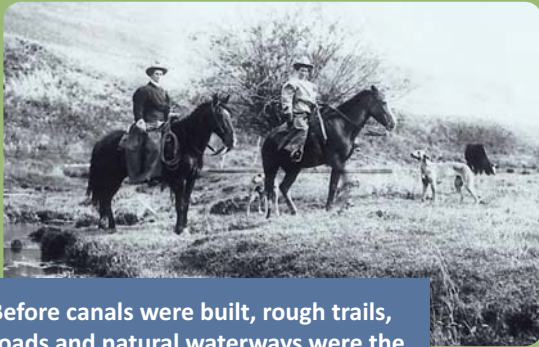


# Our early transportation system



Before canals were built, rough trails, roads and natural waterways were the only ways to travel



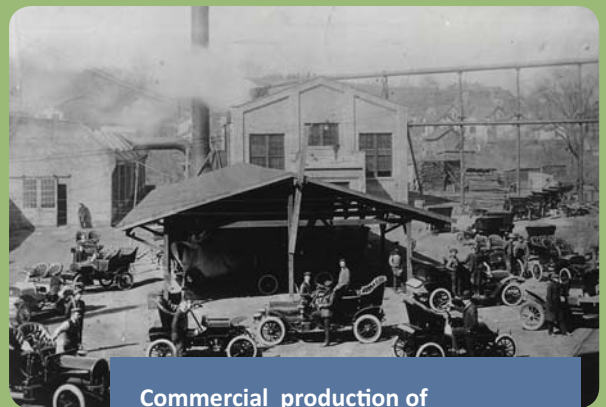
Today's transportation system was influenced by the location of the canals and railways of the past



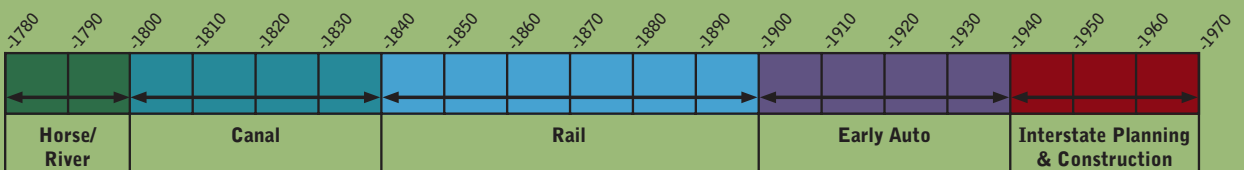
The Erie Canal, completed in 1825, ran through Syracuse and spurred economic development in the region



By the late 1830s, steam powered railroads had come to Syracuse



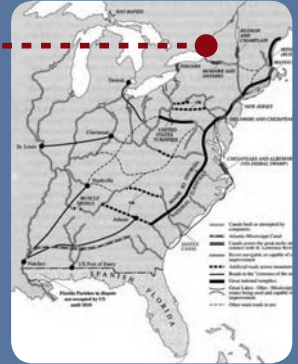
Commercial production of automobiles began in the early 1900s



