

HIGHWAY BEAUTIFICATION

We have stated in the past many times that members of the AGC are as eager to preserve and enhance the beauty of this country as any other group of citizens, but the financial crisis confronting the Nation today raises serious questions as to the wisdom of spending millions of dollars for beautification at this time.

ADVANCE ACQUISITION OF RIGHTS-OF-WAY

In 1955 and again in 1956 when this committee was considering the legislation authorizing construction of the Interstate System, the AGC recommended that adequate provision should be made for the purchase of right-of-way well in advance of construction. This is still our position today. We favor pursuing every means available to reduce the cost of highways and consider the establishment of a revolving fund for the acquisition of right-of-way a significant step. Experience of states which use such a revolving fund has proven that it will minimize the cost of acquiring land by forestalling the development of land which will ultimately be used for highway purposes and will prevent a great deal of the land speculation involved. Additionally, such a fund will facilitate the relocation of both families and businesses and will go a long way toward averting many of the problems we are facing in our urban centers today.

FRINGE PARKING FACILITIES

We refer again to our policy statement, in which we state that we believe that the most practical and economical way to have rapid, efficient transportation from the suburbs to the center city is by the use of exclusive bus lanes on the highways.

The AGC recognizes the need for the development of adequate parking facilities on the outskirts of metropolitan areas, as well as in the center city. We in no way object to the development of fringe parking areas, and agree that they should complement the exclusive bus lanes. Again, however, the cost of their development should not be paid by the highway trust fund without additional money going into the trust fund for this purpose.

Again in accordance with our policy statement, if parking facilities are developed for use of other modes of transportation, such as mass transit, rail or subway lines, we believe that the users of those modes of transportation should pay their share of the cost of the parking facilities.

COMMENTS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS

We note that at least 14 bills have been introduced, five by members of this committee, which would prohibit the withholding of highway funds by the executive branch of the Government.

We do not presume to attempt to advise the legislative that it should place restrictions on the executive. We feel, however, that we should point out to this committee that even as we are advocating the continuation of the highway program on an orderly basis, we are suffering from the effects of cutbacks, past and present, in that same program, and