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Iowa Highway Study Committee

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IOWA HIGHWAY STUDY COMMITTEE

Letter of Transmittal

TO THE GOVERNOR AND THE 60TH IOWA GENERAL ASSEMBLY:

Members of the Highway Study Committee are pleased to submit to you the report developed by the Committee in accordance with the directives of Senate Joint Resolution 36 of the Fifty-ninth General Assembly.

This report, which represents nearly two years of study on all phases of the Interstate, primary, secondary and urban road system in Iowa, is an attempt to update the Report of the previous Highway Study Committee established by House Joint Resolution 12 of the 56th General Assembly. That Committee, through the assistance of the Automotive Safety Foundation and the Public Administration Service, made the most thorough and comprehensive roads study ever made in Iowa.

We wish to thank the Iowa Highway Commission, Mr. E. H. Gibson, Chief Engineer of the Iowa State Highway Department, and many other individuals and department heads who gave of their time and information in carrying out this study.

We feel quite sure that all the members of the General Assembly will give careful consideration to the recommendations contained in this Report; the adoption of the recommendations will materially advance the programs of Iowa's road system.

Respectfully submitted,

CHARLES MARSHALL BROWN
Chairman

WILLIAM MARSHALL BROWN
Vice Chairman

Senator J. Louis Fisher

Rep. Harold O. Friesman

Senator John J. Brown

Rep. Percy D. Goode

Selected Staff

Research Division

W. H. Anderson, Jr.

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

The Highway Study Committee was established by the Senate Joint Resolution 16, 59th Iowa General Assembly (Chapter 350, Acts of the 59th General Assembly) for the purpose of continuing the work of the Highway Study Committee created by the 58th G. A. Senate Joint Resolution 36 directed the Committee:

1. To review the work of the highway study committee created by Chapter 426, Acts of the 58th General Assembly;
2. To complete whatever studies necessary to carry out the purposes of such Act;
3. To study and review the findings and recommendations of the Automotive Safety Foundation and Public Administration Service.

In order to facilitate the work of the Committee, four subcommittees were established. The subcommittees were:

1. Subcommittee on Financial Aspects

Mr. Charles Iles, Chairman
Senator John J. Brown
Representative Merle Hagedorn
Mr. J. D. Arthurs, Jr.
Mr. Robert Heir
Mr. Miles Peters

2. Subcommittee on Administrative Aspects

Representative Dewey Goode, Chairman
Senator J. Louis Fisher
Representative Harold D. Fischer
Mr. Kenneth Robinson
Mr. L. M. Clauson - ex officio

3. Subcommittee on Highway Safety

Representative Merle Hagedorn, Chairman
Senator John J. Brown
Representative Dewey Goode
Mr. J. D. Arthurs, Jr.
Mr. Robert Heir
Mr. Kenneth Robinson

4. Subcommittee on Legislation

S Senator J. Louis Fisher, Chairman
Mr. Charles Iles
Mr. Miles Peters
Mr. L. M. Clauson - ex officio

Subcommittee members were directed to study problems existing in the designated areas and present to the full Committee any problems or questions which the subcommittee felt of sufficient importance for consideration by the full Committee membership.

Committee members have met with representatives of the Iowa State Highway Commission, the Department of Public Safety, the Attorney General's Office, the Iowa League of Municipalities, the Iowa Good Roads Association, members of county boards of supervisors, and other interested citizens who expressed views, opinions, and recommendations on various issues under consideration by the Committee.

AREAS OF STUDY

Numerous areas relating to highways have been studied and discussed by Committee members. The following have received consideration by the Highway Study Committee and are subdivided without formal action being taken by Committee members.

Recommendations of the Report of the Public Administration Service to the Highway Study Committee created by the Iowa General Assembly.

Report of the study made by the Automotive Safety Foundation to the Highway Study Committee created by the Iowa General Assembly.

Overall administration of the state's highway program.

Employment of a business manager by the Iowa State Highway Commission.

Advance purchase of highway right-of-way.

Budget and financial control provision relating to the Iowa State Highway Commission.

Source of county engineers.

The total amount of road revenue available to the state of Iowa from all sources.

State gasoline tax: collections, rates, refunds.

Construction and financing of interstate highways and freeways.

Proportional allotment of road use tax funds for construction of interstate highways.

State sales tax exemption for state administrative agencies.

Refund of state gasoline tax paid by cities and towns.

