2 North Artery Spans to End Somerville Jams
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2 North Artery Spans to End Somerville Jams

By WILLIAM J. LEWIS

Plans to eliminate two traffic bottlenecks on McGrath Highway, Somerville, were announced last night by the Metropolitan District Commission.

A six-lane railroad bridge will replace the obsolete Squires bridge. An overpass, a mile and one-half long, will be built over Washington st. and Somerville av. to clear up another traffic block.

PROJECT

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PROJECT

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Cost of these combined projects, including land taking, is estimated at $4,500,000, according to M. D. C. Chairman Charles W. Greenough. Work will begin soon after Jan. 1 and is scheduled for completion in two years.

"These projects will relieve traffic congestion affecting 50,000 motorists who use the Northern Artery every day," Greenough said. He pointed out that a new business and industrial area will be made available on the Artery (the McGrath Highway) with the re-development of the so-called Brickbottom area at Squires Bridge.

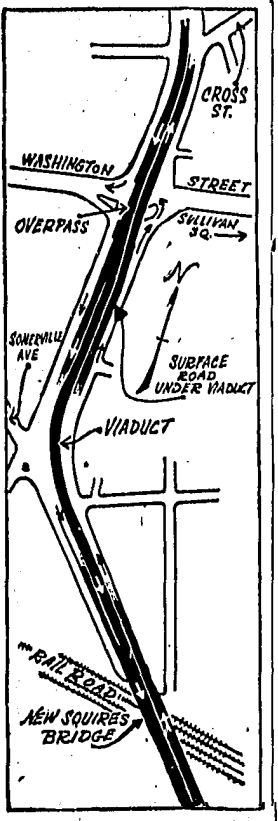
The latter is a joint municipal-Federal project.

"Overpassing Washington st. will add 50 percent to the traffic-bearing capacity of the highway, will permit a constant flow of cars over Washington st. and will greatly reduce accidents on both these heavily-loaded thoroughfares," Greenough said.

To Leap-Frog Local Traffic

"The southbound overpass into Boston will leap-frog local traffic in Somerville 2300 feet from Cross st., all the way to the new bridge. Northbound, toward Medford, the overpass will carry traffic 1600 feet from Somerville av., to Cross st.," the Commissioner explained.

A channelized surface intersection will be provided at Washington st., and local businesses will be serviced by access roads to the overpass.



MAP shows Somerville area where six-lane railroad bridge to replace obsolete Squires bridge and mile-and-one-half viaduct over Washington st., and Somerville av. will be constructed to eliminate McGrath Highway bottlenecks.

The southern section of the new bridge will be built before the present bridge is demolished. This new section will then carry traffic in both directions while the old Squires Bridge is torn down and the northern part of the new span is constructed.

Development of the Northern Artery is part of the master highway plan of 1948, and these projects have been integrated with Somerville's industrial redevelopment of the Brickbottom area.

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