

TOMORROW AND TOMORROW

Engineers, in planning and building highways, face very much the same kind of problem as does the homemaker devising a family budget. That is, it is easier to work with today's problems than it is to plan for the future. The budget-maker who spends all of his income on the present is indeed in trouble. The highway planner who does this is in even more serious trouble. However, the homemaker has only the job of convincing the few members of his family of the need for future planning.

The highway Engineer has a much more difficult job convincing the citizens of his State that money spent today will bear interest in the times ahead. Yet it must be done if the highways planned and built today are to have lasting value for the future.

With rare exceptions, humans who predict the future of highways are almost always proved to be wrong when the future arrives. And, significantly, the predictions are usually wrong on the conservative side. For instance, in 1940 "experts" were predicting that motor vehicle ownership would rise from 26 million in 1940 to about 38 million in 1960. This guess was wrong by about 36 million vehicles . . . In 1960 there were 74 million on the roads of America!

In the section that follows in this Report on Highway Services, it is hoped that our citizens will understand that the planning and construction and maintenance work described has two main goals: 1) keep the highways of Delaware adequate for today's needs, and 2) anticipate the needs of our State 20 years from now. Actually, of course, neither goal is ever fully met. Our roads and highways in Delaware are not as good as they should be for today's needs and, no doubt, they will not fully meet the requirements of 1980.

However, given the problems of money, public interest and human error, they are as good as the Department could make them under the circumstances. There are, indeed, few states, if any, which have met the demands of their citizens as well as has Delaware.

Highway Services in Delaware are planned, designed and executed for the benefit of all the citizens of this State! Highway Services are performed with a careful eye to the future and only the future will tell how well the Department has predicted its needs.

