

prepared by H. S. Fairbank for use at the Mississippi Valley Conference of State highway Departments, Chicago, Ill. March 28, 1938.

CONTINUING PLANNING ACTIVITY

The report described in the "Tentative Outline for an Initial Report of the State-Wide Highway Planning Surveys" deals only with those data of the surveys that have a bearing upon the formulation of general administrative and financial policies and uses the data only to that end. It does not enter into questions of detailed highway planning; and omits consideration of certain whole fields of data not yet generally gathered but desirable for eventual study; such as probable changes in land use and their bearing upon highway policy and vice versa, and the effect of highway features upon the causation of accidents.

Where the "Initial Report" deals with road conditions and means for their improvement, it deals with them generally and in groups. It defines problem areas and approximates the solution of problems in general, and only to the extent necessary for the determination of probable gross costs and general policy decisions. Within these problem areas there is continuing need for detailed study. For example, the report will show the locations of the most serious deficiencies of curvature, sight distance and grades. The correction of these deficiencies will involve necessity for detailed study to determine priority of correction and details of design.

The "Initial Report" does not enter into detailed consideration of questions of revised traffic routing and the new highway facilities required for that purpose, such as new express highways between cities, city entrances and by-passes, etc. This is an important area of further detailed planning study.

The "Initial Report" deals in a very limited and general way with the question of right of way, which is certain to be one of the most important of future questions in many States. In past operations the problem has been avoided by adherence to existing alignment. The necessities of modern traffic are inadequately served by these old alignments; hence the cost item for right of way - relatively small in the past - is likely to be large in the future. What is the probable extent of such needed new right of way? What will be its cost and when will it be needed? How will such costs be financed? These are questions that should have serious study by the continuing planning organization.

The continuing organization that should be set up as an integral part of each State highway department, should be capable of carrying on such further general and detailed planning studies as are indicated above; and, in addition, should be responsible for the routine of continuous revision of the basic information established by the original survey.

Most important of such routine operations are:

1. Annual revision of State and county maps.
2. Constant and immediate revision of straight-line diagrams.
3. Annual revision of statistics of road mileage by types of improvement.
4. Annual estimates, as necessary, of traffic changes.
5. Annual record of street and highway revenues and expenditures.
6. Annual record of the local distribution of motor vehicle registration.
7. Continuous record and study of highway accidents with particular reference to conditions of the highways responsible for their causation.

To carry on these routine operations properly requires a sufficient continuing personnel in the State highway department and also the establishment of satisfactory relations with other units and agencies of government, necessary for the exchange of information, and the establishing of routine procedures for the timely reporting of information concerning road changes by the field organization of the State highway department itself.

The continuing provisions necessary for the above mentioned routine operations are generally described as follows:

Revision of maps.

1. An adequate and competent drafting force in the highway department.
2. Establishment of routine reporting of all significant changes in the location and surface type of State highways, and of bordering culture by field and design forces of the State highway department.
3. Either an established regular procedure for the reporting of significant changes in local roads (similar to 2 for State roads) or a small inventory force (one or two parties) in the State highway department to travel all roads and report changes noted.

Revision of Straight-line Diagrams.

1. Same as for revision of maps.
2. Establishment of routine reporting of the condition of State roads (spring damage and other facts of interest) by maintenance forces of the State highway department. This will include also reporting of all changes effected by maintenance operations.
3. Establishment of routine reporting of the location and character of accidents, and other items of occurrence recorded on the straight-line diagrams.

Revision of Statistics of Road Mileage.

1. An adequate statistical force and tabulating equipment.
2. Access to reports described under Revision of Maps.

Annual Estimates of Traffic Change.

1. A sufficient number of automatic traffic counters properly located, and personnel adequate for their servicing.
2. A skeleton organization of skilled traffic observers equipped with portable automatic counters and loadometers to make routine manual counts, as required.
3. An adequate statistical force and tabulating equipment.

Record of Street and Highway Revenues and Expenditures.

1. An adequate statistical force and tabulating equipment.
2. Establishment of routine procedures for accumulation of data in respect to the revenues and expenditures of the State highway department.
3. Establishment of satisfactory arrangements for annual reporting of revenue and expenditure data by county, township, and city authorities.

Record of the Local Distribution of Motor Vehicle Registration.

1. Establishment of arrangements with registration authorities for the obtaining of desirable additional information from motor vehicle owners at time of registration of their vehicles, and arrangements for the annual reporting of such information to the highway department.
2. An adequate statistical force in the State highway department.

Continuous Record and Study of Accidents.

1. Establishment of adequate arrangements for the reporting of accidents, involving possible changes in the basic law and organizational and procedural changes in the State and local government agencies responsible.
2. An adequate organization in the State highway department for the field study of accidents with particular reference to their causation by features or conditions of the highways.
3. An adequate statistical force and tabulating equipment.

Classes of personnel, such as statisticians, draftsmen, etc., and equipment, such as tabulating equipment, required for the performance of more than one of the routine operations should be organized, and adjusted in size, amount and kind to the efficient performance of all of the operations described.

It is suggested that the continuing operations herein generally described are of such importance as to merit, for their proper performance, the creation of a division of the State highway department coordinate with the usual construction and maintenance divisions.

Detailed suggestions for the conduct of the continuing planning operations supplementing the general suggestions given herein, will be presented by the Bureau, and Bureau personnel will be available to cooperate with the State highway departments in working out details of organization and continuing procedure, if desired.