

## PARKING TURNOUTS AND REST AREAS

### A Summary of the Final Report of the Subcommittee

George B. Gordon, Chairman  
Supervising Landscape Architect  
Bureau of Public Roads

THE FINAL REPORT of the Subcommittee on Parking Turnouts and Rest Areas summarizes the experience of the states regarding: (1) trends in turnout and rest-area design, and general classification of such roadside developments; (2) factors governing location, selection, and acquisition of sites for turnouts and rest areas and the design and development of such roadside areas; (3) basic principles regarding design, construction, and maintenance of turnouts and rest areas on open country highways in all regions; and (4) conclusions and recommendations leading toward a suggested policy of including necessary traffic and driver-service areas as a part of future location, design, and construction of complete highways. (AUTHOR /

Adequate turnouts and rest areas are essential if our major highways are to render the complete traffic and driver services required by traffic today. Considerations of highway policy, and of highway right-of-way, design, construction, and maintenance are involved.

The report is illustrated with photographs of turnouts and rest areas on primary highways in more than thirty states. The full discussions on parking turnouts and rest areas from the viewpoint of the national park, the state park, the state highway, and the traveling public will be included in a complete report on this subject to be published in a separate bulletin of the Highway Research Board.

### TURNOUTS AND REST AREAS IN NATIONAL PARKS

Abstract of Discussion by

Conrad L. Wirth, Director  
National Park Service

HIGHWAYS within national parks have always been provided with frequent safety and scenic turnouts. The usual park road is in rough topography, shoulders are necessarily narrow, and emergency parking of disabled vehicles is provided for on occasional surfaced turnouts well off the traveled way.

Turnout locations, as a rule, are selected at places where tourists tend to stop. Fine views, shade trees, lake and stream shores, and other natural features, as well as historic sites, are occasions for turnout site selection. Turnouts are also provided to supply water to vehicles on long mountain grades.

The size of the scenic turnout area on a national-park road is usually determined by what is considered the drawing power of the site itself.

Rest areas are distinguished from turnouts on park roads by the fact that rest areas are provided with picnic tables, benches, fireplaces, water, and toilet facilities. As a policy, the service favors relatively large, well-equipped rest areas at

selected locations, rather than a large number of smaller areas. It is believed that close observation of driver habits on the road, combined with the services of professionally trained landscape personnel, is the key to good turnout and rest-area design.

/AUTHOR

## PARKING TURNOUTS AND REST AREAS FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF STATE PARKS

Abstract of Discussion by

Russell B. Tobey, Director of Recreation  
State of New Hampshire

THE AUTHOR expressed his appreciation of the information furnished by the highway departments of states east of the Mississippi in response to his written queries regarding turnouts and rest areas. His survey indicated that the need for off-road parking space and for areas for rest and incidental recreation is now recognized. Nearly all of those states agree that such driver services are essential.

Because only in recent years have most states begun to provide turnouts and rest areas, full consideration does not appear to have been given to adequate classification of services to be provided in the design of such areas. Nor has maintenance after construction been fully considered in some cases. The public has come to expect provision for comfort, rest, and passive recreation in its rest areas. Only essential services such as toilets, tables, benches, and fireplaces, and water supply should be included. All facilities must be designed for easy, low-cost maintenance, because maintenance begins when areas are opened to public use and never ends.

Maintenance must be considered in selection and acquisition of rest-area sites, in design of the area, and of each of its facilities and structures.

State parks and roadside rest areas tend to complement each other as closely related public services. If either the state park division or the highway department has the trained personnel required for good rest-area design, either agency may equally well select, design, and operate roadside rest areas and facilities along a state-highway system. As a rule in past years, state-park departments have had more well-trained landscape designers than have highway departments. /AUTHOR/

The traveling public will be best served if state-park departments and state-highway departments cooperate in every possible way on roadside rest-area development.

## REST AREAS ON A STATE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

Abstract of Discussion by

Wilbur J. Garmhausen, Chief Landscape Architect  
Ohio Department of Highways

THE REST AREA along main routes of travel is as old as history. The oasis on desert caravan routes, the railroad terminal, and the modern rest area or roadside park all serve similar purposes of providing a resting place for tired travelers.

The State of Ohio has, at this date, 283 roadside parks or rest areas complete-