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DETROIT EXPRESSWAYS

MICHIGAN
STATE HIGHWAY
DEPARTMENT
Charles M. Ziegler,
Commissioner

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Michigan. State Highway
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The Edsel Ford and John C.
Lodge expressways, Detroit.
(1954)

John M. McLaughlin

THE
EDSEL FORD
AND
JOHN C. LODGE
EXPRESSWAYS

DETROIT

Cooperative projects to serve the people
of Detroit and Michigan, being constructed as trunkline
projects by the Michigan State Highway Department.

PARTICIPATING AGENCIES

MICHIGAN STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT
U.S. BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS
CITY OF DETROIT
BOARD OF WAYNE COUNTY ROAD COMMISSIONERS

SEPTEMBER 1954

DETROIT EXPRESSWAYS RESULT OF COOPERATION

No greater public program was ever undertaken in Michigan on a cooperative basis between units of government than the John C. Lodge and Edsel Ford expressway system now under construction in Detroit.

The locations of these State trunkline expressways and the need for them were determined by traffic origin and destination surveys previously conducted by joint action of the State, County, and City.

The Federal Aid Law of 1944 for the first time earmarked Federal funds for assisting in highway construction within cities.

On September 19, 1944, a tri-party agreement between the Michigan State Highway Department, the City of Detroit, and the Wayne County Road Commission was reached to construct these two expressways. The agreement set forth the amount of financial participation each agency was to assume.

According to the agreement, when Federal funds can be used to the extent of 50 per cent, the State Highway Department pays 25 per cent of construction costs and the City of Detroit and Wayne County Road Commission each 12.5 per cent; otherwise, the participation is 50 per cent State, 25 per cent City, and 25 per cent County.

The first Federal money was secured for the Edsel Ford project on October 23, 1945. This money was used to acquire right of way. General plans for detailed design and construction and plan of procedure were approved by the cooperating agencies after many meetings, and construction of the expressways started in 1947. Funds from the first Federal-Aid allocation to Michigan for the post war highway program were channeled to this project.

Since the cost per mile of these two expressways was high due to the fact that they were being built in a highly congested urban area, it soon became evident that construction on a pay-as-you-go basis was a slow and tedious process and it would be many years before any benefit could be realized on the complete length of the routes. Accordingly, it seemed desirable and urgent to find a financing plan that would allow the completion and use of these two expressways in a shorter period of time.

In 1950 it was decided that it would be feasible and practical to sell revenue bonds to finance these projects, pledging portions of revenue by each of the three agencies from the gasoline and weight taxes to retire them. In this way construction could be speeded up so that the facilities so badly needed would be in use several years sooner.

A supplemental tri-party agreement was entered into in 1951 by the State Highway Department, the Wayne County Road Commission, and the City of Detroit. This agreement provided for the issuance of 80 million dollars of twenty-five year bonds for the acceleration of the construction of these two expressways. The bonds are being retired by annual contributions from each of the three parties in the amount of 2½ million dollars annually by the State Highway Department, and 1¼ million dollars each from the county and city. The bonds were sold at an average interest rate of two and one-eighth per cent.

With this bond money, construction of these expressways is proceeding at a greatly accelerated rate. It is felt that the 23 miles of expressways in the two systems can be completed by 1957.

The estimated cost of the Lodge Expressway is 75 million dollars. It is 74 per cent complete to date at a total expenditure of 55 million dollars. The estimated cost of the Ford Expressway is 120 million dollars. It is 53 per cent complete to date at a total expenditure of 63 million dollars. This makes a total expenditure of 118 million dollars to date not including over one million dollars which has been expended for engineering costs. All planning and most of the engineering has been done by the combined staffs of the participating agencies.

Both expressways are depressed and are designed to carry all types of traffic, including rapid-transit busses. They consist of a minimum of three 12-ft. traffic lanes in each direction, a 14-ft. median strip, two 8-ft. refuge lanes, and two 30-ft. surface service drives where necessary. All cross traffic is carried on overhead bridges and there will not be a single traffic signal light or cross-street at grade on either expressway. The designed traffic capacity of each expressway is 9,000 vehicles per hour. Easy ingress and egress to and from the expressways are being provided by interchange ramps at intervals of approximately one-quarter mile.

The Wayne County Road Commission is handling surveys, plans, right-of-way acquisition and construction as agent of the State Highway Department on the John C. Lodge expressway. The Edsel Ford expressway is under the direct supervision of the Michigan State Highway Department. An engineering committee with representatives of each participating agency was set up to study and recommend in regard to all problems.

Because of the design of the expressways, the many public and private utilities located within the construction limits of the expressways had to be relocated or provisions made to carry them through the structures. All large water mains are carried through tunnels under the expressways.

