

700-foot sight distance, and on low-traffic, third-class roads, 600-foot sight distance. If any more three-lane roads are designed, a 1500-foot sight distance will be specified. On four-lane divided roads we are specifying a 700-foot sight distance.

SOME SPECULATIONS REGARDING THE FUTURE OF UNEMPLOYMENT RELIEF THROUGH HIGHWAY CONSTRUCTION

John A. Long

Director, County Officials' Division,
American Road Builders' Association, Washington, D. C.

The creation of the Federal Works Agency for coordination of administrations directing various forms of public works, presupposes the continuation, in some form, of the services with which the various agencies have in the past been charged.

Likewise it is conceded that, these services being necessary and desirable for national welfare, the operation of the various agencies will be realigned to contribute most economically and efficiently under the new estate considered necessary, and as recognized through their inclusion in the jurisdiction of the Federal Works Agency.

It is quite permissible, therefore, to assume the continuation of the services of the Work Projects Administration and the Public Works Administration, to provide for measures to alleviate the stress of unemployment and to seek the prevention of economic distress by the stabilization of industry and the provision of public works programs as needed to equalize employment.

Because of its demonstrated ability to absorb a large volume of labor unassimilable by modern industry, and of the distribution of its services and needs to the remotest regions of the nation, the national highway program offers unusual advantages as a public works facility. It is, therefore, assumed that the highway program will be included in plans for national stabilization, and that the Public Roads Administration, the Public Works Administration, and the Work Projects Administration will be coordinated to contribute their established facilities to that end.

Pursuing the assumption further, and realizing that the highway program will be prosecuted along efficiently planned policies, designed to provide relief to present unemployment and to minimize future unemployment but, at the same time, to extend highway improvement to every county in the United States, it is evident that unemployment needs cannot be allowed to set artificial political boundaries to the objectives of the combined effort.

It is therefore assumed necessary to make provision for elasticity in the ability to balance unemployment needs and the prosecution of the highway program, using funds from various sources to delimit the boundaries set by relief needs, and to ease the effect of legal restrictions placed upon the funds of any one or more of the sources.

It is only within the past few weeks that we have been advised of the trend of plans being considered, and it looks now as though plans are being studied to combine the most favorable portions of the emergency agencies with the PRA exercising a measure of supervision over all highway projects. Plans also contemplate some combination of relief or unemployment funds and regular highway appropriations to secure two benefits: first, the rounding out of a full highway program that not only will cover the present secondary federal system but will extend outside that system to reach the roads which WPA-county programs have been covering the past three years; second, the use of this public works program to relieve present unemployment and to prevent future or additional unemployment.

Speculating a little further, I can imagine the plans to provide that the WPA and PWA may initiate projects, approve plans and specifications established by standards set by PRA, the projects to meet location requirements of PRA, using the highway planning survey as a basis, funds and sponsors' contributions to be controlled by PWA and WPA and sponsors, and paid out by them on work inspection and approval by PRA, and local engineering agencies to lay out and supervise the work under inspection in the field by PRA, possibly through the state road departments.

SOME GENERAL QUESTIONS

Now, there immediately arise certain general questions, answers to which are of vital importance to county agencies, for upon their satisfactory clarification much of the future success of federal, state, and county co-operation will depend. These questions are:

1. Does the FWA recognize as fundamental the advantage of including local highway officials in any plan touching roads now under their jurisdiction, as a requisite to success of any plan embracing local road improvement?
2. Are federal officials willing to give any weight to experience of local officials which is based upon an intimate acquaintance with varying local conditions and peculiar community needs, impossible of scientific or remote evaluation?
3. Are federal agencies committed to a highway economy based entirely upon the commercial aspect of highway earnings and returns, to the exclusion of the intangible attri-

butes bound up in public transportation convenience, choice of residence, and the cumulative contribution of *all* highways to the national social and economic order and to the earning power of the trunk lines?

4. If the PRA exercises general supervision of all types of federal assistance in highway programs, does it contemplate, in principle, liaison with local agencies through the one state agency, the highway department?

5. Does the planned highway coordination program imply an increased recognition of, and effort to make a fuller use of, the established highway agencies of county government?

6. Will county government be offered an opportunity to participate in general determinations affecting it?

7. Is it expected to ask counties to adopt a planned system of roads based on the planning survey data?

8. Will this system be limited to a primary, secondary, or tertiary county system?

9. Will there be any allowance for the exercise of local official selection, based on exceptional local conditions?

10. Will state highway official approval be required on projects, or a programmed system?

11. Will there be any state PWA or WPA approving agency?

12. Will there be any medium of national appeal from state decisions?

13. Will location, design, and construction standards be based on economic, or comparative usage need, bases?

14. Will the practical fact of present occupancy and usage be recognized as demanding continued service and consideration, pending the establishment of land-use control or zoning?

15. Has the problem of county officials and engineers to service all roads now existing, regardless of proposed plans, been given full consideration?

16. Is it proposed to set up preferred systems representing a portion of the existing roads, or to apply different types of federal assistance to different classes of roads in a comprehensive plan to improve all appropriate service roads?

17. Will local agencies be able to contribute in equipment, services, and materials?

18. Will the contract system of construction be required?

19. Will plans permit or encourage the use of competent county engineering organizations?

20. Will the type of design be so closely allied to potential use as to permit the low-cost construction necessary to county participation?

21. Would it be possible to extend federal aid to two general types of local systems, such as:

(a) A system based strictly upon the findings of the planning survey, and largely dependent, as a secondary federal system, upon the determinations and control of national agencies?

(b) A system embracing the large residue of county roads that have been and will continue to be the administrative problem of local officials, and upon which the determinations of local agencies could be given serious weight in federal approving consideration?

There is no limit to the number of pertinent questions that could be asked about a proposal of this magnitude. I have tried to raise a few—not to be inquisitive, but rather to impress the great importance to county highway administration of this opportunity when and if it is presented, and to stimulate local thinking on these problems.

Perhaps the *most* important question must be put to county officials, "Is *your* organization for handling a road program geared up to the degree of efficiency necessary to seize this opportunity?"

This, to me, is the most important question of all, and concerns every county agency, for we are not judged by our best examples, but by our *worst*.

RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STATE HIGHWAY
COMMISSION ON STATE ROUTES, BOTH
RURAL AND URBAN

Howard Atcheson,

Member, State Highway Commission of Indiana,
Indianapolis

Twenty-one years ago the General Assembly provided for the establishment of a state highway system in Indiana, created a State Highway Commission to supervise that system of roads, and set up a series of special laws to govern the acts and responsibilities of the commission. Succeeding sessions of the General Assembly have modified and added to the responsibilities of the Commission in the administration of the state highway system.