

Planning for the Future



Planning Division

David K. Witheford



These are only some of the valuable studies made by the Planning Division.

The average Delaware motorist comes into contact with the State Highway Department's Planning Division every time his car's wheels bump over a piece of rubber tubing laid across a highway.

The rubber tubing sends a signal back to an automatic counter and the driver becomes a statistic... one of more than a million bits of information accumulated each year by the Planning Division and turned into trends, reports, evaluations, conclusions and recommendations.

The Planning Division lived up to its name last year as it made it possible for the Department to gauge accurately the growing needs for its services imposed by a growing state with its rapidly increasing traffic flow.

The Division issued 18 tables and 19 studies which the Department has used, and continues to use, to try to gear itself to face the unknown changes in the years ahead.

Planning Division reports covered traffic density surveys, mapping, economic impact studies, rural road analysis and road life studies. And never satisfied, it re-evaluated its own road rating system, setting newer, more accurate standards.

By year's end, with its rural road inventory run through the Department's new IBM system, the Planning Division was able to account for every inch of roadway in the State, including up-to-the-minute corrections showing changes in construction, reconstruction, surfacing, re-

surfacing and widening.

The State Highway Department, as a result, knows its road system today as well as the average man knows the face he shaves every morning.

The Division's work isn't all statistic gathering, however. It drew up over a dozen town agreements between the various municipalities and the State Highway Department covering problems of mutual concern.

Its field teams ranged over every one of the State's rural roads and the growing suburban road network setting up evaluating systems for them.

The Planning Division also prepared the new Official Highway Map of Delaware. More than 87,000 copies have been distributed. Map preparation was also done for county maintenance maps and revised maps of the State's 51 incorporated communities. In addition, map sketches of construction detours were prepared for publication in local newspapers.

A look at the titles of two of the studies made by the Planning Division during the year give an idea of the scope of its service: The studies ranged from "Evaluation of Needs for Routes U.S. 113 and 14 in Sussex" to a report on the "Future State Highway Debt Service Requirements."

From road planning studies to the field of finance are all part of the year's work.