New York Airways Collection - Studies, Transportation by Helicopter 1955-1975, The Port of New York Authority, November 1952

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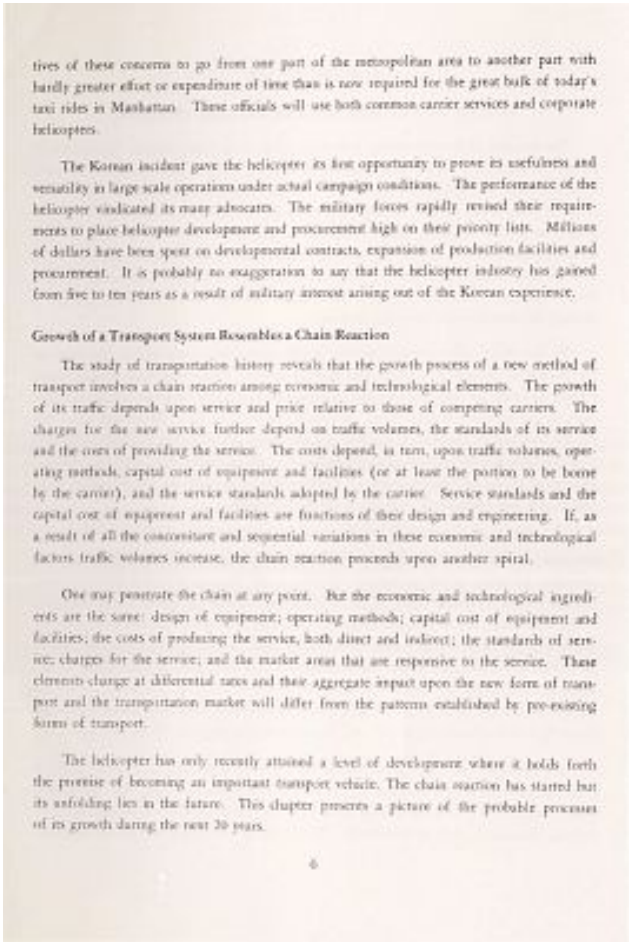
Growth of a Transport System Resembles a Chain Reaction

The study of transportation history reveals that the growth process of a new method of transport involves a chain reaction among economic and technological elements. The growth of its traffic depends upon service and price relative to those of competing carriers. The charges for the new service further depend on traffic volumes, the standards of its service and the costs of providing the service. The costs depend, in turn, upon traffic volumes, operating methods, capital cost of equipment and facilities (or at least the portion to be borne by the carrier). and the service standards adopted by the carrier. Service standards and the capital cost of equipment and facilities are functions of their design and engineering. If, as a result of all the concomitant and sequential variations in these economic and technological factors traffic volumes increase, the chain reaction proceeds upon another spiral.

One may penetrate the chain at any point. But the economical and technological ingredients are the same: design of equipment; operating methods; capital cost of equipment and facilities; the costs of producing the service, both direct and indirect; the standards of service; charges for the service; and the market areas that are responsive to the service. These elements change at differential rates and their aggregate impact upon the new form of transport and the transportation market will differ from the patterns established by pre-existing forms of transport.

The helicopter has only attained a level of development where it holds forth the promise of becoming an important transport vehicle. The chain reaction has started but its unfolding lies in the future. This chapter presents a picture of the probable processes of its growth during the next 20 years.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