Establishment of state standards for construction of streets in cities and towns.

Street Budgets and Reports to the Highway Commission by cities and towns required by sections 312.12-14, Code of Iowa, (1962).

Jurisdiction for construction and maintenance of primary road extensions into cities and towns.

Channelization of intersections.

Use and use limitation on the urban portion of road use and funds for streets other than arterial streets as provided by section 312.11, Code of Iowa (1962).

Collection of gasoline used in farm machinery eligible for refund of state gasoline tax.

Notification and designation of one phase's road segment.

Movement of overweight equipment over roads and highways.

Definition penalties for violation of the weight limitation on a highway. Present law (Sec. 311.675, Code 1962) provides that a person who exceeds the weight limitation of a highway is liable for the damage done to the highway by such violation.

Highway grade crossings for railroads.

Methods of determining sufficiency ratings for roads and highways.

Percentage funds.

Removal of curbs from and widening of 10 and 20 feet wide pavements on the primary road system.

Recommendations of The Highway Study Committee
To The 60th General Assembly

Registration Fees For Automobiles & Trucks

Automobiles

1. We recommend amending section 321.112, Code of Iowa, 1962, which pertains to automatic reduction of license fees. We recommend that the part of the automobile license fee based upon value be reduced to 75% of the rate when new on the 11th registration, 50% on the 12th registration, and 25% on the 13th registration and thereafter.
2. We recommend the present minimum motor vehicle license fee of \$15 be increased to \$20.
3. We recommend the registration fee for antiquated vehicles be increased from \$1 to \$5.
4. We recommend that sections 321.157-.162, Code of Iowa, 1962, which establish the value of new automobiles for registration be amended. We recommend that the value of new cars used for registration purposes be placed at the next even one hundred dollars above the suggested retail list price as stated on the window sticker attached to each car pursuant to the provisions of the U.S. Automobile Information Disclosure Act. The cost of all accessories on the new car at the time of the first sale which are not included in the retail list price should be added to the registration value price.
5. We recommend that the fee for new certificates of title to automobiles be increased to \$1 and the cost of duplicate certificates be increased from \$2 to \$3.
6. We recommend that the fee for the original set of automobile dealer's license plates be increased from \$25 to \$40; the fee for each additional set of plates be increased from \$5 to \$10; and that dealers be given unrestricted business use of such plates.

Trucks & Trailers

1. We recommend that the registration fee for trucks be determined upon the basis of the power unit rather than the power unit and trailer combined. We also recommend that a \$10 registration fee be placed upon all trailers. We believe this change would eliminate the inequities that exist under the present structure between, for example, a truck with a gross weight of 20 tons, and a truck and trailer combination and

registered for 10 tons. The following example will show the inadequacy.

Truck

Truck and Trailer

Gross weight 10 tons
Annual Fee - \$115

Gross weight 20 tons
Annual Fee \$190 - 10 tons for Truck
Annual Fee \$ 60 - 10 tons for Trailer
Total \$240 - 20 tons for Combination

The suggested registration fee based upon power units only would be as follows:

<u>Gross Weight</u>	<u>Annual Fee</u>	<u>Average Fee</u>	<u>Annual Fee Per Ton</u>
1 ton or less	\$ 40	\$ 35.54	\$10.00
2 1/2	100	88.01	14.67
3 1/2	200	177.00	25.00
4 1/2	250	222.27	25.00
5 1/2	300	266.71	25.00
6 1/2	350	311.16	25.00
7 1/2	400	355.61	25.00
8 1/2	450	399.05	25.00
9 1/2	500	443.50	25.00
10 1/2	550	487.94	25.00
11 1/2	600	532.39	25.00
12 1/2	650	576.83	25.00
13 1/2	700	621.28	25.00
14 1/2	750	665.72	25.00
15 1/2	800	710.17	25.00
16 1/2	850	754.61	25.00
17 1/2	900	799.06	25.00
18 1/2	950	843.50	25.00

1. To recommend that the minimum fee on all trucks be \$10.00 with the exception that the minimum fee apply only to new vehicles of 6 tons or less.

Highway Safety

1. To recommend an increase in authorized strength of the Iowa Highway Patrol. The present authorized strength of the Highway Patrol is 300 men. One of the problems encountered on Interstate highways is communication. The manner in which Interstate highways are built to provide the free flow of traffic by restricting all access makes it very difficult for stranded motorists to obtain assistance except from passing motorists. The Department of Public Safety feels one way to overcome the communication problem on Interstate highways is to provide patrolmen to cover the segments of the complicated Interstate system. As more and more miles of Interstate are completed, the need for additional highway patrolmen will become greater.

