

ENGINEERING COST EQUALS 6 PER CENT

Costs of Engineering Compared With Cost of Construction of Highway

FIGURES COMPILED FROM 14 PROJECTS

Comparison Throws Light on Question That Has Been Much Discussed.

Since the highway program of Oregon was inaugurated there has been more or less discussion as to the cost of engineering. Charges have been made that the state was paying too much for engineering and that it was amounting to little less than graft.

For the benefit of readers of this edition the Observer presents a list of various road projects completed in Wallowa, Union, and Baker counties, giving the engineering cost, together with the total cost of each.

North Powder-Haines section—Engineering, \$7,590.43. Total construction cost, \$115,202.74.

Baker-Haines section—Engineering, \$8,710.78. Total construction cost, \$105,689.77.

Nelson-Malheur county line—Engineering, \$7,454.57. Total construction cost, \$101,381.16.

Canyon section—Engineering, \$9,369.43. Total construction cost, \$129,904.80.

Union County
Island City-La Grande-Hot Lake—Engineering, \$11,013.16. Total construction cost, \$223,880.50.

Hot Lake-Union—Engineering, \$5,333.33. Total construction cost, \$76,612.99.

Kamela-Oro Dell—Engineering, \$2,332.56. Total construction cost, \$98,268.23.

Island City-Elgin—(Grading only). Engineering, \$5,399.46. Estimated total construction cost, grading only, \$78,000.00.

Wallowa Hill section—Engineering, \$8,254.01. Total construction cost (estimated), \$163,711.21.

Kamea-Hilgard—Engineering, \$7,295.18. Total construction cost (grading only), \$181,428.95.

Wallowa County
Wallowa Canyon-Lostine—(Includes distance from head of Wallowa canyon to a point two miles beyond Lostine). Engineering, \$10,815.00. Total construction cost, \$236,688.04.

Enterprise-Joseph—Engineering, \$5,243.55. Total construction cost, \$74,148.94.

Wallowa Canyon—Engineering, \$17,103.57. Total estimated cost, \$169,421.70. Distance 8.29 miles.

The foregoing are only part of the various projects in the three mentioned counties.

The total for engineering on the foregoing is \$106,116.03. The cost of construction totals \$1,754,948.33.00, therefore the cost of engineering is a little over 6 per cent of the total cost of the 14 projects covered.

Cars Used For "Lolling" Now

Delegated to innocuous despatch are the piazza, piano and parlor. Father staved for years to fill heart's desire of mother and daughter for a front porch, piano and parlor and now that he has paid for them he has had to mortgage them to fill a new heart's desire for an automobile.

Before gasoline became more popular than popular songs home sweet home was not so sweet without the piazza, piano and parlor. And with everybody venting them at the same time home sweet home was not so sweet with them.

In summer pa and ma loved to loll in the chairs on the piazza, but daughter loved to loll in the piazza hammock. Pa and Ma lollied in-doors.

When winter winds began to blow pa and ma loved to lounge in the parlor evening after work and dishes were done, but it was too cold for daughter on the porch swing. Pa and ma lollied in the kitchen.

How mother and father enjoyed the good old songs and hymns on the piano in those old days. They bought daughter a baby grand and daughter bought "You Grand Baby."

Mother and father enjoyed the old hymns in the church.

Alas and alack! This piazza is now deserted. The piano is quite still and the parlor is dark but empty. Everybody is out for a spin.

Father and mother would just love to spend an evening at home on the piazza but daughter cannot drive the car. When winter winds blow again father and mother think now is their opportunity to enjoy that easy parlor, but daughter says the car is closed and the roads opened.

Even the maid, her beau having a Henry, has no use in the world for the piazza, piano and parlor.

Don't try to buy a thing too cheap. From those with things to sell—Because the goods will have to keep. And time will have to tell.

The price you paid you'll soon forget. The goods you get will stay; The price you will not long regret—The quality you may.

Timid folk no longer dread to walk along the street as in the days of the horse's supremacy. In the old days walking past the hitching rails was one horse's head after another. Some of the dabbins were mean enough to take a bite out of a passing arm.

Sitting in With the Highway Commission

(Continued from page 1)

only take six million dollars to do the job.

There were a few, though, who suggested that the amount required would be nearer sixty millions. In those days six million dollars was a lot of money. It was a time when one hundred thousand dollars looked like a million.

