Highways approved by Federal Works Administrator published by Public Works Administration includes Routes 1 and 3 (U.S. 2, and Vermont 18 from St. Johnsbury to New Hampshire State Line).
- 1949 Virtual identity of National System and "Most Important Military Highways": Secretary of Defense states National System of Interstate Highways essential to national defense.
- 1956 President signs Highway Act of 1956 authorizing 41,000 mile System of Interstate and Defense Highways to be financed on a pay-as-you-go 90-10 ratio by the Highway Trust Fund.



MONTREAL

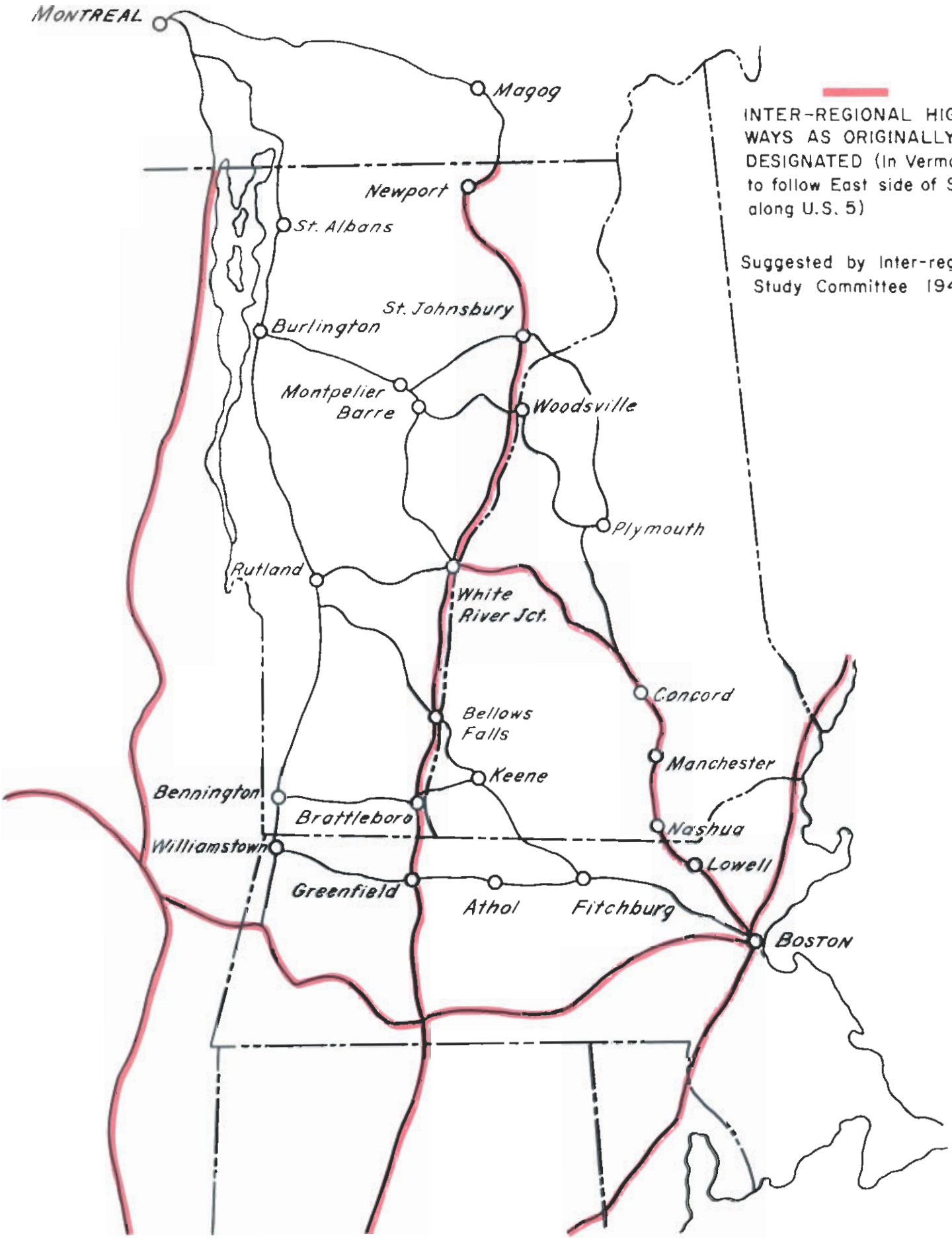
 INTER-REGIONAL HIGHWAYS AS ORIGINALLY DESIGNATED (In Vermont, to follow East side of State along U.S. 5)