There will be 36 structures on the Lodge; 24 are either completed

or are under construction. There will be 70 structures on the Ford; 39 are either completed or are under construction. There will be 45 pedestrian over-passes; 16 are either completed or are under construction.

The interchange of the two expressways, when completed, will provide for unrestricted traffic flow in any direction. In this interchange area there are 14 structures.

The Lodge Expressway extends from Jefferson Avenue to James Couzens Highway, a distance of 9 miles. It is opened to traffic from Pallister Street to Michigan Avenue, a distance of 2.91 miles. This section may be entered going south at Pallister, Milwaukee, and Forest. South bound traffic may leave the expressway at Forest, Grand River, and Vernor. North bound traffic may enter the expressway at Vernor, Grand River, and Forest and may leave the expressway at Forest, Milwaukee, and Fallister.

The Ford Expressway extends from the west city limits near Michigan Avenue at the easterly end of the Detroit Industrial Expressway to the east city limits near Harper Avenue, a distance of 14 miles. It is opened to traffic in both directions from Wyoming Avenue to Grand River Avenue for a total distance of 3.75 miles. This section may be entered going east at Wyoming, Wier, Lonyo, Cecil, and Livernois. East bound traffic may leave the expressway at Michigan Avenue, Livernois, 30th, and Grand River. West bound traffic may enter the expressway at Linwood, 30th, or at Livernois and may leave the expressway at Livernois, Cecil, Lonyo, Addison, and Michigan Avenue.

The Edsel Ford and John C. Lodge expressways will relieve greatly the present serious traffic congestion problem in the metropolitan area. They will serve a great volume of traffic between points within the city, and between the downtown section and suburban and outstate areas, reducing travel time and eliminating inconvenience and discomfort that go with driving on heavily congested streets.

Because of the limited access features and elimination of cross traffic, it will be possible to drive safely on the expressways at speeds much greater than is possible on main traffic thoroughfares in Detroit today. No traffic lights or signals will be used on the expressways and they will be illuminated at night.

The expressways will add to the beauty of the city, will speed workers from homes to factories and return, and shoppers to and from the downtown area over the safest type of highway designed today.



TOP—Dedication ceremonies of Michigan Avenue grade separation over the Detroit Industrial Expressway in Dearborn, August 17, 1949. Left to right: Mayor Orville E. Hubbard, Dearborn; Charles M. Ziegler, State Highway Commissioner; and Benson Ford.

CENTER—Mrs. Edsel Ford cutting ribbon to open to traffic the first section of the Edsel Ford Expressway, extending from Wyoming Avenue to Livernois Street, on July 9, 1951. Left to right: President Detroit Common Council Louis C. Miriani; Mayor Albert E. Cobo; Benson Ford; Mrs. Edsel Ford; Commissioner of Police Donald S. Leonard; William Clay Ford; and Mrs. Buhl Ford.

BOTTOM—Commissioner Ziegler cuts ribbon to open section of John C. Lodge Expressway from Grand River Avenue to Pallister Avenue on January 14, 1953. Left to right: H. E. Hilts, Deputy Commissioner, Federal Bureau of Public Roads; Commissioner Ziegler; Louis C. Miriani, Acting Mayor; and James P. O'Hara, Wayne County Road Commissioner.



The Edsel Ford Expressway easterly from Livernois Avenue. This portion of the Expressway is paved to the Interchange and open to traffic to Grand River Avenue. Kelsey-Hayes plant and Department of Parks and Recreation public playground in lower left.



Interchange of the Edsel Ford and John C. Lodge expressways. Looking southwesterly, the Ford Expressway is in the upper right and the Lodge Expressway in the upper left of the picture. When completed, there will be 14 structures making up the interchange which will provide unrestricted traffic flow in any direction.



