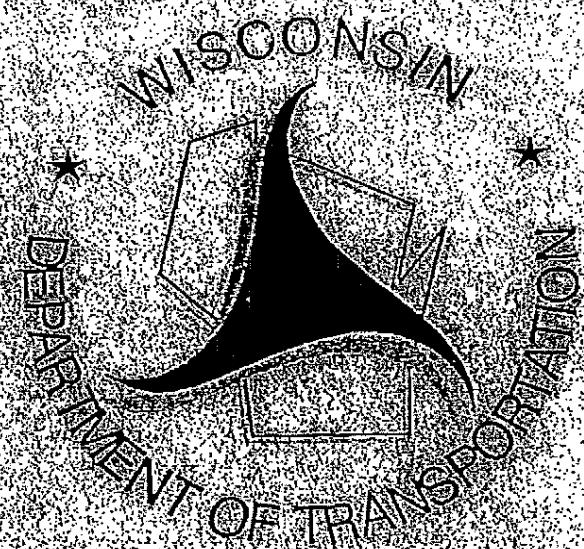


1-5-07
from
Emily Johnson

MILWAUKEE COUNTY STADIUM VARIABLE MESSAGE SIGN STUDY

IMPACTS OF AN ADVERTISING VARIABLE MESSAGE SIGN ON FREEWAY TRAFFIC



Prepared for the
Wisconsin Department of Transportation

By
WISDOT District 2
Freeway Operations Unit

December, 1994

Results:

The crash rate is a statistic that accurately describes the safety and performance of a facility by considering both the traffic volumes of the study segment and the accident frequency. An increase in side-swipe or rear-end crashes could indicate that the sign had an effect on traffic moving through the two study segments. It is possible that many crashes occurred because motorists looked at the new sign off in the distance and, as a result, momentarily drifted into an adjacent lane. The study segment roadways are somewhat S-shaped (eastbound more than westbound).

The results of the crash analysis are tabulated below. The analysis uses the following equations to indicate percentage increase or decrease:

$$1984 \text{ effect: } (R_{1984} - R_{before})/R_{before} * 100$$

$$3\text{-year after effect: } (R_{after} - R_{before})/R_{before} * 100$$

The 1984 single year average percentage increase or decrease illustrates the initial effects of the sign and the 3-year after percentage increase or decrease shows the long term effects of the sign.

EASTBOUND SEGMENT

Total Analysis

	RATE	% INCREASE/DECREASE
3 year prior average	3.12	
1984 single year average	4.46	+43%
3 year after average	4.25	+36%

Side-Swipe Analysis

	RATE	% INCREASE/DECREASE
3 year prior average	0.75	
1984 single year average	1.35	+80%
3 year after average	0.81	+8%

Rear-End Analysis

	RATE	% INCREASE/DECREASE
3 year prior average	1.31	
1984 single year average	2.1	+60%
3 year after average	2.27	+21%

WESTBOUND SEGMENT

Total Analysis

	RATE	% INCREASE/DECREASE
3 year prior average	2.91	
1984 single year average	2.56	-12%
3 year after average	3.53	+21%

Side-Swipe Analysis

	RATE	% INCREASE/DECREASE
3 year prior average	0.52	
1984 single year average	1.16	+123%
3 year after average	0.7	+35%

Rear-End Analysis

	RATE	% INCREASE/DECREASE
3 year prior average	1.39	
1984 single year average	0.99	-29%
3 year after average	1.87	+35%

Conclusions:

It is obvious that the variable message sign has had an effect on traffic, most notably in the increase of the side-swipe crash rate. The eastbound segment was impacted dramatically in both the short and long-term. The reason for this is that the sign is orientated such that it is more readable to eastbound traffic than westbound traffic.

Comparing the annual study crash rates to the annual Wisconsin urban interstate crash rates illustrates the effect of the sign, especially in the eastbound direction. If the sign had no effect on traffic, most likely the segment crash rates would have followed a trend similar to the urban interstate, but at a higher overall rate.

Crash rates may be lower in the westbound due to the merging area created by westbound I-94 traffic originating from northbound and southbound USH 41. Observation reveals that merging traffic 'meters' or causes traffic to slow down as it enters the area. As a result, traffic in the majority of the westbound study segment tends to be less congested once it passes through the more constrained operational area to the east. The eastbound segment appears to be an area of more uniformly distributed congestion.

The Milwaukee County Stadium variable message sign changes images on an average of 12 frames per minute. Signs operating at a faster display rate with similar horizontal and vertical grading in the area are possible to have an equal or greater impact on traffic. It may be beneficial to introduce traffic responsive variable message signs into the area. Signs could function at rates proportional to traffic flow and density in the viewing area. Money, time and lives could be saved.

Milwaukee County Stadium Variable Message Sign Study

Need for Study:

The Department has been looking for a process to analyze the immediate and long-term effects of variable message signs advertising along roadways. The term advertising refers to signs that display non-traffic related information. With the introduction of highly sophisticated signs, which can distract motorists, the Department seeks statistics showing how less advanced signs have impacted traffic in the past. These statistics will be the basis for justification into further study. Regulating the use of complex messages, which may demand motorists' attention and as a result, decrease the level of service and increase the number of crashes in that area, could possibly be a recommendation.

Facility Studied:

The study area consists of I-94 eastbound and westbound adjacent to Milwaukee County Stadium namely: from just east of Hawley Road to just west of the Stadium Interchange(Figure 1). This range was determined through field analysis. The area consists of all places where the variable message sign can be viewed by a motorist and/or passengers at various traveling speeds ranging from 30 to 55 miles per hour.

Time Period Studied:

The Milwaukee County Stadium message sign began operation on April 13, 1984. In order to obtain valid results, the time period studied was January 1, 1981 to December 31, 1987; three years prior to operation and three years after.

Process of Investigation:

Annual crashes were inventoried and classified by type for the study area using spot maps maintained by the WISDOT Freeway Operations Unit. The crashes were then broken into percentage (%) by crash type. Average daily traffic (ADT) counts from the automatic traffic recorder (ATR) # 40.0002, located immediately west of Mitchell Boulevard, maintained by the WISDOT Planning Unit, were obtained and converted into average yearly traffic (AYT). Annual crash rates for each segment were calculated by type using the following equation:

$$\text{crash rate} = \text{accident frequency}/(\text{length of test segment} * \text{AYT} * 10^3)$$

units = # of crashes per million vehicle miles

Refer to Tables 1-4 for data collected and calculated. Figures 3 and 4 are illustrations representing the relationship between crash rates and years studied for each segment. Figure 4 shows a graphical comparison of crash rates within the study area versus the state-wide urban interstate crash rate.