Suggested by Inter-regional Study Committee 1944





MONTREAL



**INTER-REGIONAL HIGHWAYS AS ORIGINALLY DESIGNATED** (In Vermont, to follow East side of State along U.S. 5)

Suggested by Inter-regional Study Committee 1944

Magog

Newport

St. Albans

St. Johnsbury

Burlington

Montpelier  
Barre

Woodsville

Plymouth

Rutland

White  
River Jct.

Bellows  
Falls

Concord

Manchester

Bennington

Keene

Brattleboro

Nashua

Williamstown

Lowell

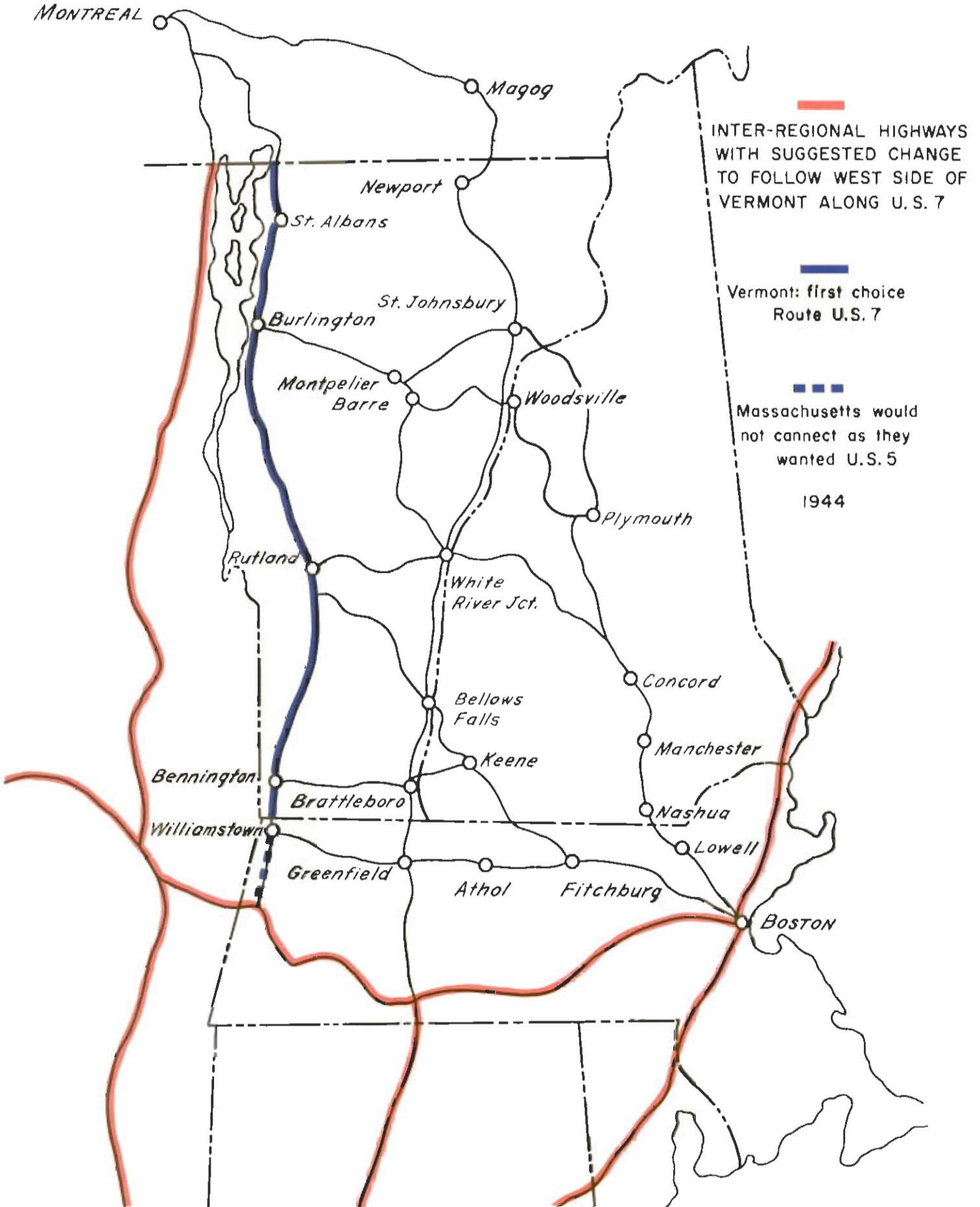
Greenfield

Athol

Fitchburg

BOSTON

MONTREAL



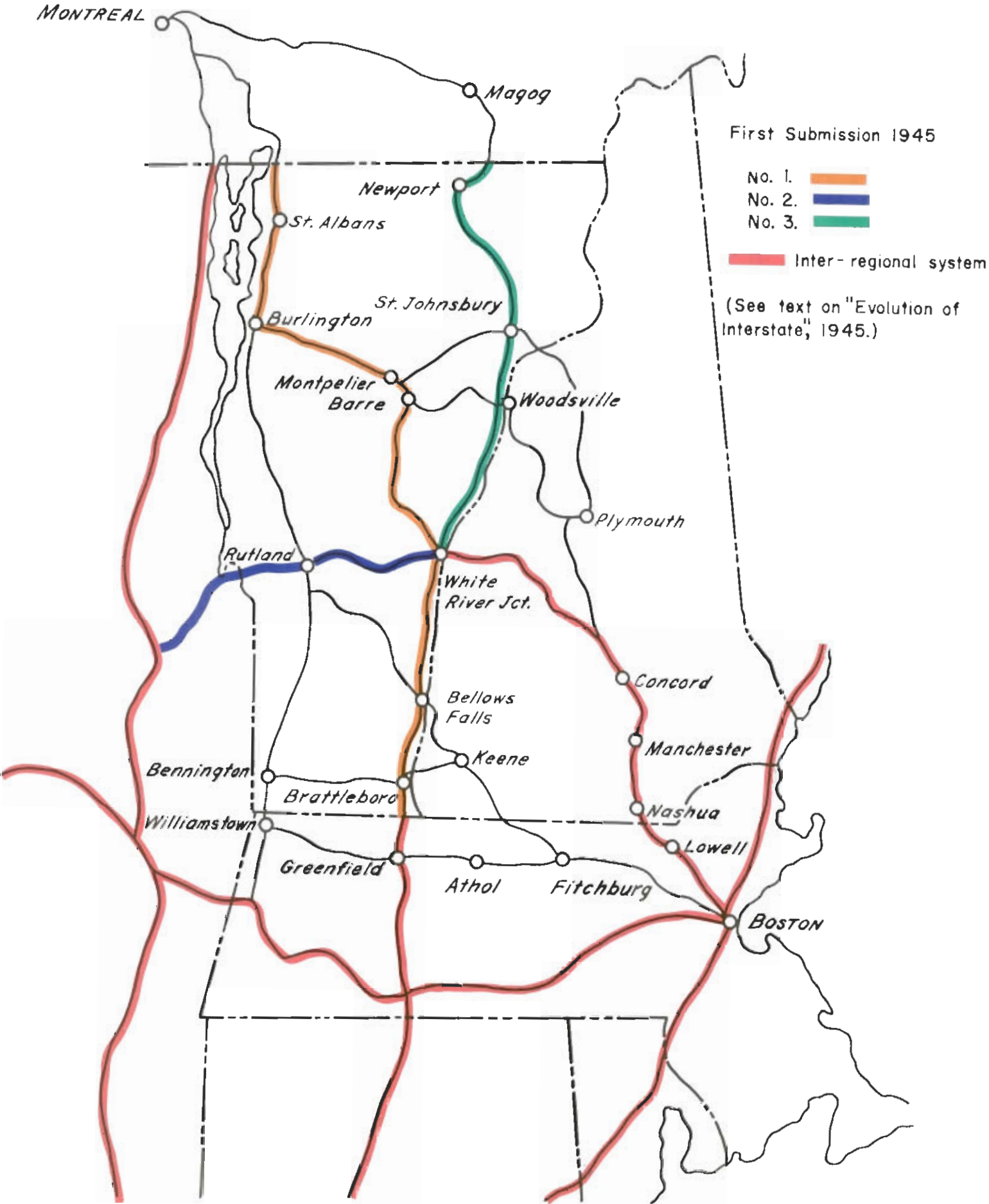
INTER-REGIONAL HIGHWAYS WITH SUGGESTED CHANGE TO FOLLOW WEST SIDE OF VERMONT ALONG U.S. 7