# Canals

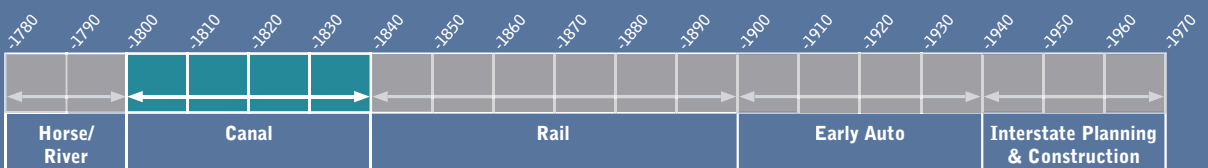
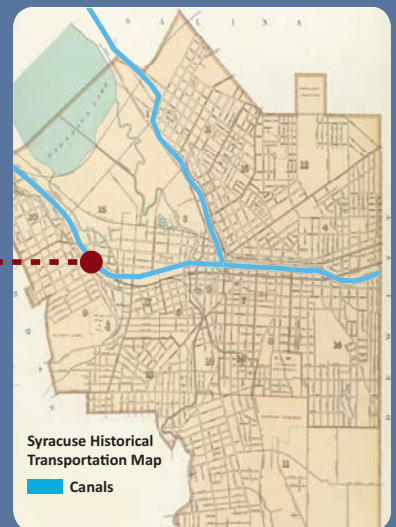
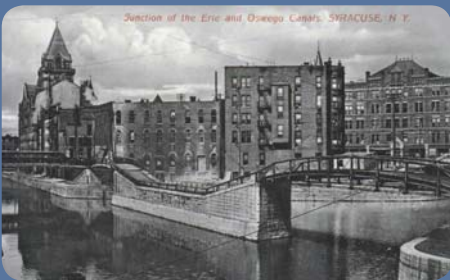
## THE REPORT ON ROADS, CANALS, HARBORS AND RIVERS

- Presented to Congress in 1808 by Secretary of the Treasury Albert Gallatin
- Detailed many transportation infrastructure projects, including a canal across New York State - that would eventually become the Erie Canal



## THE ERIE CANAL

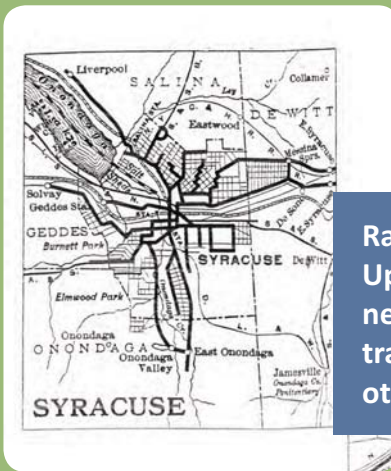
- Created a major economic corridor
- Sparked canal building across the nation
- Established New York as a leader in transportation development



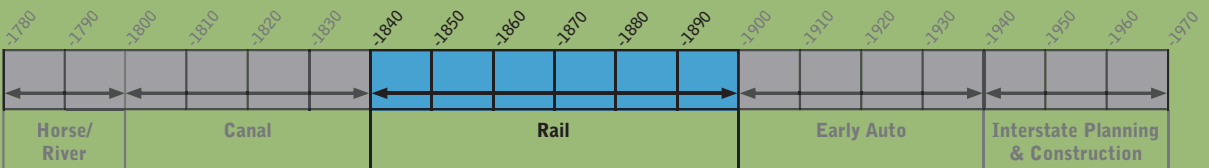
# Railroads and streetcars



Railroads began to operate in the 1830s and soon became the preferred method for shipping.

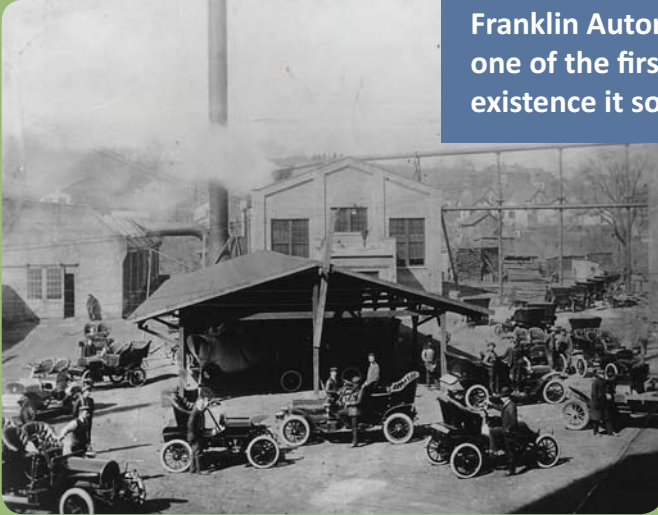


Rail was also important for moving people. Up to 1941, Syracuse operated a dense network of streetcars and interurban trains connecting neighborhoods and other towns with downtown.