TABLE 1

STADIUM VARIABLE MESSAGE SIGN STUDY
NUMBER OF CRASHES BY TYPE

EASTBOUND SEGMENT

Year	REAR-END	SIDE-SWIPE	FIXED OBJECT	OTHER	TOTAL
1981	16	11	10	4	41
1982	16	5	5	5	31
1983	13	10	5	7	35
1984	25	16	8	4	53
1985	21	8	7	5	41
1986	30	13	4	8	55
1987	33	9	12	7	61
TOTAL # OF CRASHES BEFORE 1984				107	
TOTAL # OF CRASHES AFTER 1984				157	

WESTBOUND SEGEMNT

Year	REAR-END	SIDE-SWIPE	FIXED OBJECT	OTHER	TOTAL
1981	13	7	11	3	34
1982	17	3	8	1	29
1983	18	8	7	4	37
1984	12	14	4	1	31
1985	18	9	9	9	45
1986	30	9	7	2	48
1987	22	8	6	3	39
TOTAL # OF CRASHES BEFORE 1984				160	
TOTAL # OF CRASHES AFTER 1984				132	

TABLE 2

STADIUM VARIABLE MESSAGE SIGN STUDY
PERCENTAGE(%) OF CRASHES BY TYPE

EASTBOUND SEGMENT				
Year	REAR-END	SIDE-SWIPE	FIXED OBJECT	OTHER
1981	39.0	26.8	24.4	9.8
1982	51.6	16.1	16.1	16.1
1983	37.1	28.6	14.3	20.0
1984	47.2	30.2	15.1	7.5
1985	51.2	19.5	17.1	12.2
1986	54.4	23.6	7.3	14.5
1987	54.1	14.8	19.7	11.5

WESTBOUND SEGMENT				
Year	REAR-END	SIDE-SWIPE	FIXED OBJECT	OTHER
1981	38.2	20.6	32.4	8.8
1982	58.6	10.3	27.6	3.4
1983	48.6	21.6	18.9	10.8
1984	38.7	45.2	12.9	3.2
1985	40.0	20.0	20.0	20.0
1986	62.5	18.8	14.6	4.2
1987	56.4	20.5	15.4	7.7

TABLE 3

STADIUM VARIABLE MESSAGE SIGN STUDY

AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC(ADT) FROM ATR # 40-0002

LOCATION: Immediately west of Mitchell Boulevard

NOTE: ADT consists of 7 day average.

	<u>EASTBOUND</u>	<u>WESTBOUND</u>
1981	51,716	51,566
1982	51,494	51,776
1983	53,524	53,720
1984	54,293	55,326
1985	53,653	55,312
1986	55,943	57,984
1987	58,410	57,285

AVERAGE YEARLY TRAFFIC(AYT)

	<u>EASTBOUND</u>	<u>WESTBOUND</u>
1981	18,876,340	18,821,590
1982	18,795,310	18,898,240
1983	19,536,260	19,607,800
1984	19,816,945	20,193,990
1985	19,583,345	20,188,880
1986	20,419,195	21,164,160
1987	21,319,650	20,909,025

TABLE 4

STADIUM VARIABLE MESSAGE SIGN STUDY

CRASH RATE

Note: units are accidents/million vehicle miles

EASTBOUND SEGMENT

Year	REAR-END	SIDE-SWIPE	FIXED OBJECT	OTHER	TOTAL
1981	1.41	0.97	0.88	0.35	3.62
1982	1.42	0.44	0.44	0.44	2.75
1983	1.11	0.85	0.43	0.60	2.99
1984	2.10	1.35	0.67	0.34	4.46
1985	1.79	0.68	0.60	0.43	3.49
1986	2.45	1.06	0.33	0.65	4.49
1987	2.58	0.70	0.94	0.55	4.77
			PRE-1994 AVERAGE CRASH RATE	3.12	
			POST-1994 AVERAGE CRASH RATE	4.25	

WESTBOUND SEGMENT

Year	REAR-END	SIDE-SWIPE	FIXED OBJECT	OTHER	TOTAL
1981	1.15	0.62	0.27	0.27	3.01
1982	1.50	0.26	0.09	0.09	2.56
1983	1.53	0.68	0.34	0.34	3.15
1984	0.99	1.16	0.08	0.08	2.56
1985	1.49	0.74	0.74	0.74	3.71
1986	2.36	0.71	0.16	0.16	3.78
1987	1.75	0.64	0.24	0.24	3.11
			PRE-1994 AVERAGE CRASH RATE	2.91	
			POST-1994 AVERAGE CRASH RATE	3.53	

FIGURE 2

STADIUM MESSAGE SIGN STUDY

CRASH RATE BY TYPE (EASTBOUND SEGMENT)

Note: the unit of crash rate is # of crashes per million vehicle miles.