Vermont: first choice Route U.S. 7

Massachusetts would not connect as they wanted U.S. 5

1944

MONTREAL



First Submission 1945

- No. 1. █
- No. 2. █
- No. 3. █

█ Inter-regional system

(See text on "Evolution of Interstate," 1945.)

# STATE HIGHWAY STATISTICS

## Miles in State Highway System

### Calendar 1964

High Type . . . . .	.693	miles
Medium Type . . . . .	.670	"
Low Type . . . . .	.717	"
Gravel . . . . .	57	"
Interstate Authorized . . . . .	.321	"
Interstate Completed . . . . .	73	"
Investment in Highways . . . . .	\$738,939,000	
Investment in Buildings and Equipment . . . . .	\$ 4,969,417	
Income for 1964 Calendar Year Including Federal-Aid (Est.) . . . . .	\$ 45,583,340	
Motor Vehicles Registered . . . . .	8,262,656	
Total for Construction Program . . . . .	\$ 28,656,120	
Total for Maintenance Operations . . . . .	\$ 6,686,113	

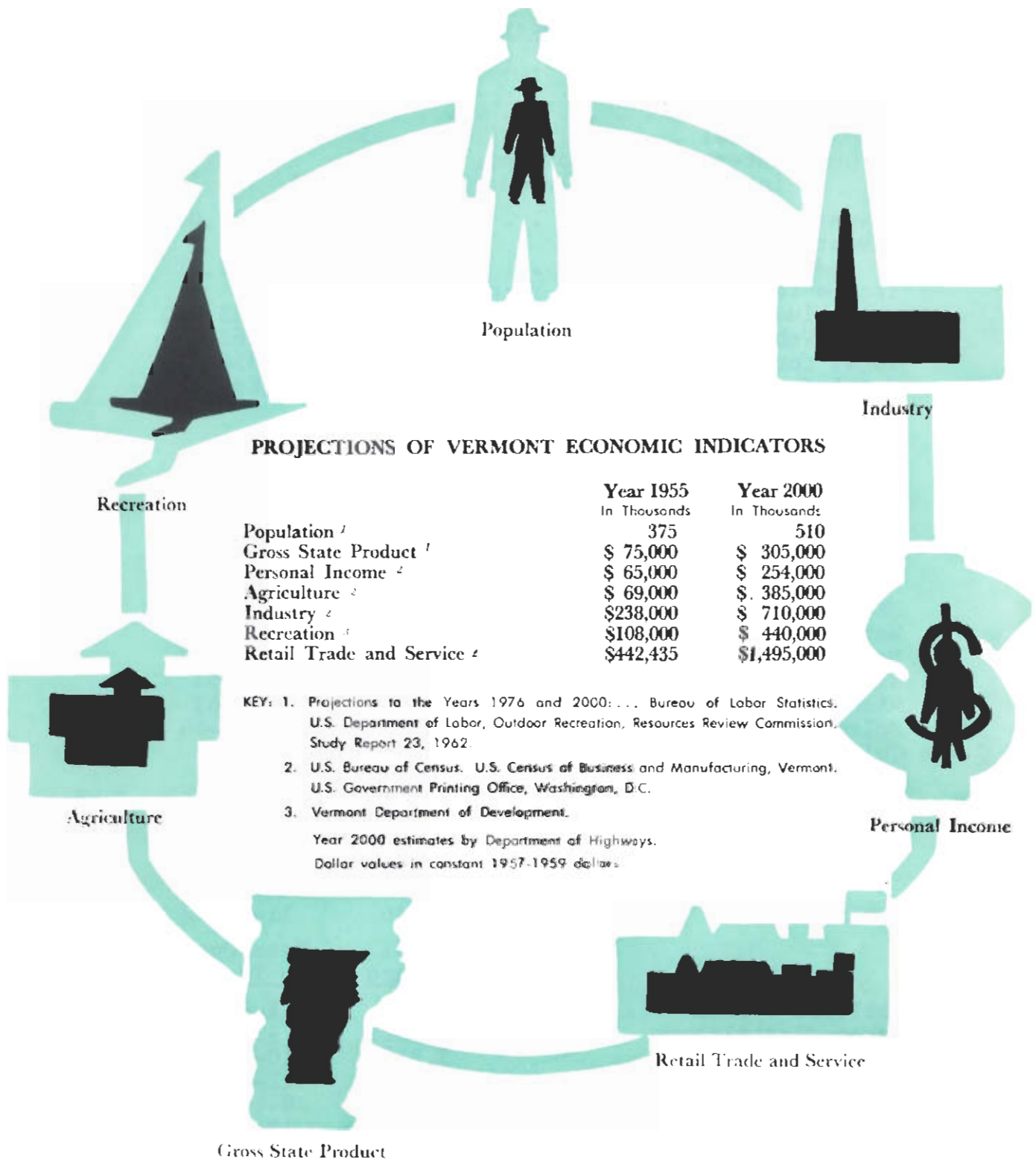
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## Tabulation for Interstate Openings & Mileages