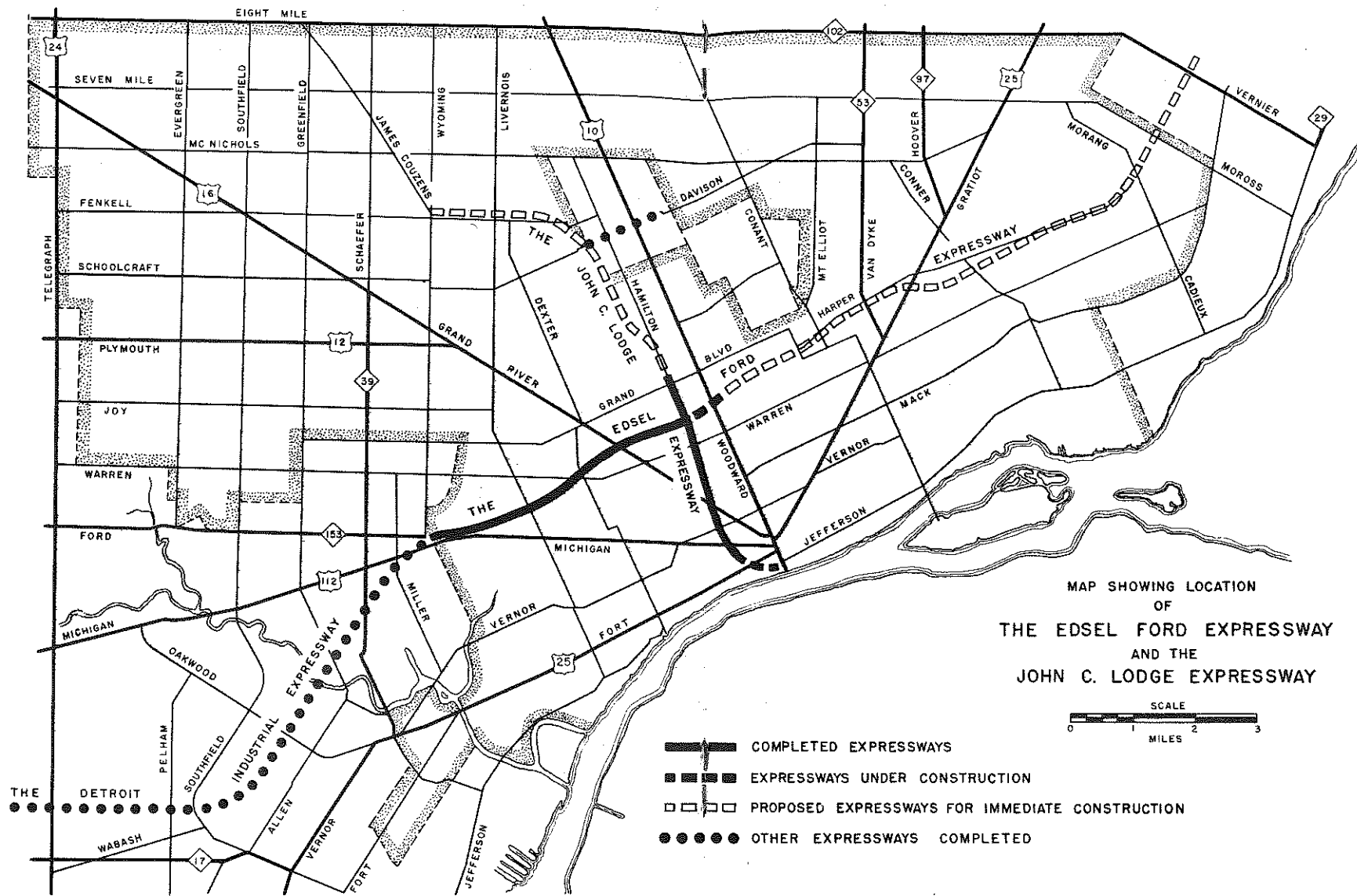
The Edsel Ford Expressway, easterly from the Ford-Lodge Interchange, showing projects now under construction. University of Detroit athletic field in foreground.



The Edsel Ford Expressway, westerly from the Ford-Lodge Interchange. This portion of the Expressway is nearing completion. The New York Central and Grand Trunk Western railroads can be seen running diagonally across the picture. D.S.R. bus terminal in center.



The John C. Lodge Expressway, northerly from the Ford-Lodge Interchange, showing the completed section and the portion under contract. The Fisher and General Motors buildings will be noted in the right center of the picture.