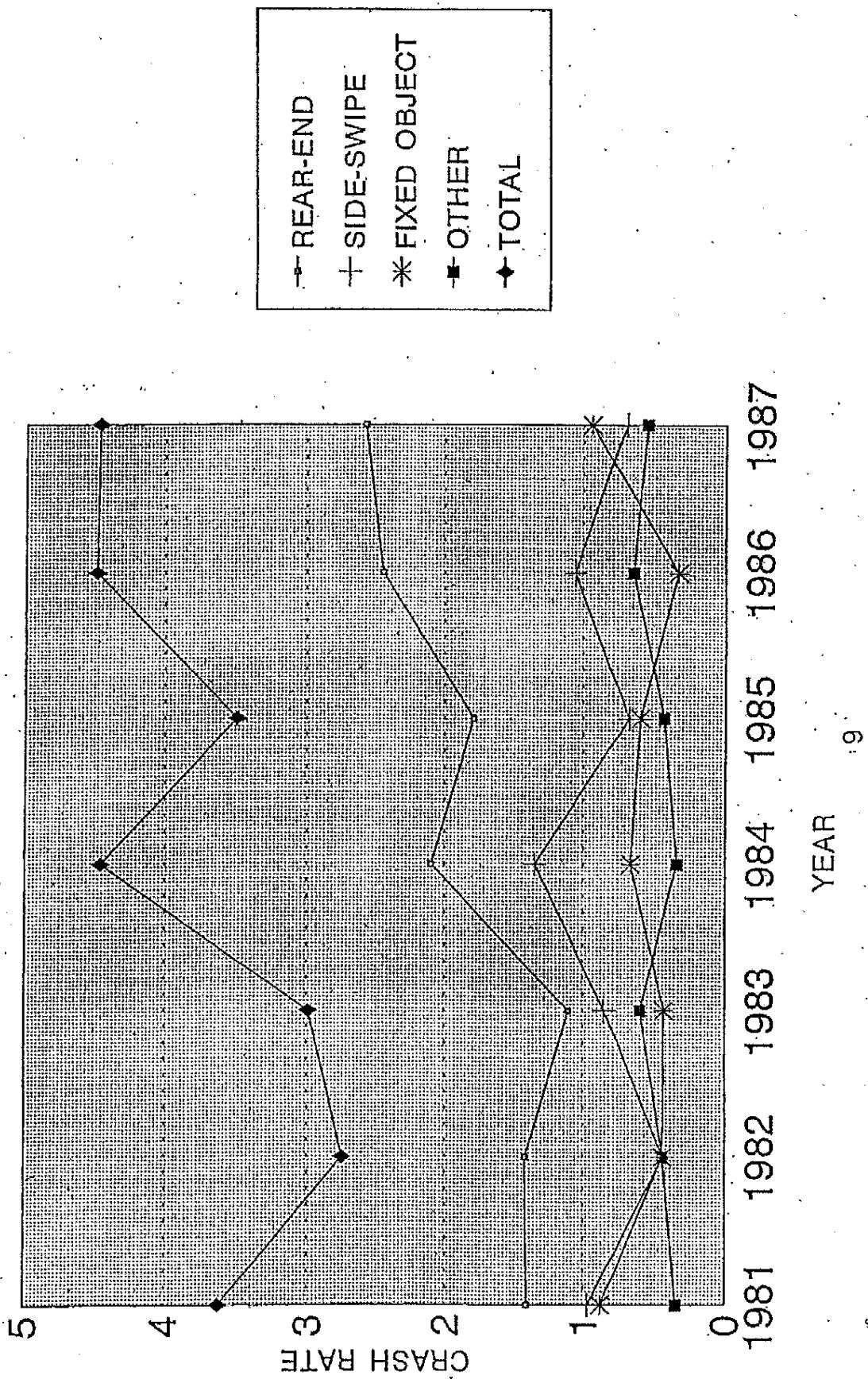
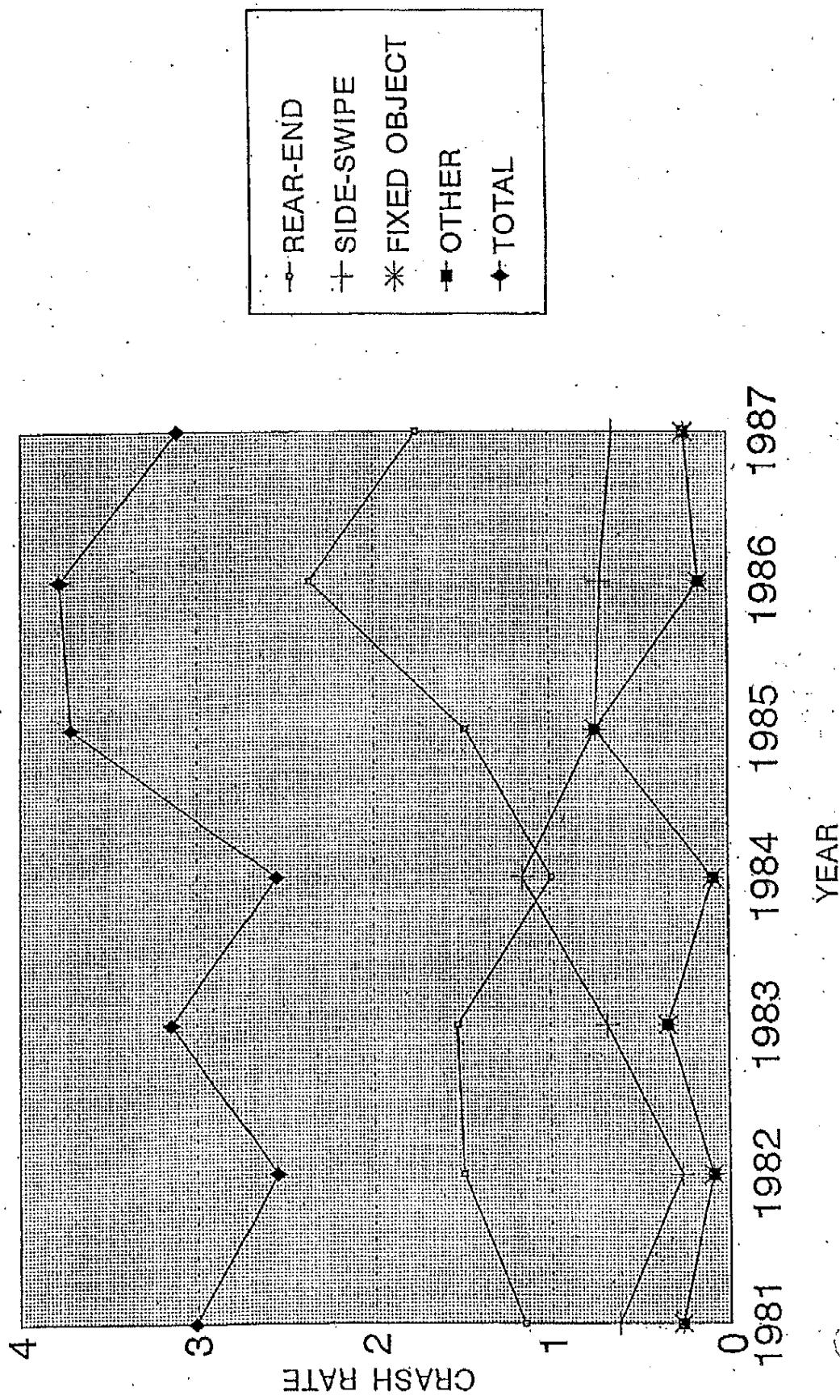


FIGURE 3

STADIUM VARIABLE MESSAGE SIGN STUDY CRASH RATE BY TYPE(WESTBOUND SEGMENT)

Note: the unit of crash rate is # of crashes per million vehicle miles.





Wisconsin Department of Transportation

MEMORANDUM

DATE: December 19, 1994

TO: John Corbin, Freeway Operations Engineer

FROM: Todd Szymkowski, Freeway Operations

SUBJECT: Milwaukee County Stadium variable message sign study

As requested, I have prepared a study showing the traffic impacts that the variable message sign located at County Stadium has created since installation. It started operation on the Brewer's opening game in 1984. Therefore, 1984 has been designated the test year. For accurate results, information pertaining to the study was collected three years prior and three years after the beginning of operation.

In 1984, side-swipe crashes increased 123% in the westbound study segment of I-94. In the three year after analysis, crashes increased 36% in the eastbound study segment. The first signifies the immediate effects and the latter highlights the long-term effect of the sign.

If you have any questions or wish to meet or discuss, please contact John Corbin (414)-227-2150 or me at (414)-227-2153.

Copies: Bob Packee
Ron Sonntag
Ed Friede
Steve Young
Dick Lange
Stu Mathias
Kristi Sebastian
Mark Morrison
Jay Obenberger

ST. LOUIS AREA

DATE PICKS

MIS DOT

JEFF. CITY MISSOURI

STARTING UP PATROL

ST. LOUIS & KCM

EDWARDS & LELCEY

RON.

