

REMARKS DURING
THE MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT SESSION

Charles Pryor, Jr.
Commissioner, Kentucky Department of Highways
Frankfort, Kentucky

As I said this morning, the new Urban Streets Aid Program recommends a fresh direction for the Department of Highways. For the first time the Department has a mandate to offer the same assistance to municipal governments and un-incorporated urban areas that counties have enjoyed for 36 years.

I can think of no better way to define our objectives than to repeat the name we have tentatively assigned to this program. We are calling it the Urban Streets Aid Program.

The word "aid" serves two purposes: It demonstrates that this program has something in common with the County Road Aid Program; and, it points out that the Department of Highways does not assume responsibility for maintenance or improvement of any urban streets except those included in the state-maintenance system. These streets remain the responsibility of the local government that controls them. The Department will help you meet that responsibility through this program.

Now for a few facts and figures that will be of interest to you. The program becomes effective July 1, 1973. It is estimated that the revenues assigned this program, one-half cent of motor-fuel tax collection, will provide \$9,330,000. Twelve percent will be deducted to establish an emergency account and to provide the cost of administering the fund to the Department.

The remainder, \$8,210,000 will be allotted to 407 qualified urban areas. This includes all cities of the first through the sixth and lowest class. It includes all un-incorporated urban areas identified by the Federal census.

The 1970 census has found 1,669,568 Kentuckians whom it classifies as urban. By dividing this number into the amount to be allotted, we find that your city or urban area will receive \$4.92 per capita to support its Urban Streets Aid Program.

I am sure you understand that all the figures I have given you are tentative. I believe them to be accurate but they may very well be changed by a final

accounting.

How will the Department of Highways administer this program? I shall make it plain that we are not going to make you a check for the amount your community is to receive. As in the case of the County Road Aid Program, we will develop a formal agreement specifying those projects and activities selected to be undertaken through the program. Then the Department of Highways will proceed to impliment the program, controlling the expenditure of Urban Streets Aid Program funds.

Your council or commission or other legislative body will have an equal voice to the Department of Highways in selecting the program. Generally speaking, the Department seldom has any difficulties reaching agreement with the Fiscal Courts of the Commonwealth and we look forward to having no problems in dealing with municipal governments. As you can imagine, the Department will have to turn out a fat book of regulations before we can actually go to work on the program. Fortunately, our schedule allows adequate time for my bureaucratic friends to get all their clauses and commas sorted out.

I have assigned particular responsibilities to John Witt, Assistant to Deputy Commissioner Otto Ingram, and Jesse Chisholm, Director of Rural Roads. It will be their assignment to work out the program details, making it possible for us to start developing 407 separate agreements. We should begin sometime next winter to allow plenty of time to work out the books in an unfamiliar situation.

I urge all of you to begin thinking now and to develop plans and priorities that are longer than one-year. The single annual allotment is not going to work miracles on your streets, but if it is applied to a carefully selected program of street maintenance and improvement I imagine the years will find your street system substantially up-graded.

My only regret is that we did not have this program when I was Mayor of Sturgis, I could have used it.