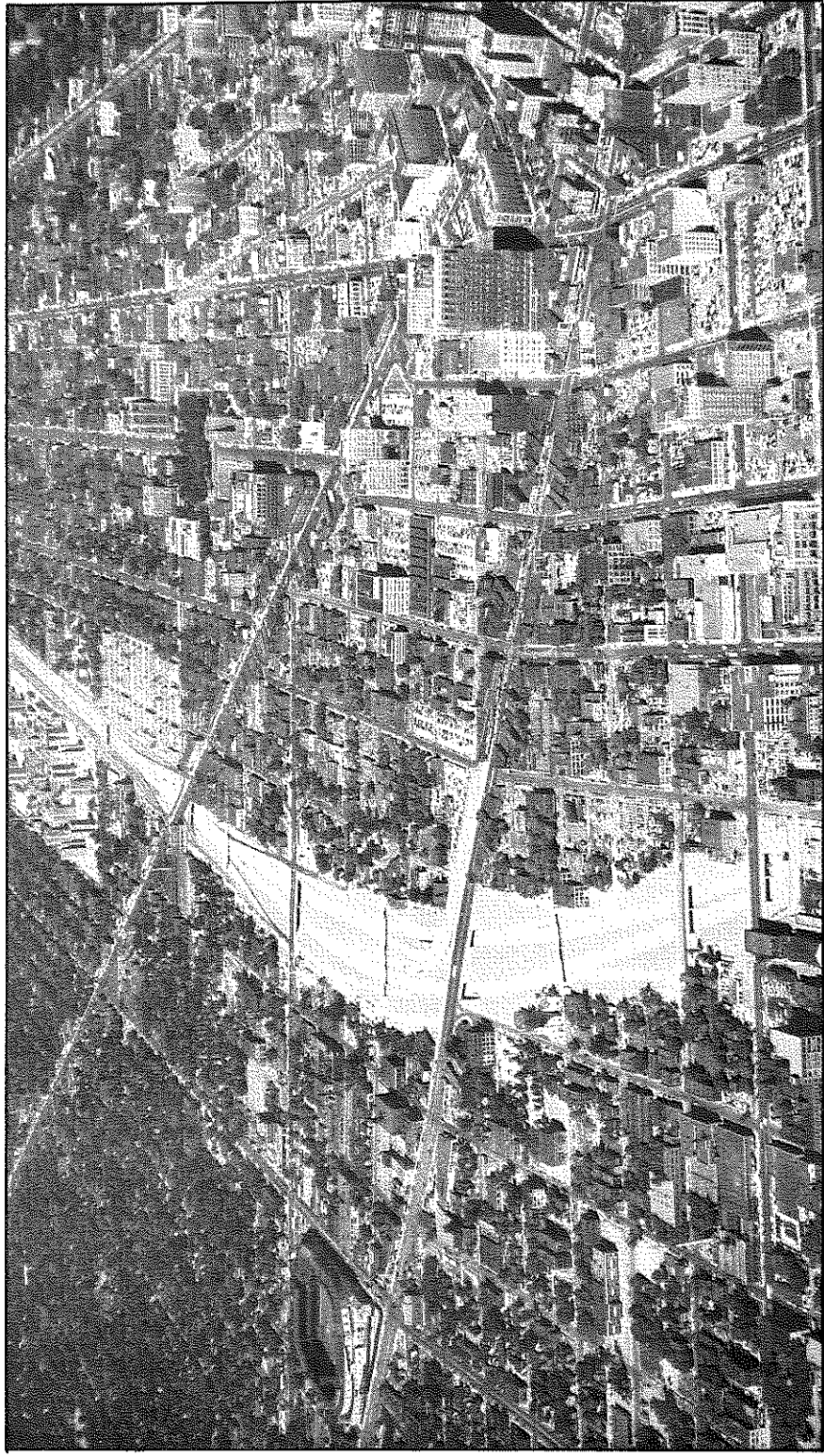




The John C. Lodge Expressway, southerly from the Ford-Lodge Interchange, showing the completed portion near downtown Detroit. The Detroit River and Windsor, Ontario, in the background.