LOCAL CONTACT w/ GCM

PHIL TEK

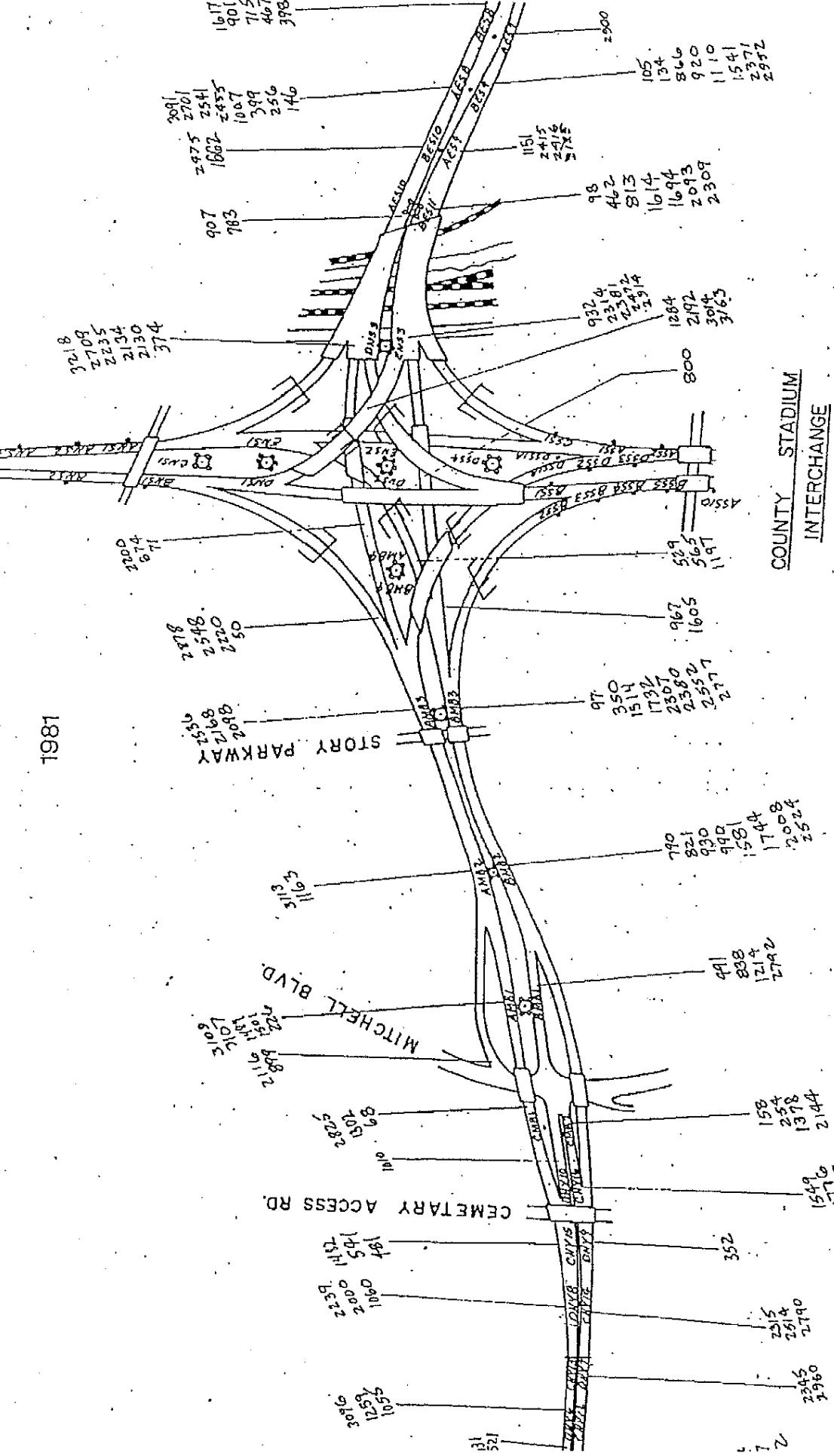
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B-1 - 555-1212

(314) -

1-(314)-555-1212

751-7100



1981

EB 314 SS 2624 FO

927 RE 97 SS

1112 O 350 FO

2345 FO 1514 SS

2960 RE 1732 FO

2315 RF 2307 RE

2514 RE 2380 SS

2790 FO 2552 RE

352 FO 2777 O

1549 SS 967 RE

1776 O 1605 O

2323 RE 5298 FO

158 RE 605 FO

254 SS 232 FO

1378 FO 1197

2144 DS

491 RE

838 SS REAR END = RE = 16

1214(9) RE SIDE SWIPE SS = 11

2792 RE FIXED OBJECT FO = 10

790 SS OTHER = O = 4

821 RE UNKNOWN = U = O

980 RE TOTAL = 41

990 RE

1681 SS

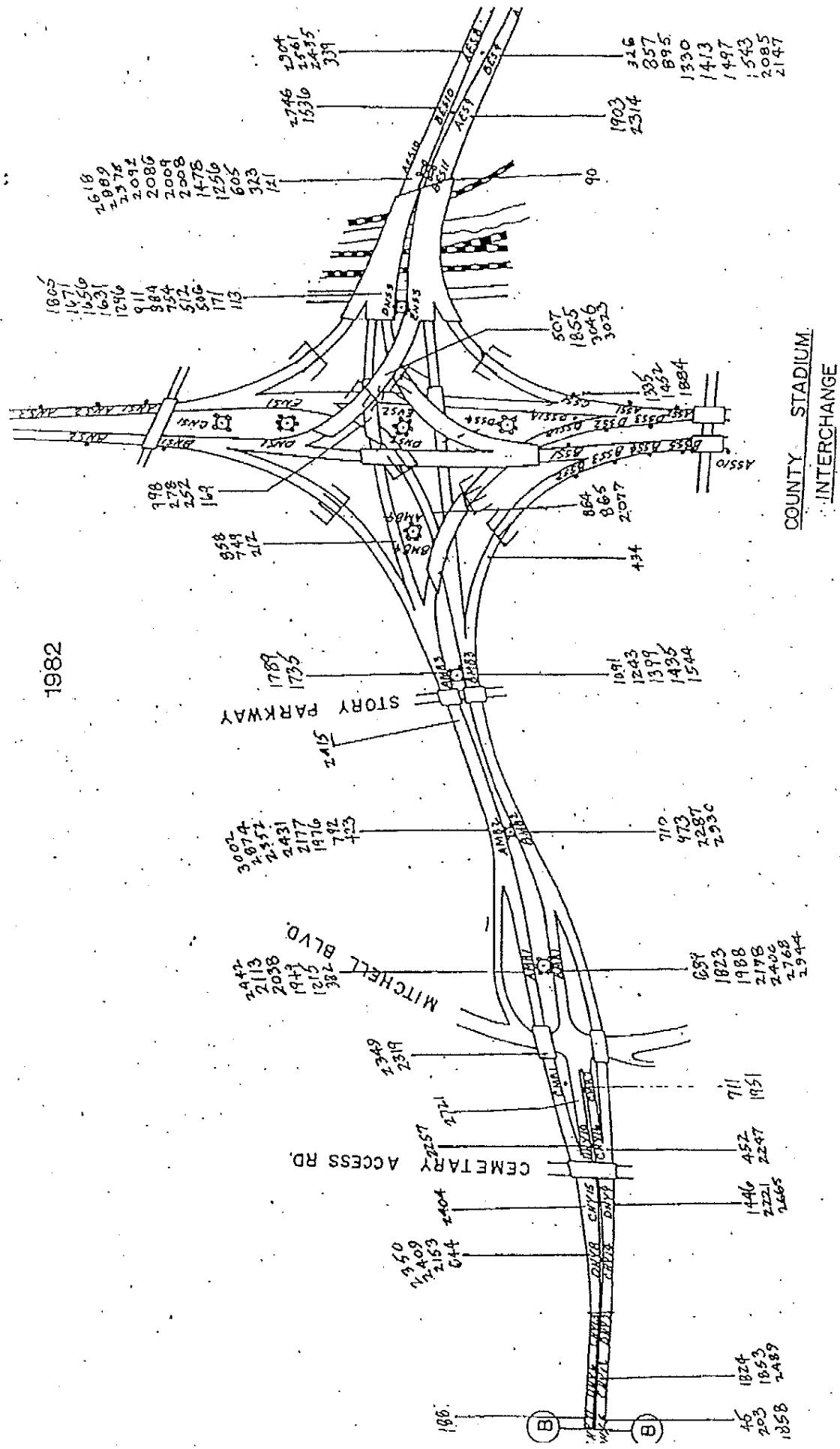
1744 SS

2008 SS

1981

WB	2200 : FO	2000 : SS
674	FO	1060. FO
71	FO	8096. RE
2078	SS	1259. RE
2548	FO	1056. RE
2220	FO	1331. SS
60	FO	1521. FO
2530	SS	1097
2168	SS	
2098	SS	
3113	SO	
1163	RE	
3109	RE	
3107	RE	
1489	RE	
1501	FO	
226	RE	
2116	O.	
899	RE	
2825	RE	REAR END = RE = 13 13
1302	FO	SIDE SWIPE = SS = 7
68	RE	FIXED OBJECT = FO = 11
1010	RE	OTHER = O = 3
1482	O.	UNKNOWN = U. = 0
541	RE	TOTAL = 34
481	SS	
2169	FO	

