THE KENTUCKY URBAN PROGRAM

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At the Kentucky Highway Conference last year I spoke to you on "How Early Priority Urban Projects are Selected." Today I have been asked to discuss that program, and as far as possible to advise what progress we have made in implementing it.

Last spring the Governor appointed a 39-member Citizen's Advisory Committee to confer with and advise highway officials as to the proposed enlarged highway program. Two meetings of this committee have been held to review the Department's recommendations for a program that would utilize all available State, with matching Federal Aid Funds through the 1959-1960 fiscal years. These meetings were held on April 29th and October 9th, 1957.

The Governor's Highway Advisory Committee now has approved 88 Urban Projects in cities of over 5000 population, which are eligible for 50-50 matching with Federal Aid Urban Funds, and 27 projects in cities with a population between 2500 and 5000, which are not eligible for F.A. Urban Funds, but which could be financed with 50-50 F.A.P. or F.A.S. matching funds, or be built solely from State funds.

These projects, which were presented to, and approved by the committee, were those that had the highest priority ratings according to the formula devised by the Automotive Safety Foundation in their study of Kentucky's highway needs, (a formula with factors relating to present capacity, present structural condition, present and anticipated traffic, delay features, safety, geometrics, cost per vehicle mile for proposal, etc.). Other factors being equal, the selection of early priority projects was made to also affect a geographical distribution over the State—to illustrate:

Needed projects in cities of over 5000 population were selected in: Ashland, Bowling Green, Catlettsburg, Corbin, Danville, Dayton, Frankfort, Georgetown, Glasgow, Harrodsburg, Hazard, Henderson, Hopkinsville, Jenkins, Lexington, Louisville, Madisonville, Mayfield, Maysville, Middlesboro, Murray, Mt. Sterling, Covington, Newport, Fort Thomas, Owensboro, Paducah, Paris, Pikeville, Princeton, Richmond, Somerset and Winchester.

In addition to the above named cities with population of more than 5000, needed improvements were recommended and approved by the committee for projects in cities in the 2500 to 5000 population group. These are not eligible under the Federal Aid Highway Acts, for the use of Federal Aid Urban matching funds, but could qualify for matching F.A.P. or F.A.S. federal funds, or use strictly State Highway construction funds that might be available. Included in this group are needed projects in the following cities: Barbourville, Berea, Carrollton, Central City, Cumberland, Cynthiana, Campbellsville, Franklin, Fulton, Greenville, Lebanon, London, Monticello, Morehead, Morganfield, Nicholasville, Paintsville, Pineville, Prestonsburg, Providence, Shelbyville, Versailles and Williamsburg.

All of these committee approved projects have been tentatively scheduled for design, right-of-way and construction in the 1958-59 or 1960 fiscal years and would utilize all expected available funds for the three year period.

In all of our studies of Urban Highway and Street needs we have endeavored to work closely with those cities and counties having Planning and Zoning Boards or Commissions. No doubt many of you have heard, or read, of the recent Hartford Conference at which a number of planning and highway design engineers
differed on their respective responsibilities in redevelopment of blighted sections of urban areas and of providing adequate transportation facilities.

We have endeavored to make a study of the current and future needs of the city, and its environs as a whole, and that gets down, sooner or later, to the needs and desires of the motoring public. It calls for recognition of the essential fact that federal and state governments cannot take over local problems alone. We should have local or regional authorities to help plan and finance basic undertakings for the whole area, with due regard for land use. We also need the support of public officials at all levels of government. We need informed public support. This support should be voiced at public hearings which precede action.

Most of all we need understanding, that this highway program is literally a matter of life and death. If people are to continue to use motor vehicles, and use them in increasing numbers, they must have safe and adequate highways.

What the highway engineer needs more than anything else right now is, as I have tried to emphasize, public support. We recognize the complexity of problems in Urban Highway Planning, especially the many ramifications of every decision regarding alignment, location of intersections, off and on ramps, etc. The recent American Association of State Highway Officials Convention high-lighted the problem of public and community relations. The sessions on these subjects attracted capacity attendance. It resulted in our asking Mr. Harold Plummer, Chairman of the Highway Commission of the State of Wisconsin, an authority on the subject, to address us at the general session tomorrow morning.

Now, to go back to the urban program and the list of projects in cities for which work is planned. These needed improvements were scheduled on a base of funds estimated to be available for the purpose at the time submitted. I must add that our past system of planning and budgeting has more or less been inadequate, and is now being reviewed and placed on a more exact basis whereby, with improved reports, we will know continuously the amount of money available for for scheduling, at all times. We have, in the past, carried over, from year to year, large balances that could have been utilized in more construction.

This all amounts to saying that the proposed urban program is about correct, or it might be accelerated, or even delayed. In other words, at present it is only a close approximation of what we plan and can do.

I feel that a detailed description of the one hundred and fifteen approved projects would take up too much of the time of the speakers to follow, but I will be glad to answer a letter as to specific projects, from any one who is interested.