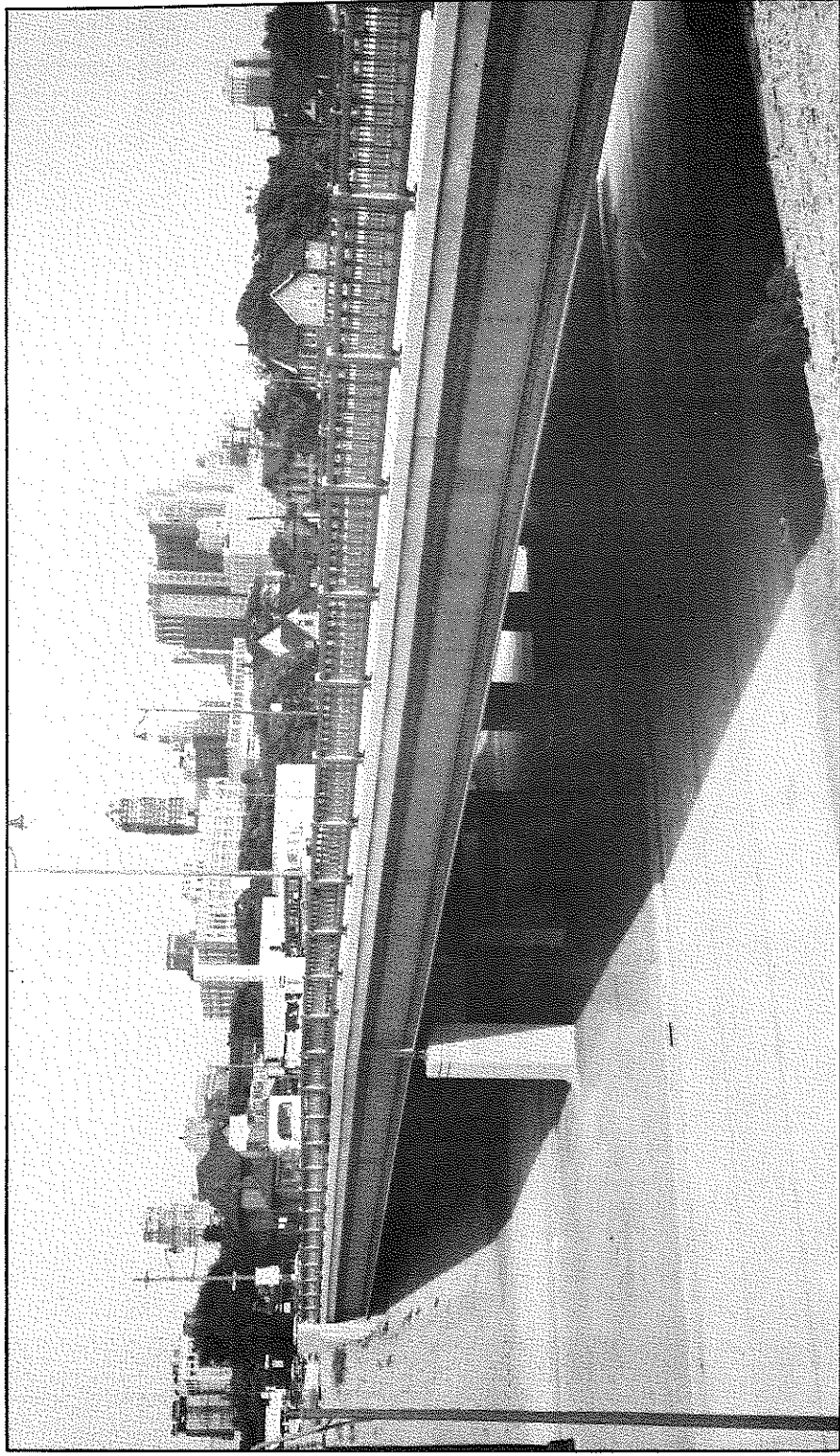
The Edsel Ford Expressway at the west limits of the City of Detroit showing connection to the Detroit Industrial Expressway and the Michigan Avenue interchange in Dearborn. DeSoto plant at left.



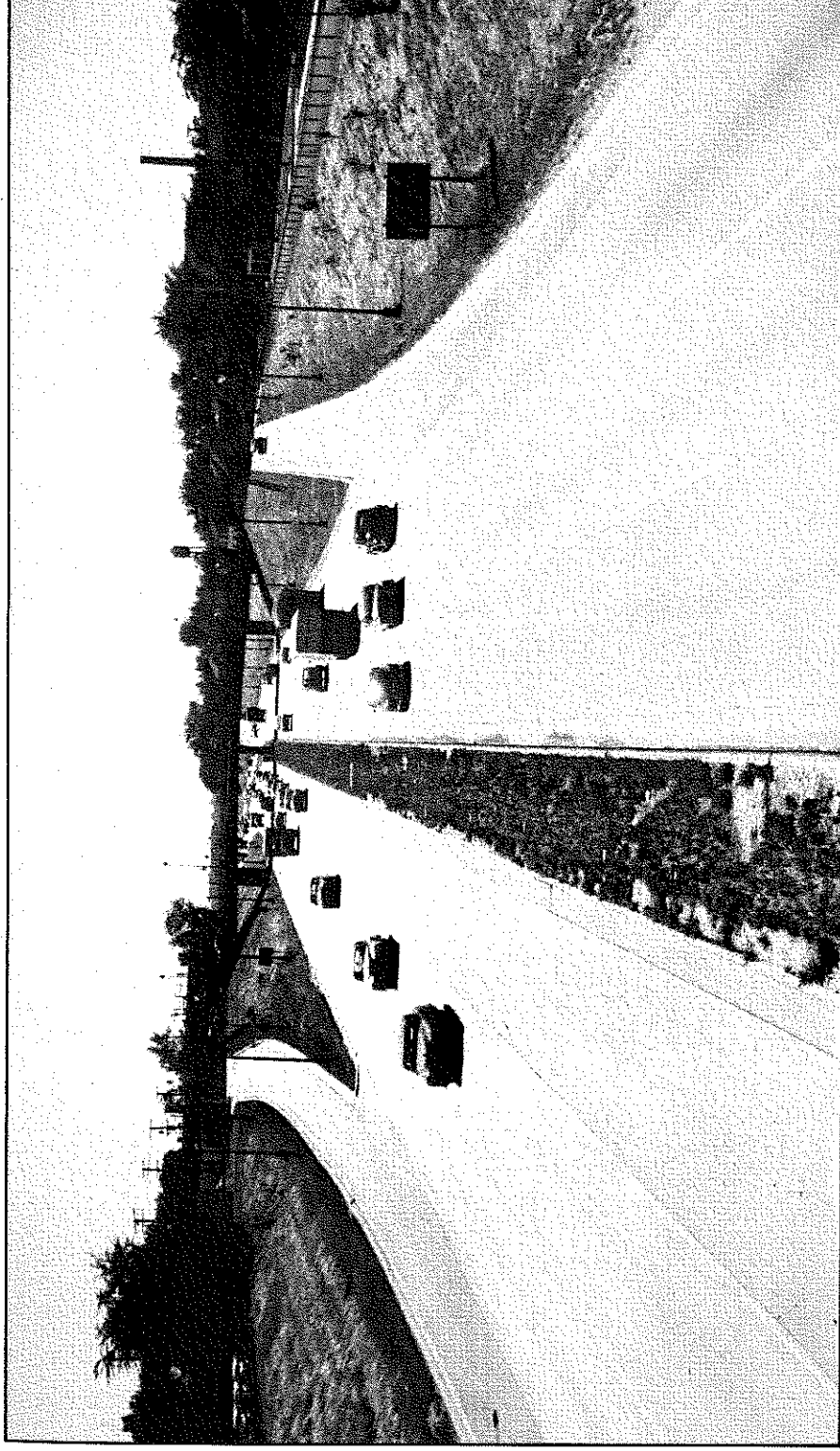
The John C. Lodge Expressway northerly from the Union Depot in downtown Detroit. This portion is completed from Lafayette Blvd. north. Briggs Stadium may be seen in left portion of picture and two large housing developments at top on either side of the Expressway.