188



1982

1982 EB

45 SS

203 SS

1858 RE

1824 RE

1853 SS

2409 O

1496 FO

2221 RE

2665 RF

152 RE

2247 RE

711 O

1957 MORE

689 O

1823 O

1988 SS

2178 RE

2400 RE

2768 FO

2944 RE

710 RE

973 SS

2287 RE

2930 RE

1081 RE

1243 RE

1399 FO

1435 RE

1544 O

484 FO

864

check 864
10/10/82

2077 FO

RE = 16

SS = 6

F0 = 5

O = 5

U = 10

TOTAL = 31

1982

WB 858 RE 2153 FO

749 FO 644 FO

212 ~~FO~~ FO 188 FO

1789 RE

1735 RE

2415 RE

3002 RE RE = 17

2874 FO SS = 13

2352 RE FO = 118

2431 RE O = 31

2177 RE U = 0

1976 RE TOTAL 29

792 FO

423 O

~~2942~~

2113 SS

2038 RE

1941 SS

1215 RE

382 & SS

2349 RE

1319 FO

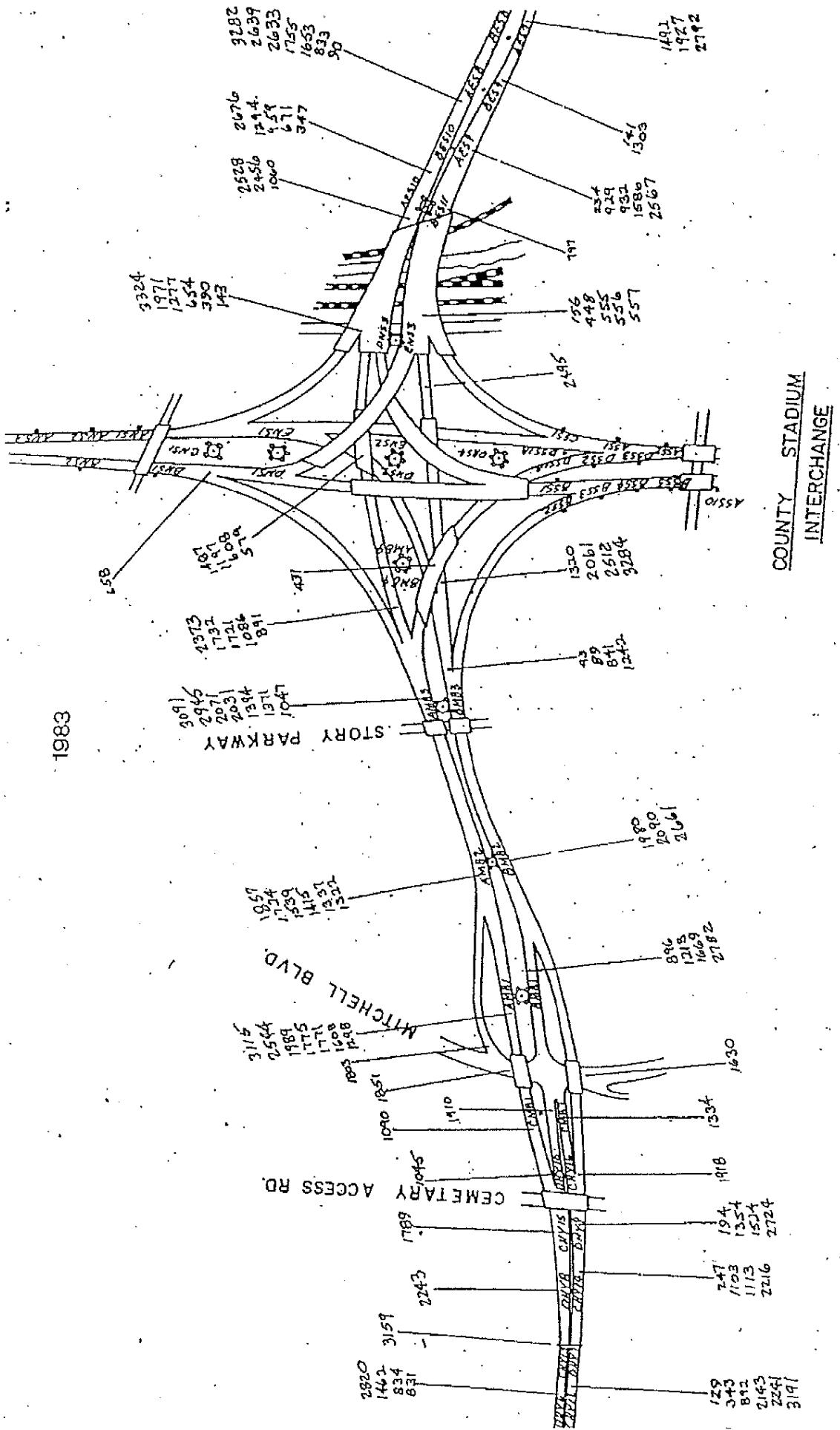
2721 RE

2257 RE

1404 RE

2360 RE

1933



1983

EB 1333 FO 89 ♂ RE

1858 RE

129 RE

343 FO

892 ♂ SS

2143 RE

2241 O

3191 FO

247 FO

1103 ♂ SS

1113 RE

2216 ♂ SS

194 O

1354 ♂ SS

1524 RE

2724 O

1918 O

1334 ♂ SS

1630 O

896 RE

1213 RE

1069 RE

2782 RE

1980 RE

2090 RE

2661 SS

9(1)3 SS

841 FO

1242 ♂ SS

1320 RE

2061 ♂ SS