2. We recommend the repeal of the second paragraph of section 321.196, Code of Iowa, 1962. This paragraph provides authority to the Commissioner of Public Safety "to assign not to exceed ten percent of the total number of Iowa highway safety patrolmen" as Driver's Examiners. The repeal of this provision would give the Commissioner of Public Safety more administrative freedom to shift personnel from Driver's Examination to regular patrol duty.
3. We recommend the creation of a traffic safety coordinating committee of state administrative officials. This committee would be responsible for the coordination of traffic safety programs within the state. Administrators from departments such as Public Safety, Public Instruction, Highway Commission, and Commerce Commission would serve on such a committee.
4. We recommend the issuance of probationary licenses to young drivers. A probationary license is issued to drivers under the age of 18 in Ohio and Indiana, and to drivers under the age of 21 in Connecticut and Minnesota. The probationary license can be revoked for certain violations and the driver cannot obtain another license until he reaches the age when permanent licenses are issued. The highway safety record can only be improved by responsible drivers. We believe it would be well to impress upon young drivers that a drivers license is a privilege, and the operation of a motor vehicle is a great responsibility.

Highway Commission

1. We recommend to the General Assembly that legislation be enacted to define the proper role of the Iowa State Highway Commission as a policy-making body, and to constitute an Iowa State Highway Department, whose chief executive officer should be the Chief Engineer, responsible to the Commission for carrying out its approved policies, for operating the Department, and for recommending revised policy--all within the framework of a statement of legislative purposes defining the general powers and duties of the Department.

Responsibility of County Board of Supervisors and County Engineers

1. We recommend that the General Assembly enact legislation rewriting the pertinent laws to define and establish the board of supervisors as a policy-making body; to prevent the board of supervisors from personally assuming duties as a superintendent or a foreman or other participant in actual construction or maintenance operations on secondary roads; and to designate the county engineer as the executive officer, responsible for the actual execution of all construction and maintenance of secondary roads within the county and for the approval of all bills for secondary road work to the extent that no expenditures may be made from secondary road funds without the signed approval of the county engineer.

Road Use Tax Fund

1. We recommend that any new or increased road use revenue go to the road use tax fund and be allocated in the same manner as such fund is presently allocated.

Sales Tax Refund for State Agencies

1. We recommend that subsection six of section 422.45, Code of Iowa, 1962, be amended to entitle state administrative agencies, such as the Iowa State Highway Commission, to obtain refunds of state sales tax provided for in that subsection. Subsection six of section 422.45 provides for a refund of sales and use tax paid by contractors in fulfilling contracts with the state when the property upon which the tax is paid becomes the property of the state.

Miscellaneous

Purchase of Machinery by Counties

1. We recommend that section 309.40, Code of Iowa, 1962, be amended to include that all purchaser or leased purchaser of machinery in excess of \$5,000 be advertised and a public hearing held by counties.

Road Maintenance and Construction Contracts between Cities and Counties

2. We recommend that section 391.2, Code of Iowa, 1962, be amended to allow counties to contract for work construction and maintenance with cities and towns regardless of the size of such city or town.

Regulation of Billboards

3. We recommend that if any control is desired of commercial signs along all highways, counties and municipalities exercise such control under present zoning authority.

Diagonal Highways

4. We recommend that section 313.8, Code of Iowa, 1962, be amended to repeal the diagonal highway restriction.

Secondary Road Research Fund

5. We recommend that sections 310.34, 310.35 and 310.36, Code of Iowa, 1962, be repealed. These sections were inadvertently not repealed by Senate File 466 of the 55th General Assembly. Section 212.2, Code 1962, provides funds which may be used for secondary road research.

Miscellaneous Items

Platting of Rural Subdivisions

5. We recommend, in order to give boards of supervisors authority to reject plats filed containing unimproved streets, that section 506.15, Code of Iowa, 1962, be amended to read as follows:

"All road plans, plats, and field notes for rural subdivisions shall first be approved by the board of supervisors and the county engineer, and then filed and recorded by the auditor before the subdivision is laid out and platted, and if any proposed rural subdivision is within one mile of the corporate limits of any city or town such road plans shall also be approved by the city engineer or council of the adjoining municipality. In the event such road plans are not approved or herein provided such roads shall not become a part of any road system as defined in Chapter 306."