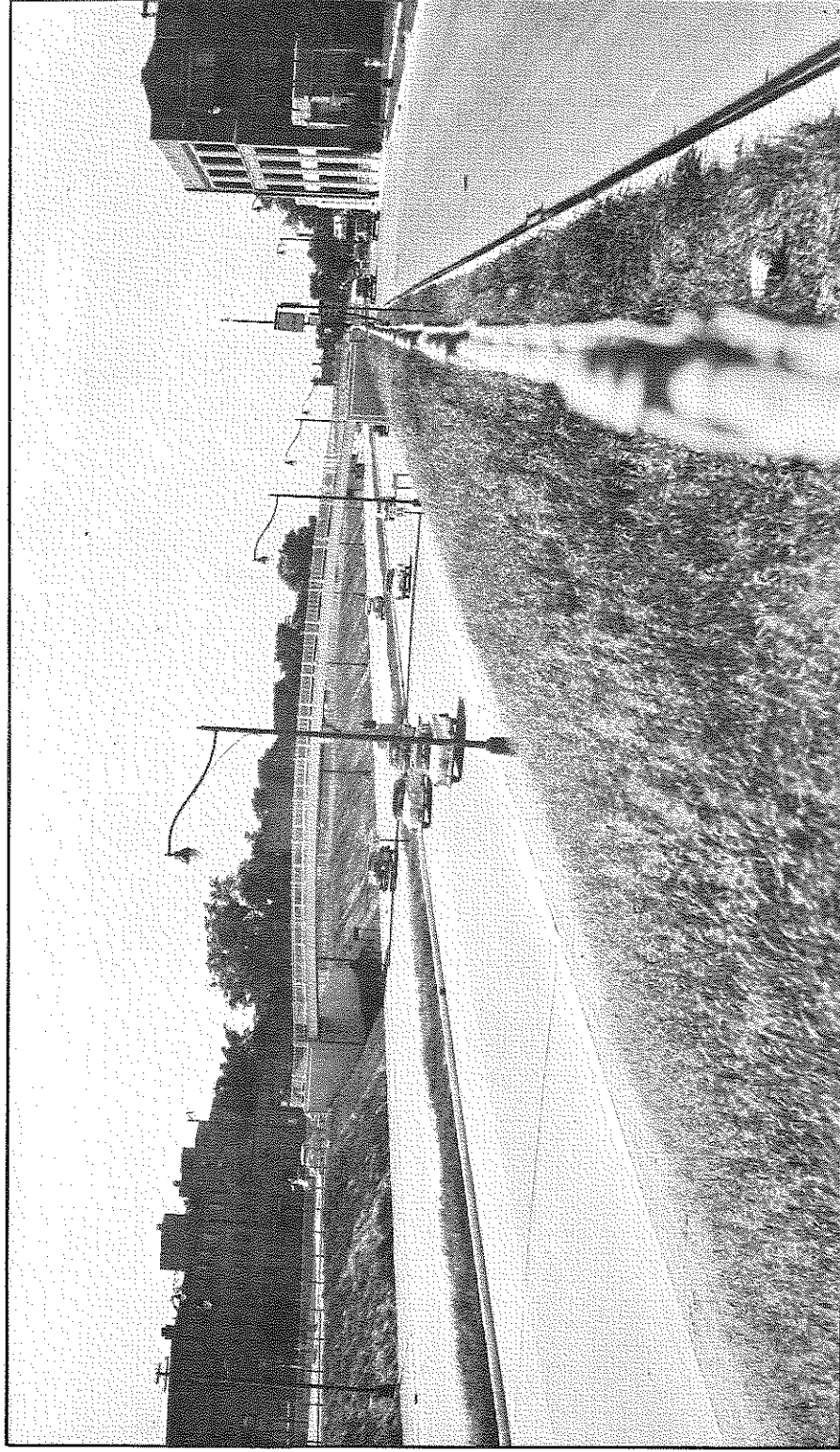
A close-up of a portion of the northwest section of the Ford-Lodge Interchange showing the ramp and structures which provide for eastbound traffic from the Ford Expressway to go north on the Lodge Expressway.