2612 SS

3284 O

1090 O

RE = \$13

SS = \$10

FO = 5

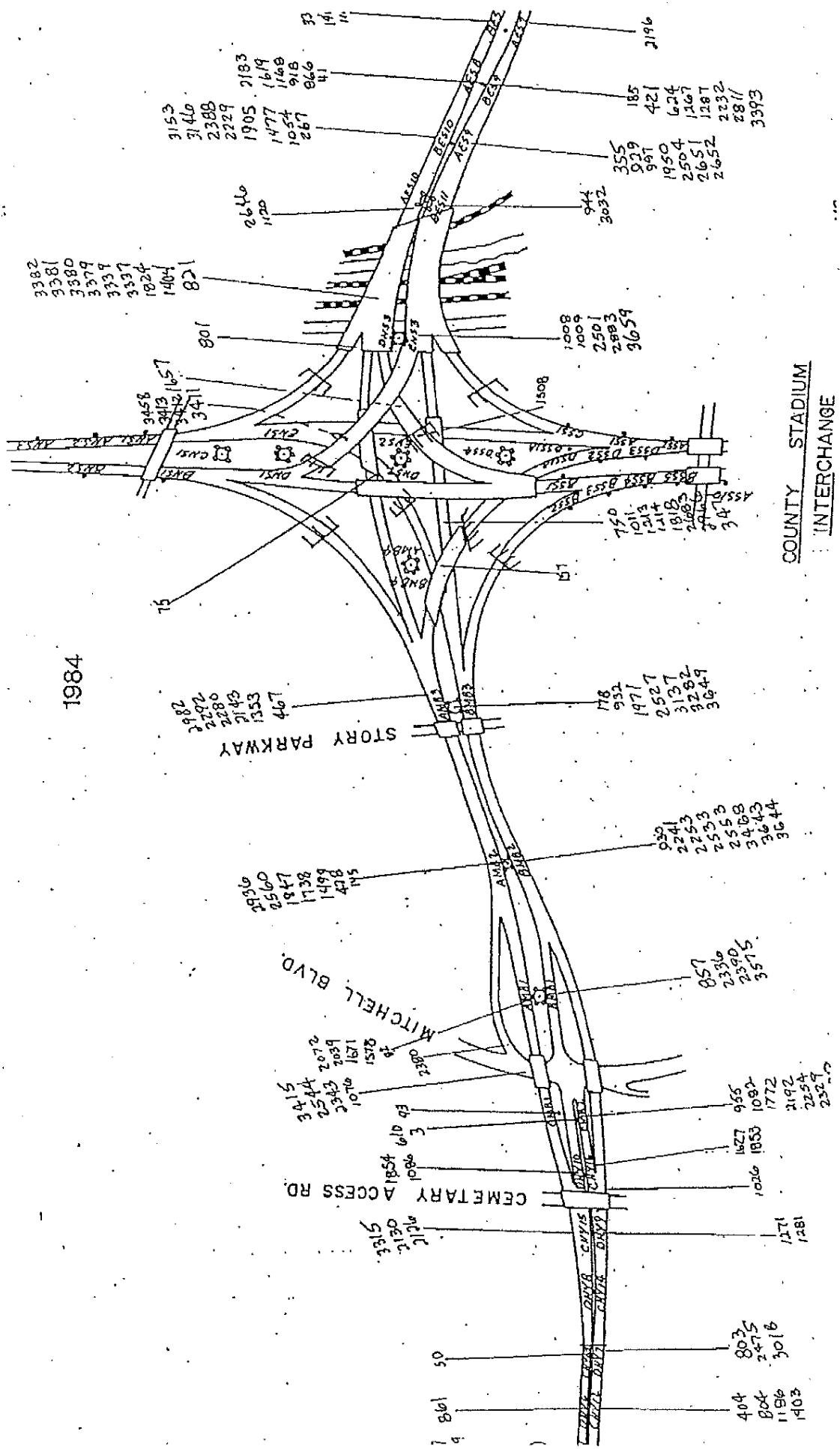
O = ~~\$13.7~~

TOTAL = 34

1983

1983 WB	431 FO	1051 FO
2373 RE		1910 RE
1732 RE		ER 1040 O
1721 RE		1045 \$ SS
1086 RE		1789 \$ SS
891 RE		2243 O
5091 FO		3159 FO
2945 RE		2820 O
2071 \$ SS		1462 RE
2031 RE		834 RE
1394 RE		831 RE
1371 RE		
1617 FO		
1857 RE	RE = 18	
1724 \$ SS	SS = 48	
1589 RE	FO = 7	
1415 RE	O = 12 4	
1337 \$ SS	TOTAL = 387	
1322 RE		
3115 O		
2544 O		
1989 \$ SS		
1775 FO		
1771 RE		
1608 SS		
1298 \$ SS		
1863 FO		

1984



RE = 25
SS = 14
FO = 8
O = 4
U = 0

1984

TOTAL = 53

63 1626 RE	2336 RE
1585 SS	2390 RE
2053 RE	3575 FO
2233 FO	930 O
2262 SS	2241 SS
3158 O	9253 RE
3669 SS	2533 RE
404 RE	2553 O
804 SS	8468 FO
1186 FO	3643 SS
1403 O	3644 RE
803 FO	178 SS
2475 FO	932 FO
3018 RE	1971 RE
1271 RE	2527 FO
1281 SS	3137 RE
CO26 RE	3282 RE
1620 RE	3649 SS
1853 RE	750 O SS
955 SS	1011 RE
1082 RE	1213 RE
1772 RE	1214 SS
2192 RE	1818 SS
2264 RE	2683 RE
2329 SS	2966 RE
2520 RE	3170 SS
857 SS	

