

Dunsmuir Bypass Viewed With Mixed Feelings

By PEGGY WALSH

DUNSMUIR — Dunsmuir, the first community in Northern California to face complete bypass by conversion of Highway 99 into a four-lane, limited access freeway, views the beginning of construction with mixed feelings.

Some regard the step as progressive, acknowledging some challenge and adjustment on the part of the town. Others predict highway bypassing will clamp a

death mask upon the city with the loss of the heavy north-south traffic which now funnels through Dunsmuir's narrow main street.

Bids for the five million dollar project will be let July 30 with construction of the 3.7 mile segment of freeway to begin in early August. Already a portent of things to come is clearly visible along the town's west perimeter where nearly 160 residences and other structures have been razed in the freeway's path.

The availability of federal highway construction funds has updated the Highway 99 program. Demands of the citizenry that possible recurrence of last year's truck tragedy which killed two and smashed a block of store fronts be forestalled has accelerated the construction through Dunsmuir. Property acquisition started

several years ago but original state division of highway plans called for progressing northward from Redding, segment by segment, until Dunsmuir was reached. Now Sacramento Canyon plans have been shelved and the Dunsmuir bypass speeded up by about two years.

Francis McEnerney, Dunsmuir merchant, has started a 20-home building program in north Dunsmuir and others are building one or two for sale.

Lee Huddle, president of the chamber of commerce and jewelry store owner in downtown Dunsmuir, foresees a quieter, more leisurely shopping area. Parking should be simpler once traffic pile-ups cease on Florence Avenue, present route of the two-lane highway. Business transactions will no longer be interrupted by the noise of heavy gears grinding or brakes squealing, Huddle commented. As many as 5,000 vehicles per day are now channeled through town.

Dunsmuir has experienced five years without a pedestrian traffic death. (The two men killed last summer were in a parked car.) This record has been established at the expense of nerves and agility, most citizens agree. Moving the through traffic away from the major school crossing will allow many mothers relief from concern over this hazard.

"No one will come into our town," is the cry of the hand wringing contingent. They point to the decay of Sacramento Avenue, the original business street, when the present highway was constructed on Florence Avenue in the 1920s. "Business will move to the highway," they contend.

The response of highway engineers that commercial development along freeways will be prohibited and all communities will eventually be bypassed does not convince this group.

Dunsmuir's mayor, J. Morgan Jones, is vociferous in his opinion

that had he not expanded to the four-lane highway at the north approach to Dunsmuir, his motel business would now be defunct. The four-lane north approach to Dunsmuir was completed about five years ago and plans to convert it into a limited access freeway are in the blueprint stage.

Armond Brunel, another motel owner and former president of the chamber of commerce, is going to wait and see. He says studies of the New England areas show communities bypassed by trunk highways suffered a lag from four to seven years but nearly every community reports complete recovery plus increased business.

However, planning statistics have established that people will shop in an attractive shopping area close to adjacent parking facilities. Provisions for offstreet parking and modern store fronts, well lighted and arranged stores may be more of a contributing factor to Dunsmuir's business status than loss of heavy traffic. Property owners and business men have no plan of action as yet on this aspect of the town's prosperity.

Meanwhile construction crews will descend on the community in August. Plans call for a four-lane divided highway with three access interchanges and underpasses at Oak Street and Willow Street linking the high school area with the city proper.

Herbert Miles, state division of highways engineer, has explained to the Dunsmuir City Council that grading of the 100 foot right-of-way will be the first phase of the project. Surfacing of the new freeway will be delayed until the spring of 1960 to allow for settling and drainage.

Ellis Engle has been assigned as the state's resident engineer on the Dunsmuir job. He has set up an office at the southern limits of the town and currently has a 20-man surveying crew determining final details prior to construction.

Marines Promote Chas. Swafford

Pfc. Charles A. Swafford, son of Mr. and Mrs. Charles F. Swafford, 930 North Ninth Street, was meritoriously promoted to his present rank at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot in San Diego last week.

Presented during graduating ceremonies, the promotion is given to men completing their 11 weeks recruit training with a display of outstanding initiative in learning and of leadership qualities, combined with a high degree of military proficiency.

Prior to his four-year enlistment with the Marines in April, 1958, Swafford had graduated in 1957 from Sacred Heart Academy where he lettered in football and track for four years, and in basketball for two.

Swafford will now receive four weeks field training at the Camp Pendleton Base in Oceanside, California, where he will learn the advanced phases of infantry field tactics. He will then be assigned to duty with the First Marine Division at that base.

Gordon Takes Back Old Job

Klamath County Court yesterday appointed M. B. (Buster) Gordon as county civil defense director.

Gordon last May submitted a resignation from the post to become effective July 1. However, he reconsidered and agreed to take the job for another year.

Gordon's salary will be \$100 monthly for the part-time position, jointly paid by the city and county. His salary before was \$59 a month.

The director post calls for working with state civil defense officials and coordinating local agencies for action in case of emergency. Gordon will work with police, fire, medical and utilities officials as well as communicators and Red Cross.

He would be in charge of any mass evacuation or evacuation drill, or of coping with any sudden disaster or disaster drill. Gordon is also chief of the Suburban Fire Department.

This area has now been placed in the "strategic" category by defense officials because of the new jet fighter base which will be installed at Kingsley Field.

When it is in operation, more elaborate civil defense programs may be set up.

County Assigned Display Booth

Klamath County has been assigned its display booth for the Oregon State Fair in Salem, August 28-September 6, the Commerce Chamber was notified today.

The county will have Booth 7 in the National Resources Building.

Chamber Assistant Manager Ed Brotherhood, in charge of developing and installing the booth, said its contents will be similar to last year's.

To go on display will be this area's industrial products, including lumber, its agricultural produce and photographs of its tourist attractions, including Crater and other lakes.

Brotherhood will get the booth's components together here, but they will be assembled at the fair.

He said he would welcome discussion with anyone who has ideas or suggestions for the booth.

Meeting Hears Merrill Band

MERRILL — The recently formed Women's Drum Corps of the Women of the Moose, Merrill Chapter No. 18, took part in the proceedings at the annual Oregon State Moose Convention in Tillamook recently.

Wearing new uniforms consisting of gold blouses, gray skirts and purple ties, the corps made appearances at both Friday and Saturday evening dances, the Saturday parade and talent show on Sunday. The group was led by Joanne Gestvang, majorette.

Representing the Women of the Moose and the Loyal Order of Moose, Merrill Chapters, at the convention were Mr. and Mrs. Paul Tschirky, Mr. and Mrs. Woodie Prince, Mr. and Mrs. Tommy Slaughter, Mrs. Rose Baley, Betty Jo Brightman, Katy Schweigert, Lucille Grey, Polly Tipton and Joanne Gestvang.

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