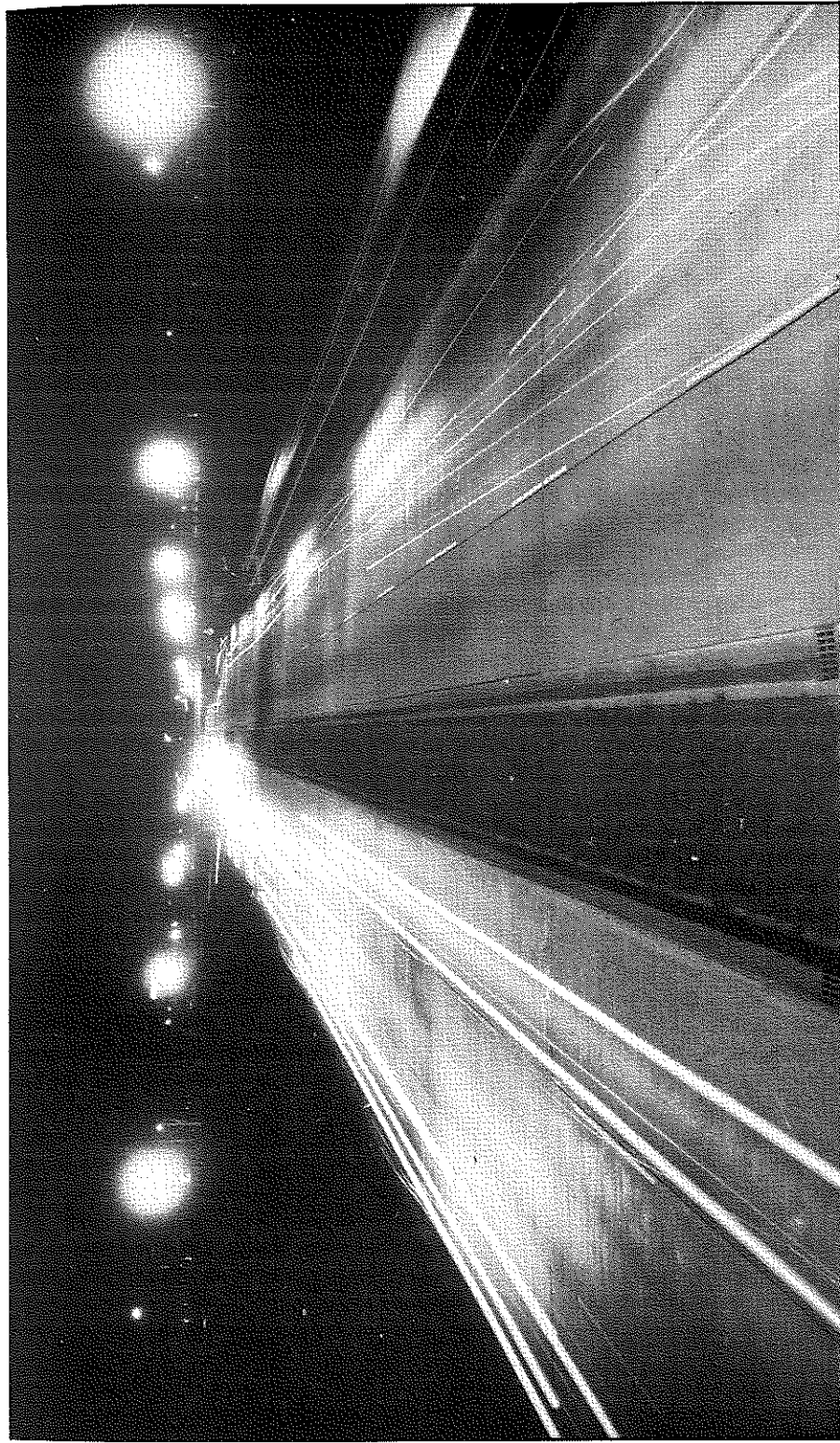
Vernor Highway over the John C. Lodge Expressway looking southeast at Detroit's downtown skyline. This vehicular structure is a typical design of 90 such bridges carrying city streets over the two expressways.