# Automobiles

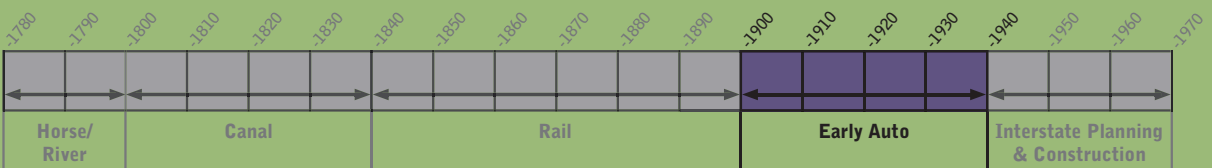
Automobiles entered the scene in the early 1900s. The Franklin Automobile Company, based in Syracuse, was one of the first car manufacturers. In its 30 years of existence it sold about 150,000 vehicles.\*



By the early 1900s, Syracuse streets began to experience congestion associated with the railroads, streetcars and newly introduced automobiles operating on city streets.

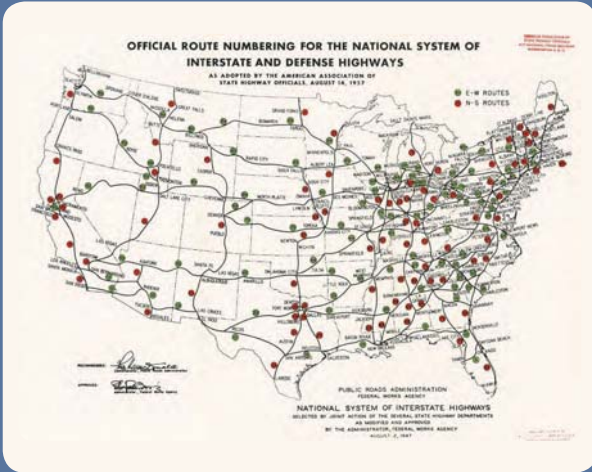


In order to improve road conditions, the Delaware & Lackawana Railroad began operating on an elevated structure and the New York Central Railroad was shifted north and elevated along the alignment of today's I-690.



\* Source: Smithsonian National Museum of American History "America on the Move"

# Interstate highway planning

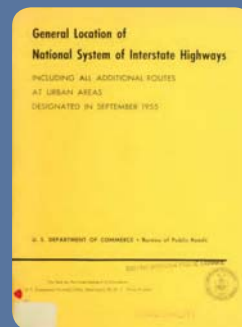


## 1944 FEDERAL HIGHWAY ACT

- Began a new era of highway building
- Provided significant federal funding for new highway construction across the nation

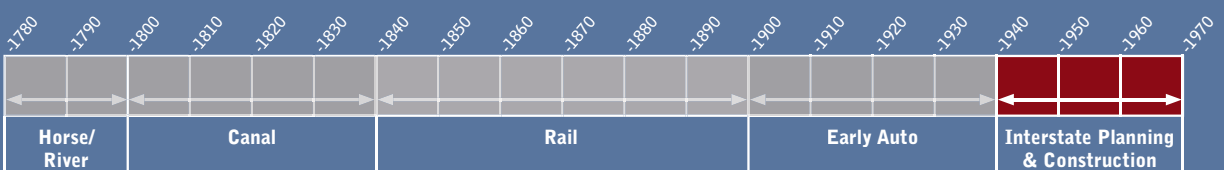
## THE 1955 YELLOW BOOK

- Mapped out what became the interstate highway system
- Located interstate highways through and near major urban centers



## FEDERAL-AID HIGHWAY ACT OF 1956

- Authorized \$25 billion dollars to construct 41,000 miles of the original interstate system
- Provided federal funds for majority of construction costs