Continuing Study

6. We recommend that study of highway matters be continued and that the Iowa General Assembly establish a Highway Study Committee composed similar to the Committee making this report. We recommend the area of study would be as broad as is possible by such a Committee.

Access Control

Authority to establish access control on primary highways is vested with the State Highway Commission; section 306A.10, Code of Iowa, 1962. The Highway Commission is authorized to promulgate rules and regulations on access control.

Objections to the rules and regulations on access control were registered by some property owners when access to their property was regulated.

In cases where misunderstanding developed over the wording of signs on primary highways which read "Access Restricted on this Highway. For Information Apply to the State Highway Commission at Ames." The fact that a highway had such a sign has resulted in creating a cloud on the title of abutting property owners. Another case where a cloud on the title of property has occurred is when individuals sign applications for right of access.

The Highway Commission reviewed the rules and regulations on access control in 1962, and adopted revised rules in October. The purpose of the revised rules was to remove some of the objectionable features of previous rules. The Highway Commission passed a resolution at the same time stating that signs posted on primary highways stating "Access Restricted on this Highway" were for "informational purposes only and it was not the intent, nor does the Iowa State Highway Commission claim, that such signs create any property rights in the Iowa State Highway Commission for the State of Iowa in or to property abutting such right of way."

The Highway Study Committee recognizes the importance of access control on primary highways in the state. The Committee recognizes the rights of property owners in matters of access control. The Committee has given general approval to the revised rules and regulations on access control as promulgated in October, 1961.

The Committee feels that if legislation is required to resolve any question or closed on the title of property owners, such corrective legislation should be enacted.

LEGISLATION

The subcommittee on legislation is presently drafting legislation to implement the Committee recommendations. Upon an order of the chair of the subcommittee, appropriate legislation will be introduced in the 60th General Assembly. In the interest of better highways for the State of Iowa, the Committee desires careful consideration of the legislature's proposals.

Minority Report

No. 1

We the undersigned members of the Highway Study Committee, in addition to the recommendations made by the full Committee, make the following recommendations:

1. We recommend that the Iowa State Highway Commission give high priority to the removal of existing curbing and the widening of all 16 and 20 foot primary pavement to at least 24 feet wide. The Commission should also give priority to reconstruction work needed to meet traffic requirements on such roads. Each road should be completed as soon as possible without waiting several years to complete work on a single road. We recommend a change in the law to this effect.
2. We recommend that the present proposed inter-state highway system be completed before work is begun on the proposed freeway system as recommended by the Automobile Safety Foundation Report. Such freeway system should only be constructed if the Federal government contributes by paying 90% of the cost.
3. We believe that the Iowa State Highway Commission is spending far too much money on expensive by-pass and interchanges. Each new foot of ground added to the present road system must be maintained in the future. We believe that if the present course being followed by the highway commission is pursued, maintenance costs in the future will be so high as to prohibit new construction.

John J. Brown
J. Lewis Fisher
Harold O. Fischer
Dewey E. Goode
Merle W. Jagedorn
Ken Robinson

Minority Report

No. 2

Opening Statement

Some very important issues concerning the future development of our road and street system in Iowa were discussed by the Study Committee but without sufficient support to make recommendations thereon.

We, the undersigned, believe that the following items are of sufficient importance to receive immediate consideration at this time.

1. Urban Freeways.
2. Reclassification of the road system.
3. Funds for research.
4. Increase in the State Gas Tax.
5. Matching of Federal funds for Interstate and deferred highways.

Urban Freeways In Iowa

We must find ways to meet the ever increasing requirements of cars on streets which clog our streets and are becoming a more and more serious problem each passing day. The increased social and commercial needs of our metropolitan areas are placing tremendous demands on our road and street facilities. Delay in solving these problems will have a very detrimental effect on our cities and especially our central business districts.

As a city grows in population and in area, the need for better highways, facilities grows with it. Highway transportation is the most popular and most used method of transportation for both people and goods. Although only 12% of our highway mileage in Iowa is urban, these highways carries 42% of all highway traffic. The development and promotion of urban freeways will also develop the economic strength and increase the tax base of our cities.