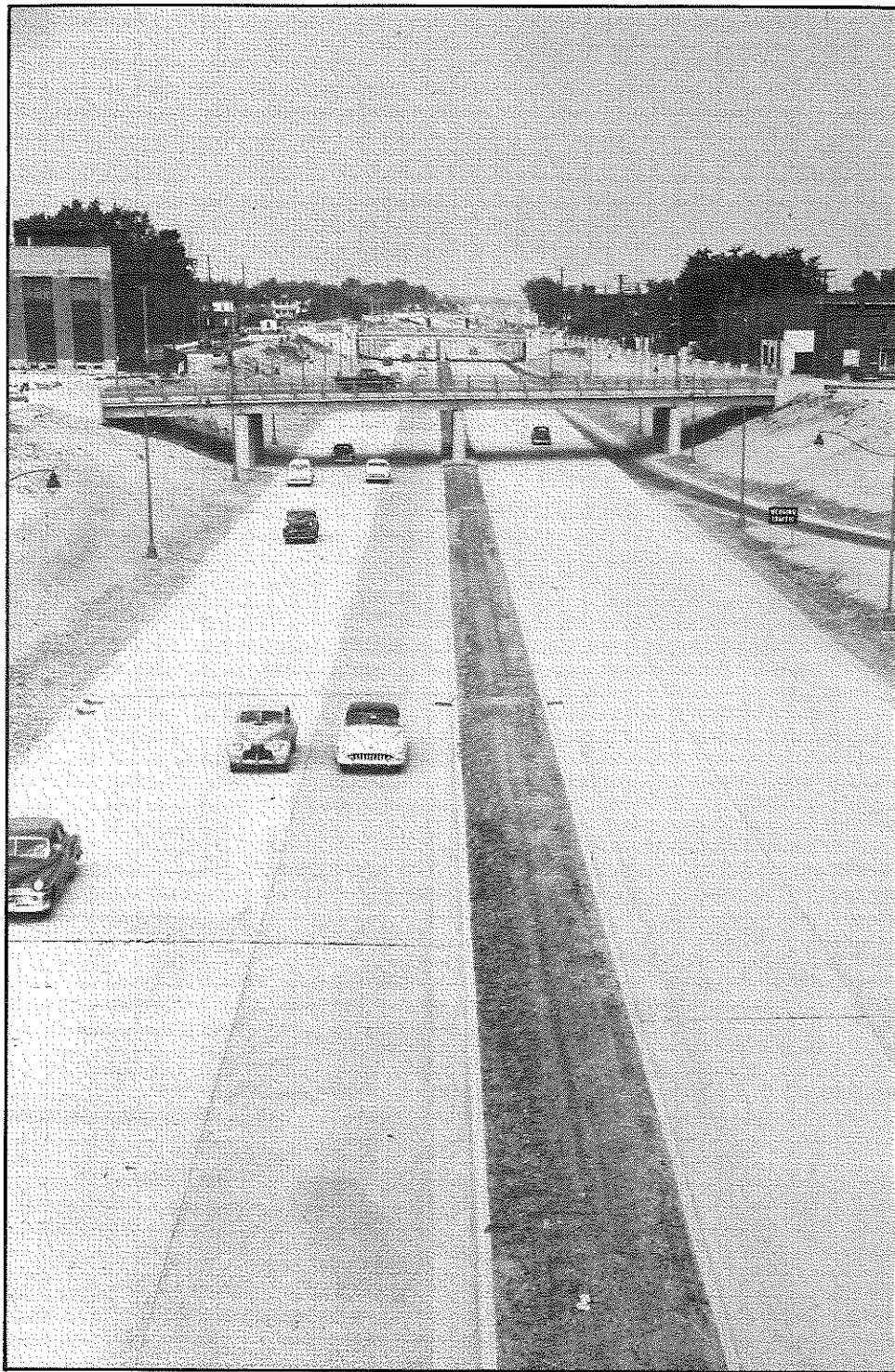
The Edsel Ford Expressway looking westerly from the Lumley Avenue pedestrian overpass showing entrance and exit ramps and grade separation at Lonyo Avenue.



A completed portion of the John C. Lodge Expressway showing service roads, lighting, fencing, and the pedestrian overpass at Selden Avenue, one of 45 such structures on the two expressways.



Night scene on the Edsel Ford Expressway looking east from the Martin Avenue grade separation showing efficient street lighting and the night traffic pattern. Livemore grade separation in the distance.



Beginning of the Edsel Ford Expressway looking east from Wyoming Avenue grade separation. Grade separations shown are Wier, Addison, and Trenton.