

Columbia River Town Now Choosing New Building Site

Eugene—The relocated city of Boardman, Ore., may see a four-fold increase in its population and a corresponding surge in the number of business establishments in the next 15 years, if the Boeing company's nearby rocket test facilities are placed in full operation.

This estimate of Boardman's future is contained in a report recently published by the University of Oregon bureau of municipal research and service.

The study was done in collaboration with the Seattle office of Cornell, Howland, Hayes and Merryfield, consulting engineers, and was financed by funds from Boardman and from the U.S. Housing and Home Finance Agency, Growth Studies.

The future population and economic growth of Board-

man is being studied in preparation for choosing a new site for the town. The present site, on the Columbia river in Morrow county 162 miles east of Portland, will be inundated in 1977 by the pool created by the John Day dam now under construction on the Columbia near the mouth of the John Day river.

Future reports from the Bureau and the consulting engineers will contain recommendations for a specific new townsite, detailed town plans, and drafts of zoning and subdivision regulations. One tentative new townsite which has been suggested would place the community a mile southeast of its present location within Boardman's extended city limits.

One of the chief factors in Boardman's future is the development of the Boardman Space Age industrial park, a 100,000-acre tract southwest of the town which has been

leased by the state of Oregon to the Boeing company for "its activities in the development of space vehicles," the report points out.

Crew To Arrive

First step in this development will be the arrival of a temporary 50-man construction force in the Boardman area to build the structural portions of a rocket engine test stand. It is anticipated that this work will begin this year.

When work on this structure is finished, Boardman may expect a permanent population increase of 30 to 50 people, including maintenance personnel, their families, and "community support workers," who will provide goods and services to the new residents. This increase will come, providing residential and commercial facilities are available, the report says.

If the facility is further developed to provide complete instrumentation and all equipment necessary for a single test stand capable of running static tests of rockets with three to five million-pound thrusts, another 30 to 50 people will arrive in Boardman. It is "reasonably certain" that this will occur within one to three years, according to the report.

Over the long range, if the test facilities are fully developed, Boardman may expect a population increase of "up to 400 persons," the report states. In addition, the town must be prepared to provide as many as a hundred transient workers who will come to the facility for rocket test firings.

"Planning for the development of the townsite should be such as to allow for expansion to accommodate this ad-

ditional population, but no actual investment in facilities in anticipation of this population is justified at the present time," the report states.

One drawback to Boardman's participation in the space age will be the noise from rocket tests, which will occur about once a month initially and last for two or three minutes. The frequency of tests will increase as the facilities are expanded.

At the present site of Boardman, about 11 miles from the test stand location, and at any of the new townsites thus far proposed, the sound will reach approximately 100 decibels, a noise level "similar to that of a nearby riveter driving rivets in steel construction work," according to the report.

"This noise level may become a serious cause of complaint from residents," the report warns, and the noise cannot be avoided unless the town is moved from 25 to 30 miles away. Concerted efforts are being made to minimize the noise and vibration, the Boeing company has reported.

In addition to the test facilities, other developments may boost Boardman's present population of 157 to 600 or 700 in 1977 and increase the number of business facilities from the present 18 to 40 or 50.

Among these factors is the increased traffic which may be expected on Interstate 80 North, when it replaces U. S. Highway 30 in the next few years.

Much of Boardman's present population and employ-

ment is dependent on its highway location, and its future economic health will depend partially on easy access from the new highway and space for as many as 23 traffic-oriented businesses at its new

townsite, according to the report.

The development of the John Day pool as an important recreational area for water sports enthusiasts, hunters, fishermen, and tourists will also add to Boardman's economic potential, the report says.

In line with these recrea-

tional aims, the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers has proposed a waterfront park at Boardman, and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service has proposed the development of a 29,730-acre waterfowl management area in the Boardman vicinity.

The Corps of Engineers has reported that Boardman is

suitably located as a Columbia river port, which could move 42,100 tons of cargo annually. This cargo would consist mainly of petroleum products, but could include a portion of Morrow county farm products, if county roads from upland farm and wheat areas were improved, the researchers point out.



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