Urban freeways are:

1. Safer - Two to four times safer than conventional streets.
2. Carry more traffic - as much as three times more than conventional streets.
3. Save time - measured in time, freeways are cutting distances in half.

4. Pay for themselves - save 2¢ per mile of accident and operating costs.
5. Spur economic growth - Alfred Marshall, the English economist, once said that the dominate factor in the industrial development of the western world was not manufacturing, but transportation.

This state should proceed as rapidly as possible with the planning, engineering and construction of primary freeways in our cities of 50,000 population or greater. The backlog and new construction of needed urban freeways as programmed by the needs study, developed by the Automotive Safety Foundation for the period from 1961 to 1980, was fourteen million dollars annually for the first five years alone.

Although freeways cost more to build in urban areas, the density of the traffic makes them the lowest cost roads per vehicle mile traveled of any portion of the road system including the most outlying rural areas. Freeways will bring the suburbs and our downtown areas more closely together for the definite benefit of all.

Highway Research

The need for continuing research is very essential to the progress and economy of all segments of the road systems. New methods and materials for road construction are in constant demand and only through research can these needs be met.

Highway Classification

Road system classification is the heart of a sound road program in our primary, secondary and urban systems. Reclassification was the most stressed recommendation made by the Automotive Safety Foundation in their study of Iowa's road needs. It permits us to plan for balanced progress of all systems and for balanced progress within each system. Without it, long range planning is less effective than it should be. Here is what reclassification does.

1. It provides equal service where conditions are similar.
2. It permits the establishment of the proper degree of access control.

3. It permits the development and application of different sufficiency rating systems.
4. It permits sound construction standards to meet engineering needs.
5. It permits the expenditure of road funds where the need is greatest.

Gasoline Tax Increase

Economic growth is the continued long term increase in real income per capita. A balanced economy is essential to economic growth.

The present concern for highway development, due to the fact that Iowa is at present twenty-five million dollars annually short of being able to bring our roads up to twenty-year program standards; and due to the fact that our highways are further deteriorating at a rapid rate, is an expression of fear that our highway transportation system is a bottleneck which could seriously retard our economic growth.

Some of us on the Committee are disturbed by the refusal of the Committee as a whole to recognize the urgency of increased highway development in Iowa. We do not believe that the saturation point has been reached in motor fuel taxation.

Despite efforts by some interests to arouse public sentiment against the gasoline tax, it is still the most practical and the most proper means of supporting highways. The Iowa gas tax is below the national average. Twenty-two states have a higher rate of tax and eighteen states have the same rate.

Highways have long been the prime aspect of our physical plant, providing movement and accessibility to people and goods. New concepts of planning and development must include highway development in order to service and guide the ever growing metropolitan areas.

Conclusion

We therefore make the following recommendations to the 60th General Assembly. With them we ask the continued support of all members of the General Assembly in the advancement of a long range, adequate and soundly financed highway program for the economic future of Iowa.

1. We recommend that the Iowa State Highway Commission reclassify the primary and secondary road system substantially in accordance with the recommendations made by the Automotive Safety Foundation Report which would include establishment of certain primary routes, both rural and urban, as a freeway system.
2. We also feel that the repeal of Sections 310.34, .35 and .36, of the Code as recommended by the Committee, will certainly eliminate research within the counties and will jeopardize the receipt of federal aid to the farm-to-market road fund. The Federal Aid Act of 1962 requires the top one and one-half percent of federal aid funds be matched and spent for research.

We also feel a percentage of funds allocated to cities and towns under Section 312.2, Code of Iowa, 1962, should be set aside for research.

We recommend that Sections 310.34, 310.35, and 310.36, Code of Iowa, 1962, not be repealed.

3. We recommend a one cent increase on motor vehicle fuel tax with the additional funds distributed as set out in Section 312.2, Code of Iowa, 1962.
4. We recommend that Section 312.2, subsection 6, Code of Iowa, 1962, be amended to set the amount credited as matching funds for federal funds for interstate highways at one-ninth of the federal allotment to Iowa rather than a fixed amount.
5. We recommend that the matching funds for interstate highways provided by Section 312.2, subsection 6, Code of Iowa, 1962, be credited monthly rather than annually.
6. We recommend that Section 313.21, Code of Iowa, 1962, be amended to strike the twenty-five percent limitation on the primary road construction fund, of funds which may be spent in cities and towns.

J. F. Arthurs, Jr.
Robert Keir
Hiles Sutera
Martin Wiley