If there had been a general realization that sixty million dollars were to be expended it is a safe bet that Bines and his campaign committee would never have put the six million dollar bond issue over.

Now that sixty millions have been spent it is of some interest to take a retrospect over what the millions have yielded. In the state highway system there are embraced 4450 miles. Of this mileage the total figures for improved highways are 325 miles paved, 1197 miles gravelled or macadamized, and 475 miles of new grade which has not been surfaced with gravel. Up to this point the total expenditure was \$59,494,222.39. Of this amount \$24,284,757.78 has been spent east of the summit of the Cascade mountains.

In other words 36.7 per cent of the total has been expended in eastern Oregon and 33.2 in western Oregon, the summit of the Cascades being taken as the dividing line.

Eastern Oregon Gets Good Share.
Putting it another way eastern Oregon with a population of 24.5 per cent, an assessed valuation of 25.7 per cent and an area of 67.2 per cent has received 49.7 per cent of the total expenditure.

It will not be contended by any reasonable person that the eastern part of the state has unduly profited. The figures are given merely as a matter of information.

Continuing the comparison, it is estimated that through the motor increase fees eastern Oregon contributes 19 per cent and western Oregon 81 per cent. Of the gasoline tax 26.2 per cent comes from eastern Oregon and 73.8 per cent from western Oregon.

Expenditures on state highways have been distributed from the following funds:

Funds	Eastern Oregon	Western Oregon
State	\$14,645,662.25	\$27,291,853.07
County	5,315,355.18	5,917,547.39
Railroad	113,258.71	167,578.24
Gov't	4,226,481.84	2,822,188.32

Total \$24,284,757.78 \$35,299,455.31

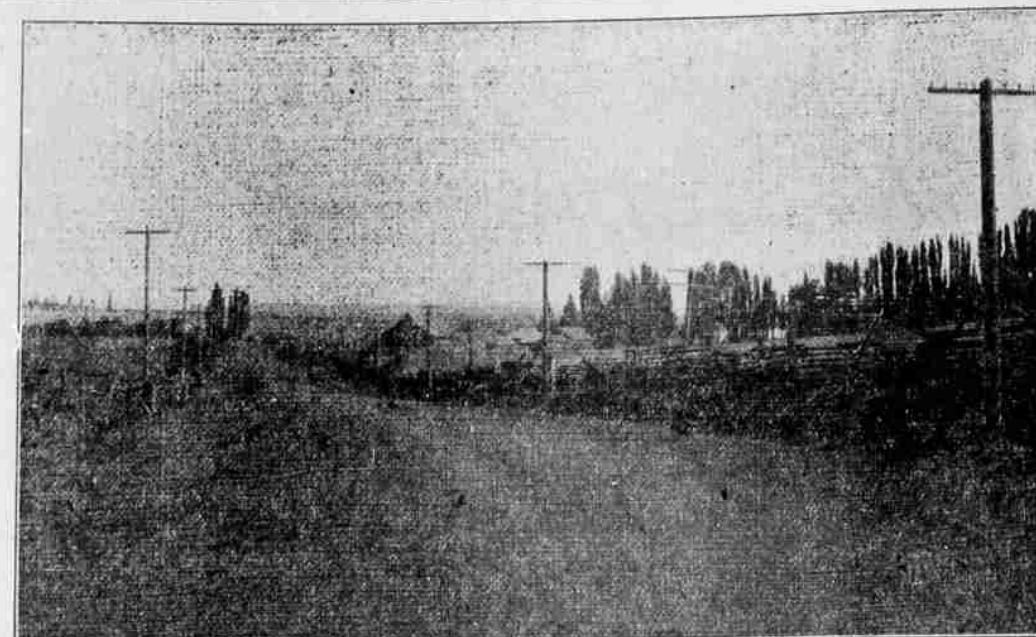
Of the state and federal funds western Oregon has received 61.8 per cent and eastern Oregon 38.2 per cent.

It will also be noted that the contribution from counties is larger in eastern Oregon than in western Oregon.

So far as western Oregon is concerned the era of construction ought to be at an end. With the exception of the Coast or Roosevelt highway which will require several millions to complete all the main trunk roads on the west side of the mountains are finished and from now on it should be merely a question of upkeep.