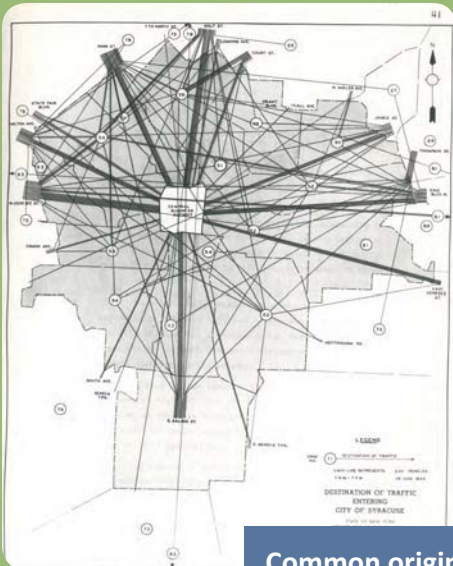
# Highway routing

While the federal government laid out general locations of highways, it was up to state and local officials to determine the exact alignment of the new highways.

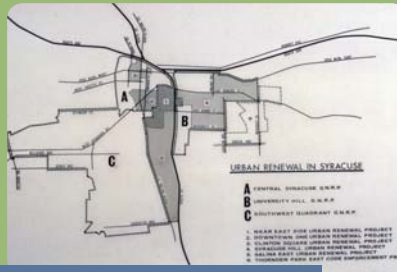
Key factors that influenced the routes of our current highways:



Location of existing transportation rights of way



Common origins and destinations



Location of areas identified for urban renewal

## WHAT IS URBAN RENEWAL?

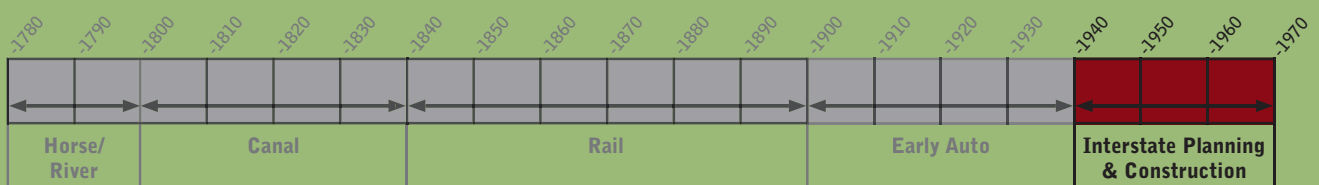
Urban renewal refers to efforts to revitalize what were considered blighted city areas during the 1940s-1970s.

Urban renewal usually included:

- Relocation of businesses
- Demolition of buildings
- Displacement of people



I-81 was aligned along Almond Street. This alignment allowed for an elevated structure and coincided with the location of the Near East Side Urban Renewal Area.

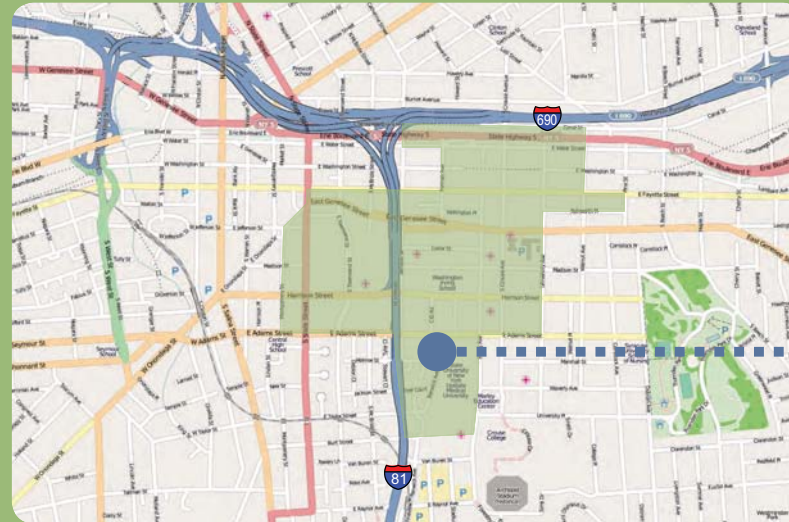


# I-81 and the 15th Ward



Syracuse, like many cities, experienced controversy around the locations of the highways built during this era. In Syracuse, the controversy involved a variety of concerns including environmental protection, historical and neighborhood preservation, race, and class.

