

# MOTORS-TRAFFIC-HIGHWAYS

## CLEAR LANE FOR CONGRESS ST. EXPRESSWAY

### Plan to Open First Link This Summer

BY HAL FOUST

Congress st. expressway is beginning to take form. A path has been cut thru the center of Chicago, for the 8 miles from Michigan av. to Austin av., and now there is digging and building.

"We're half way finished altho we still don't have anything to ride on," said Virgil E. Gunlock, commissioner of subways and superhighways. "We've spent 57 million dollars and we now want to get some utility from this investment as quickly as possible.

"The first pavement on the Congress st. expressway to be opened to traffic will be from La Salle to State st. this summer. Thereafter, sections will be opened to service as they are completed. The entire job to the city will be finished in 1955."

#### Engineer Presents Report

A more detailed progress report was obtained from Gunlock's chief engineer, Dick Van Gorp. As prepared by his public relations director, Jake Irmiter, formerly of North Judson, Ind., it reads as follows:

Between Michigan av. and State st., are three large buildings now being arcaded to provide for the widening of Congress st. They are the 434 S. Wabash Building, 20 per cent completed; the Sears-Leiter building, 60 per cent completed; the Congress Bank building, 65 per cent completed.

Three other buildings are also to be arcaded. They are Roosevelt college, the Congress hotel, and the Annes restaurant. Purchase of right-of-way thru them was recently approved by city council action, and during the year contracts are expected to be let for their arcading.

#### Push Paving Work

The substructure work under the La Salle st. railway station train shed has been completed. The highway will pass beneath the station.

Between LaSalle st., and State st., work is being pushed on the first paving contract. This work is about 35 per cent completed.

In the path of the highway near the railroad station stands one section of the Western Union building. This section, seven stories high, must be cut off. Bids on this job are to be opened next Thursday.

Demolition work for the removal of the last few buildings in the traffic plaza area between Wells st., and the river is now under way. This will complete all building removal required east of the river, with the exception of one building, the Old Appraisers Stores building at 158 W. Harrison st.

Being the property of the United States, it required an act of Congress last December for the city to acquire it. The contract for its removal has been let.

#### Complete Structure Job

The substructure for the new \$4,000,000 bridge across the South Branch of the river is completed.

West of the post office the superstructure is rapidly being placed for the elevated section of the highway. The county is doing this work.

Between Desplaines and Halsted sts., the first excavation for the depressed section of the road is completed. Two overpass bridges, at Peoria and Halsted sts., are completed and in service.

The section of the main drain between Desplaines st., and Sacramento blvd., is completed. The pumping station near Desplaines st., is about 70 per cent completed. On May 13, the county took bids on two additional sections of the main drain, one from Homan av., to Sacramento blvd., and one from Pulaski rd., to Homan av.

#### City Opens Bids

Bids were opened by the city on April 24 for the elevated railroad structure across Congress st., between Hermitage av. and Paulina st., and the elevated structure connection from the former Logan Square L to the Lake st. L at Lake and Paulina sts. This structure is to carry the Douglas park elevated traffic to a connection with the Lake st. elevated.

The incline structures which are to transfer the Garfield park elevated trains and the Chicago, Aurora & Elgin trains to grade in Van Buren st., are about 70 per cent completed. The elevated structure between Aberdeen st. and Sacramento blvd. will be razed to clear away the final obstacle in the Congress st. right-of-way.

#### Portal Contract Let

Track reconstruction for the diversion of Garfield park elevated and Chicago, Aurora & Elgin trains to the surface of Van Buren st. is now going forward between Sacramento blvd. and Western av.

The contract for the west side subway portal at Halsted st. is now awaiting council approval.