### Through 1965

<u>Section</u>	<u>I 89 Mileage</u>	<u>Date Open to Traffic</u>
Montpelier-Middlesex	6.287	11-21-60
Middlesex-Waterbury	5.106	12-31-60
Waterbury-Bolton	7.049	11-20-61
South Burlington-Winooski	3.388	11-29-62
Winooski-Colchester	1.184	11-1-63
Richmond-South Burlington	8.723	11-6-63
Bolton-Richmond	6.745	10-30-64
Colchester	6.486	11-64
Swanton-Highgate	5.538	1965
Total Mileage	50.506	
	<u>I 189 Mileage</u>	<u>Date Open to Traffic</u>
Burlington	1.436	11-29-62
	<u>I 91 Mileage</u>	<u>Date Open to Traffic</u>
Guilford-Vernon	5.879	11-1-58
Vernon-Brattleboro	1.942	7-31-59
Brattleboro	3.918	10-5-60
Brattleboro-Putney	11.055	12-6-61
Putney-Westminster	2.973	8-10-62
Derby	2.812	11-20-62
Derby	2.106	8-21-63
Westminster-Rockingham	9.437	11-7-63
Rockingham-Ascutney	16.319	1965
Total Mileage	56.441	
GRAND TOTAL Mileage	108.383	

# A Pictorial of Vermont Economy Paced by Highway Progress



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