I-81 is often cited as the primary force in the loss of the 15th Ward neighborhood. However, it is important to understand that I-81 is only part of the story.



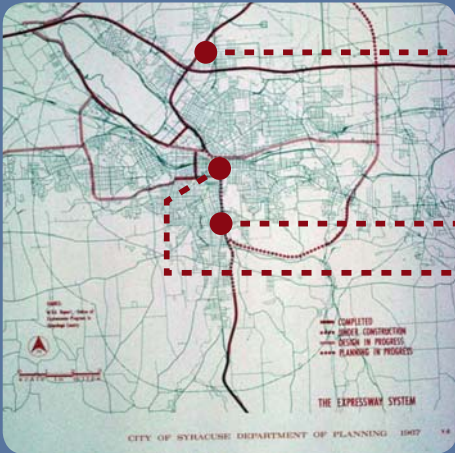
15th Ward



In 1963, Syracuse Mayor William F. Walsh began a major urban renewal effort in the 15th Ward that displaced 1,300 residents and would ultimately make way for a museum, a new police headquarters, a state hospital, a middle-income housing complex and the I-81 viaduct.\*

# The construction of I-81

I-81 was completed in 3 segments, over a ten-year period from 1959-1969



The first segment, completed in 1959, stretched from Brewerton to the northern end of downtown Syracuse

The southern segment north to Adams Street opened in 1962

The last link, which included the viaduct, opened in 1969



1964 - Townsend Street



1965



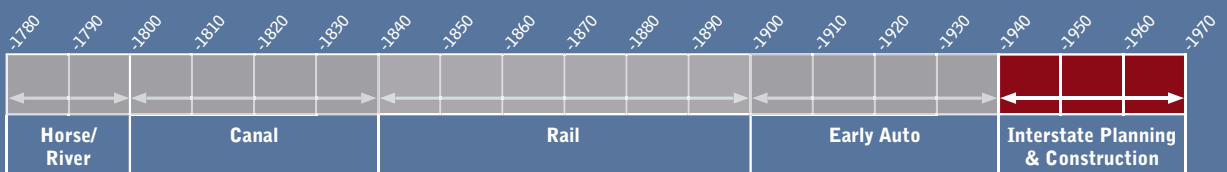
1966



1967



Cars on a new section of I-81





# How does I-81 impact you?

This is some of what we've heard so far:

I-81 has facilitated economic development throughout the region



The highway increases convenience and mobility in our region



I-81 is perceived as a barrier that divides the city of Syracuse



I-81 played a part in the destruction of the 15th Ward neighborhood



Because of I-81, Syracuse is a "20 Minute City"



I-81 encourages the use of cars over alternative modes of transportation





# Share your stories about I-81

## Write and post your responses on the wall

How has I-81 had an impact on your life?

What is your personal history with I-81?

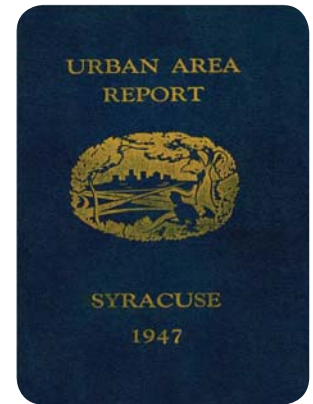
What do you remember about I-81's construction?





# The Evolution of Transportation in the Syracuse Region

This video is about 17 minutes long



The video will  
be shown on  
the hour and  
at :20 and :40  
past each hour

