

State Accelerates Highway Projects

By HENRY C. MacARTHUR
Capitol News Service

SACRAMENTO — Good news for highway users of California came from the office of Governor Ronald Reagan this week with the announcement that advance work would begin on more than 30 highway projects throughout the state with a combined value of approximately \$157 million.

Construction on these projects will begin well ahead of schedule, and the locations will be all the way from Humboldt county in the north to San Diego county in the south.

The state is able to undertake the accelerated highway construction program as a direct result of the administration's continuing efforts to make the maximum use of gas tax funds which

are earmarked for highway construction.

"AS A DIRECT result of economies and the application of sound business practices," Governor Reagan said, "the administration is now in a position to step up the overall highway construction program."

The new projects are in addition to the more than \$100 million highway construction program begun in 1967, and will raise this year's budget from \$402 million to more than half a billion dollars.

The added construction, it was pointed out, was accomplished without any increase in gasoline taxes or other highway user costs.

THE GOVERNOR explained that of the \$157 million

for new construction, nearly \$60 million was made possible by careful review and subsequent reduction of funds originally budgeted for the purchasing of rights-of-way.

An additional \$14 million resulted from savings effected in the Department of Motor Vehicles and the California Highway Patrol.

Also, some \$17 million in savings was realized through recent low bids on current highway projects and through administrative savings in the California Division of Highways.

"AS A RESULT," he said, "we will now be in a position to not only save more lives by means of safer highways, but to provide better service to the driving public, and to further stimulate the economy through the contracts for additional construction."

The added construction is scheduled to have a strong and positive effect on the construction industry and labor, as approximately half of each construction dollar is plowed back into on-site, or back-up industry payments.

While the additional construction work will be a boon to highway users, it still does not bring the highway system to the point where it is meeting the demands of highway users. However, with the growth in traffic in California, and the increasing use of the highway system for passenger and freight traffic, this point probably never will be reached.

MEANWHILE, the administration is doing the best it can with the resources it has, and considerable better than had been expected earlier this year.

In effect, the administration and the California Highway Commission are putting the highway users' tax dollar to work at an accelerated pace in actual construction, rather than dragging out the construction over a long period of time.

Wins Northrop Contract

Northrop Corp. has been awarded a contract by the University of California to conduct a study to determine how modern communications can best serve the nine-campus system in the 1970s.

The work will be performed by Page Communications Engineers, Washington-based subsidiary of Northrop.

The study will cover telephone, teletype, data transmission and television services linking the nine campuses. It also will include a plan for a management report system permitting better direction of the entire communications system.

Page specializes in the design, installation and operation of long range communications systems throughout the world. Under the new

Tryouts Set for Trio Of College Productions

Tryouts for three fall plays — "The Crucible," "Billy Budd," and "The Curious Savage" — which will be produced this fall by the El Camino College drama department will be held during the first week of fall classes, according to the two faculty directors, Peter Henderson and Bill Buck.

Henderson has scheduled tryouts for "The Crucible" Sept. 17 and 19 at 7:30 p.m. in the Campus Theater.

"Individuals interested in drama but who work during the day will be especially interested in this play since it will be cast, rehearsed and presented during night time hours," Henderson said.

"FEW PLAYS offer the actor and actress such a variety of roles to pick from as this play," he added. The play includes 10 parts for men ranging in age from 20 to 85. Ages of female characters range from 16 to 75. The play is a drama about the purge of witchcraft in Salem, Mass., in the 1690s.

Tryouts for the other two plays will be held Sept. 16, 17, and 18 at 3 p.m. in the Campus Theater, Buck said.

Twenty-five parts for men of all ages are open for "Billy Budd," a stage adaptation of Herman Melville novel about the sea. "The Curious Savage," a theater-in-the-round production, calls for six women and five men.

Two of the plays will be presented in the Campus Theater — "Billy Budd" Nov. 1, 2, 8, and 9 and "The Crucible" Dec. 6, 7, 13, and 14.

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