

REPORT OF DIVISION III  
ON  
EDUCATION, SPECIFICATIONS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

By

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From the battle between the billboards and the "roadside beautiful" forces which began more than a generation ago, to the ideal of the "complete highways" and "freeways" of today, is a long but steady road of progress. This progress has had many setbacks and temporary discouragements.

But the battle front has changed. It has broadened. In fact, we have learned through the years a more effective strategy.

Integration of Roadbed and Roadside Problems in Highway Design and Development - The procedure no longer is to attack the obvious and most flagrant offenders but to integrate our forces with those of the design and maintenance departments. We have enlisted the interest and help of the safety technicians, the soil conservationists, and others. All of us together have oftentimes outflanked the old enemy. As a result of an active and simultaneous education and public relations program, we are now often surprised to find that our old enemies by sheer public opinion as well as enlightenment among their own people now seem to have "silently folded their tents" and left the field (in this case the roadsides). Unfortunately, however, that is not always true. In many states and regions we have only advanced through the first lines. There are others beyond and the rear guard is often very annoying still.

Concept of the "Complete Highway" Program - It is encouraging to note the new techniques and processes now employed in building and rebuilding our great highway systems. The "complete highway" and the freeway and parkway are now generally accepted as requirements in the most advanced states.

But we are still more or less needlessly killing 35,000 or more people annually on our highways and streets. Only a few western states like Colorado, California, Oregon and Washington have yet readily accepted our concept of the "complete highway." And in some regions tree butchers, billboards and signs still make driving difficult and hideous. The eroded shoulders, deep ditches and bare-gullied backslopes too often make country driving a hazard and a nervous ordeal and not the invigorating recreational experience it could and should be.

So, are we back where we started? By no means. We are now forging ahead with united forces, gathering technical recruits on the way. Today organized citizens and local official groups do much of the roadside clean-up work formerly occupying our attention.

"Beauty is Still the Crowning Perfection of That Which is Useful" - Complete highways and complete organizations go together. In the "complete highway" with ample rights-of-way, first located, designed and adjusted to the natural topography of the countryside and planted sparingly — much by nature herself — we have a great ideal, a "complete plan" for improved highway safety that has and will continue to require technically well-trained and experienced personnel in the key positions in the highway and roadside development field.

Personnel Training - In 1943 this Committee sent out and received answers to a series of questions directed to State highway departments and to the colleges and universities that train the engineers and landscape architects who will be in charge of tomorrow's highway development. The interesting results of this survey of nation-wide activities regarding the training of men who are to plan and carry out effective roadside development were given in the progress report of the Committee on Education beginning on page 30 of the 1943 Report on Roadside Development. The qualifications were stated as ideals which it was recognized at that time probably could not be met immediately, due to lack of trained professional landscape personnel.

It was also recognized at that time that complete uniformity in qualifications could not be achieved in all States. In this year's report the recommendations of the Project Committee on Education are included. These recommendations are submitted as a skeleton organization for study purposes and should be helpful to many highway departments in organizing landscape personnel. In looking forward to the adoption of the recommendations as standard for the respective positions, it should be noted that where landscape architect is used, this refers to landscape architect, landscape engineer, director of roadside development, engineer of roadside development, or such title as is used by any State or agency in designating the personnel.

Accompanying this report is an introductory paper reviewing some of the basic considerations underlying sound roadside improvement programs as an integral part of better highway design. These are presented primarily for discussion at the several meetings of coordinators to be resumed this year in each of the local groups of States.