1984

WB. 157 SS 33/5 SS

2982 SS 2130 SS

2292 FO 2126 RE

2280 RE 50 SS

2143 RE 861 SS

1863 RE 1977 SS

467 SS 799 RE

2936 RE RE = 12

2560 RE SS = 14

1847 RE FO = 4

1738 FO O = 1

1499 SS U = O

478 RE TOTAL = 31

145 SS

2072 SS

2039 RE

1671 O

1578 SS

92 RE

~~2419 ZERO~~

~~2544~~

~~2447~~

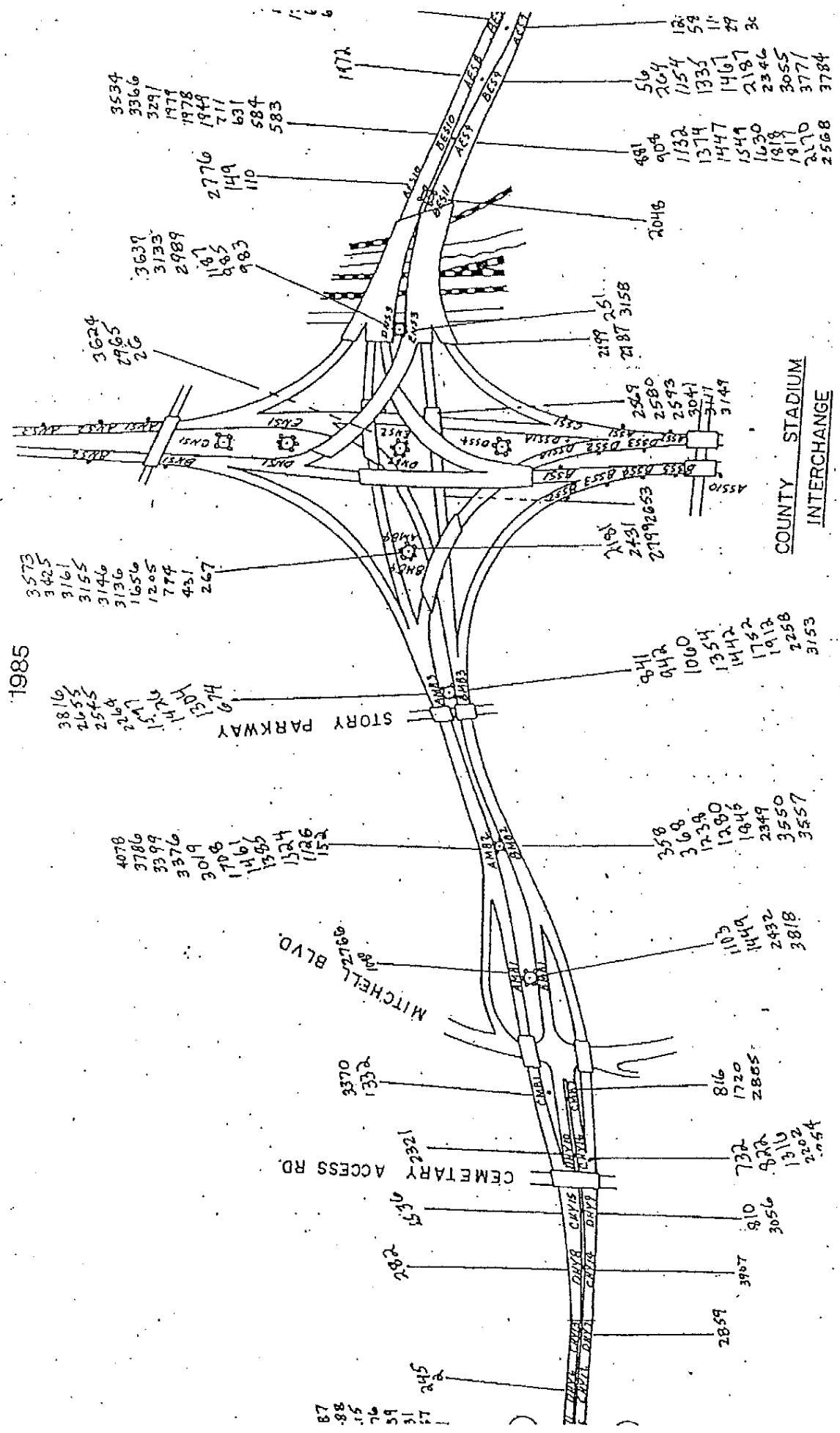
1076 SS

2380 FO

93 RE

3 FO

1086 SS



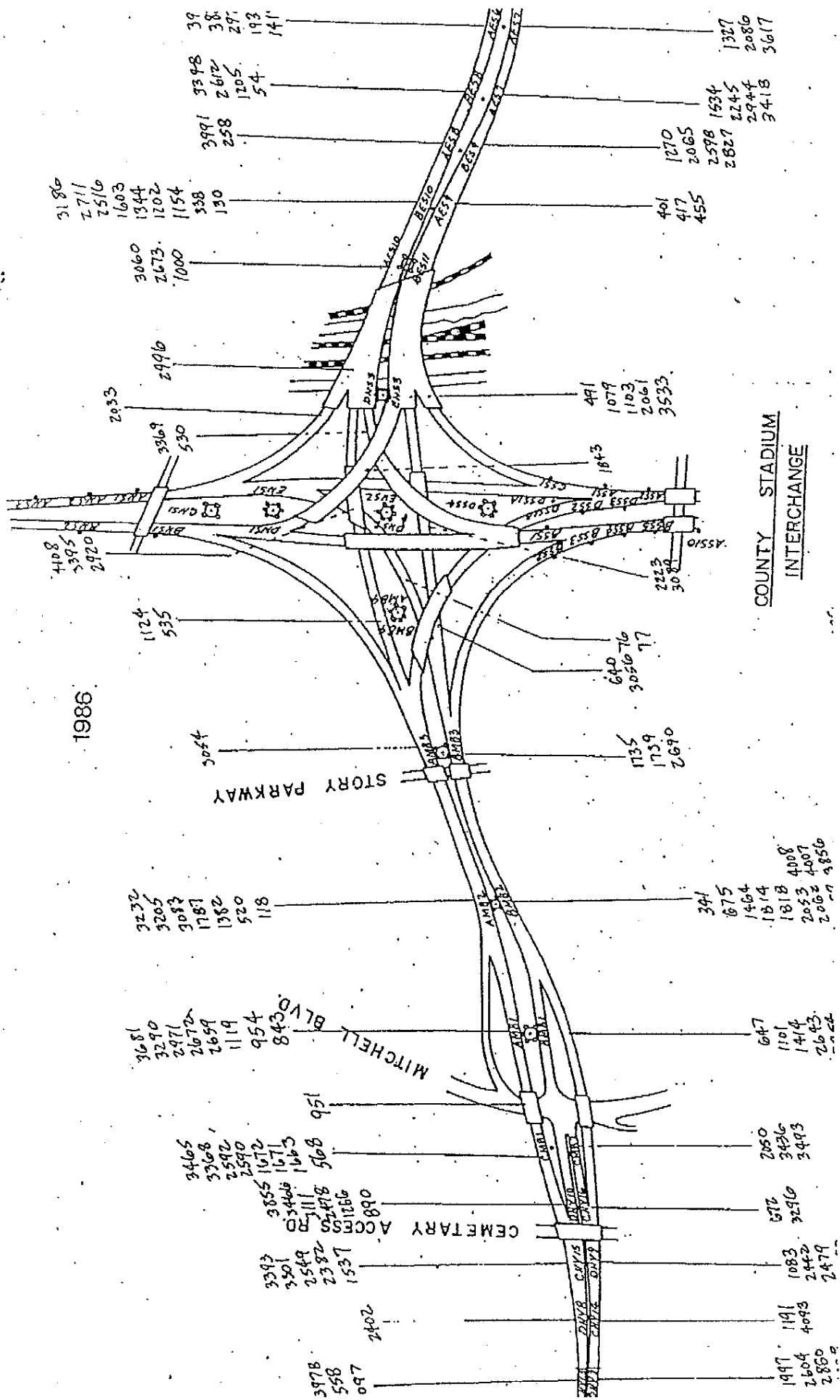
1985

EB	2859 RE	841 O
	3907 RE	942 FO
	810 O O	1066 FO
	3056 O	1354 FO
	732 RE SS	1442 RE
	822 O	1752 RE
	1316 RE	1912 RE
	2202 RE	2258 SS
	2854 FO	3153 RE
	2942 FO	2181 RE RE
	3432 RE	2131 RE
	3942 FO	2799 RE SS
	816 RE RE	2653 RE SS
	1720 RE	1080 RE
	2885 RE	
	1103 O	RE = 1000 21
	1449 RE RE	SS = 188 11
	2932 FO	FO = 7
	3018 SS	O = 1000 5
	358 RE SS	TOTAL = 401
	368 RE	
	1238 RE	
	1280 RE	
	1846 RE SS	
	2349 RE RE	
	3650 SS	
	3557 RE	

1985

WB	3673 FO	1324 RE
	3125 RE	1126 SS
	3161 SS	152 SS
	3155 RE	2766 O
	3146 RE	1080
	3136 SS	3370 RE
	1656 O	1382 RE
	1205 FO	2321 RE
	794 RE	1536 RE
	431 O	282 SS
	267 SS	245 FO
	3816 FO	2 O
	2655 RE	3087 RE
	2675 RE	7488 SS
	2264 SS	2215 RE
	1597 RE	1976 O
	1426 RE	1939 O
	1304 FO	731 O
	674 FO	657 RE
	4078 SS	
	3786 RE	RE = 18
	3399 RE	SS = 9
	3376 FO	FO = 9
	3019 FO	O = 9
	1708 O	TOTAL = 45
	1461 FO	
	1385 O	