Traffic Growth Continues.
Conditions are different east of the mountains with its large under-population and to the public confidence

A Macadam Road That Is Perfect



Near Blanchard farm between Elgin and Minam—said to be the best macadamized road in Oregon—on the La Grande-Joseph Highway.

developed areas. There is also the growing traffic between the main centers of population which will in a short time demand the extension of the paved surface from The Dalles to the Idaho line over the Old Oregon Trail and also into the Wallowa valley with its attractive summer resorts.

Speaking of Wallowa reminds us that when the present improvement on that section was contemplated there was no vision beyond Wallowa lake. The only thing in view was a dead end road.

There is a broader vision now. The horizon has receded into Washington and Idaho and the road from La Grande to Enterprise has grown to an interstate road which on account of its scenic beauties will draw the transcontinental traveler.

Public sentiment will soon demand the full improvement of this road from Enterprise to Flora and thence on to the state line to connect with the Washington and Idaho systems.

The growth of the Wallowa road from a local to an interstate highway is illustrative of the whole highway development in Oregon.

People Loyal to Roads.
One of the most remarkable phases of the state's highway development from a philosophical standpoint is that the expenditure of such a vast amount of money for public purpose has been attended with so little criticism.

This may be attributed both to the absence of public opinion as to the necessity and to the public confidence

in the ability and integrity of the state highway commission. In comparison with the results obtained by other states Oregon has received better value than any other.

While it is true there has been some criticism it will be found that it has been based on political interest, misinformation and lack of knowledge of what is being done.

The only way to form a fair judgment as to the development of the highway system as a whole and not from a local view only. In cases of local criticism it will often be found that the local county authorities have been at fault through lack of cooperation and failure to subordinate private to public interest.

It will not be contended that the highway commission has made no mistakes. These have been in making locations and type of construction.

Experiments Were Necessary.
There has also been some waste due to the fact that road building is still in its experimental stage. There are soil conditions and the unknown factor of the volume of traffic which will develop.

For a great deal of the waste public sentiment must take its share of blame. There has been an insistence on doing the work right off the bat. In road making as in everything else has been shown the American characteristic of wanting something done just as soon as it is wanted.

Urged on by this sentiment the road building authority had often departed from those principles which

would govern private enterprises. In view of the fact that public work can not be carried on as economically as private work it is surprising that there has not been a greater waste of state road funds.

The state has been fortunate in the personnel of the state highway commission. They have been men of broad enough vision to realize from the start that it was essential to first develop the main trunk highways.

If they had yielded to the pressure to concentrate the work in influential communities there would have followed a dissipation of the funds in series of disconnected projects.

Almost as interesting as the evolution of the state highway system has been the development of the highway commissioners. They would come on the board with their local prejudices and viewpoints, but under the fire of conflicting local interests and study of the general situation they would begin to expand and get a broader view. It takes about two years to make a good highway commissioner.

Thus far politics using the word in its ordinary acceptation, have been kept out of the highway commission almost entirely but it can not be predicted that this situation will prevail in the future. Probably one reason why the post has been so free from politics is that there were plenty of available funds and there was no occasion to fight over them.

Every locality was assured of getting something. In coming days road money is going to be scarcer being confined

principally to federal funds and the necessary state funds to match. Counties have exhausted their resources for many years. With the small amount available for new construction it is to be expected that there will be considerable strife between sections "for the pot."

Another thing that has kept politics out of the highway commission is that Governors Withycombe and Olcott both had the good sense not to interfere with the commission's policy and methods.

Whether Governor Pierce will be able to keep self respecting men on the commission by a policy of non-interference remains to be demonstrated.

It is already apparent that since he has moved into the chief executive's office at the state house Governor Pierce has realized that the state highway program has been pretty well managed, considering the limitations of human nature.

POEME
A half a yard of ribbon,
Some silk of mellow brown,
A little bit of golden lace,
Make an evening gown.

A coat with swallow tail,
Vest, trousers, tie, and dickey,
Silk hat, gloves, shiny pumps,
For rent—eleven fifty.

A feminine writer says men are a nuisance at an afternoon tea because they talk about their work. What work?

Over Forty Years For Us

Our's is the Oregon Trail Drug Store

Established in the old town over forty years ago

And no one ever got anything but a square deal here, ask them

Just try us once for service and notice the treatment you receive

When you see our advertisements, read them for special helps
Watch our candy specials. Bring us your prescriptions and your picture developing.

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