

any event, we are proposing to acquire rights-of-way for all three facilities.

Selection of the two that are going to be constructed of the three that we are going to acquire rights-of-way on, and actually do the preliminary designs for, will be settled, we hope, immediately prior to the time we sell the bonds. We have established a time table and we hope that we will be able to market bonds for the sale of these structures early in 1968, probably by March of 1968.

Now, the needs for the second Baltimore Harbor tunnel and a new bridge parallel to the existing bay bridge we feel is both immediate and urgent. The traffic using the Harbor Tunnel queues up for miles every weekend during the year in both directions and we have determined we have about 1,200 hours of congestion in that tunnel during a typical year.

I might say, too, that the traffic of the present tunnel is about at a level with the Lincoln Tunnel as it was at its ultimate capacity when it was a four-lane facility; that is, about 191½ million vehicles a year. We feel that if we cannot do something to relieve that tunnel, we will be in very serious difficulty. Naturally traffic will find other paths to travel, but the difficulty is that it will create more congestion through the city.

There is a complication, however, in the construction of that tunnel, that was alluded to here before that I think is worthy of mention.

Now traffic using the existing Chesapeake Bay Bridge is badly congested every weekend between May and October. During the past 5 years we have devised a system to stop traffic in one direction in order to permit a single direction operation over the bridge that varies from once or twice to several times each weekend.

The congestion that is experienced on the present bridge has caused actual stopping delays of from half an hour to an hour and a half while we have one-way operation in effect. During the present summer, the backups have approached nearly 10 miles in length.

The complication I referred to regarding the Baltimore Harbor Tunnel is that although we recognize it will help to relieve congestion in the Baltimore-Washington corridor, we have to consider an alternative construction schedule as between the second harbor tunnel and the northern crossing, because of the proposed timing of the interstate construction through the city.

It is presently estimated that the interstate construction, which in some measure will definitely parallel and compete with the proposed new tunnel, will require something in the order of 8 years to construct.

During that time, the existing tunnel—and we hope the proposed second tunnel—will carry the traffic. But when the interstate is completed, we estimate that from 30 to 40 percent of the traffic will be diverted back to the free facility.

It is, therefore, possible, based on certain studies we are making on the estimated time of completion of the east-west expressway, we may be in a position where we might substitute the non-Chesapeake Bay crossing for the second harbor tunnel if we can find a way of projecting a very rapid acceleration of the construction schedule. We now have studies underway.

We feel that construction of the proposed parallel bay bridge will completely relieve traffic congestion on the present bridge. It is presently utilizing the U.S. 50 and U.S. 301 corridors.