1986



RE = 30
SS = 13
FO = 4
O = 8
U = 0
TOTAL = 55

1986

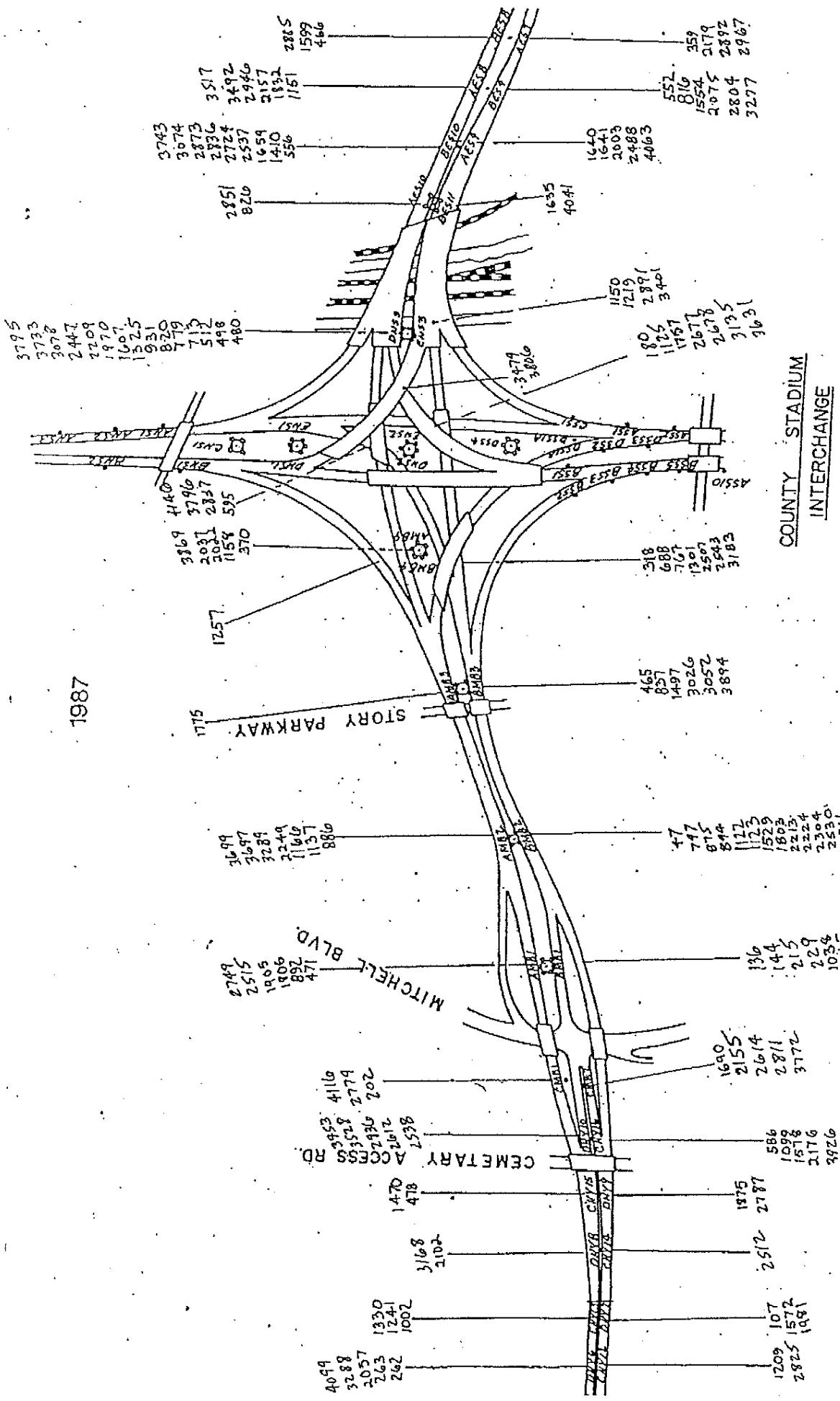
EB 2 1046 RE	3139 RE
1819 SS RE	3494 RE
3144 O	3918 RE
3288 RE	3956 RE
1073 SS	391 RE
3146 SS	675 SS
1997 SS	1464 RE
2604 O	1814 SS
2860 SS	1818 RE
3228 RE	2053 RE
3767 RE	2062 SS
1191 SS	2157 RE
4093 SS	2264 RE
1083 SS	2354 FO
2AAZ O	2369 SS
2479 RE	4008 RE
2680 O	4007 O
672 FO	3856 SS
3296 RE	3A19 RE
2050 RE	3278 RE
3436 RE	2640 RE
3493 RE	1735 O
647 FO	1734 O
1101 O	2690 FO
1414 RE	640 RE
2643 RE	3056 RE
2954 SS	76 RE

SS = 9
FO = 7
O = 2
U =
TOTAL = 48

1986

<u>NB</u>	1124 SS	3855 SS
	535 FO	3466 RE
	3054 FO	8111 RE
	3232 RE	2478 RE
	3205 RE	1246 RE
	3083 RE	890 O
	1287 SS	3393 O
	1382 RE	3301 RE
	520 RE	2549 RE
	118 FO	2382 RE
	3681 RE	1537 SS
	3290 RE	2402 RE
	2971 RE	3978 FO
	2672 RE	1558 RE
	2654 RE	1097 SS
	1119 SS	3622 FO
	954 RE	2135 SS
	843 RE	1391 RE
	1672	558 FO
	3465 RE	2444 RE
	3368 RE	1315 SS
	2592 RE	212 FO
	2590 RE	
	1672 RE	
	1671 RE	
	1663 RE	
	568 SS	

1887



1987

EB 1148 O	2777 RE	318 FO
1709 FO	2823 RE	688 FO
2825 RE	3276 RE	767 SS
107 FO	3633 SS	1301 FO
1572 RE	3898 RE	2507 FO
1981 RE	3911 RE	2543 RE
2672 FO	4052 RE	3183 O
1875 RE	473 FO	
2187 RE	797 SS	
586 FO	875 FO	RE = 33
1099 RE	894 RE	SS = 9
1578 RE	1122 RE	FO = 12
2176 SS	1123 RE	O = 7
3926 FO	1529 RE	TOTAL = 61
1690 O	1803 RE	
2155 RE	2213 RE	
2614 RE	2224 RE	
2811 SS	2304 RE	
3772 SS	2530 RE	
136 RE	3811 RE	
144 RE	3867 SS	
215 FO	465 O	
229 SS	837 FO O	
1038 SS	1497 O	
1175 O	3024 RE	
1910 RE	3052 RE	
2483 RE	3894 RE	

1.987.

WB

3869 FO

2538 RE

2037 O

1470 RE

~~2027 O~~

478 RE

1158 SS

3168 RE

370 FO

9102 RE

1257 O

1330 RE

1775 RE

1241 RE

3699 SS

1002 O

3697 SS

4099 SS

3289 RE

3288 RE

2249 SS

2057 RE

1166 RE

263 SS

1187 FO

262 FO

886 RE

2749 RE

RE = 21

2575 RE

SS = 8

1905 RE

FO = 6

1806 FO

O = 3

892 RE

V = 0

471 RE

TOTAL = 39

4116 FO

2779 RE RE

202 RE

3953 SS

3528 SS

2986 RE

2612 RE

