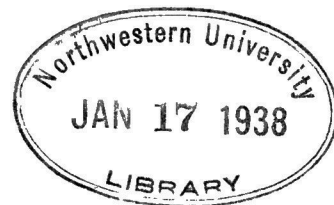


T H E W O R K S P R O G R A M

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--Works Progress Administration--



For Release to Afternoon Newspapers  
Wednesday, January 12, 1938.

97 Percent of WPA Projects Are Result of Local Demands, Report Shows

Approximately 97 percent of all WPA projects originate from proposals of the State or locality they serve, Aubrey Williams, Acting Works Progress Administrator, announced today in making public a report on sponsorship of the various types of work relief.

"These governmental bodies, in addition to proposing the projects and preparing the necessary plans, provide supervision for the labor involved and share in the costs of operation," Mr. Williams explained. "Their contributions go chiefly into provision of materials, equipment and supplies.

"Approximately 79 percent of WPA projects, in terms of value, have been sponsored by municipalities, townships or counties, the governmental body representing the locality benefited. An additional 18 percent have been sponsored by State governments. However, in a number of the projects sponsored by the State, local political subdivisions have functioned as cooperating sponsors, often assuming a major part of the sponsoring functions. In these cases the primary function of the State sponsors has been as coordinating bodies for the supervision of a particular activity.

"Only 3 percent of the value of all projects is in work sponsored by Federal governmental agencies, which may initiate only such operations as are nationwide in scope and conducted on Federal property. The latter is co-sponsored occasionally by local bodies."

Nearly 40 percent of all WPA projects, comprising almost 50 percent of the total project cost estimates, have been sponsored by municipal bodies - those of incorporated boroughs, villages, towns, and cities. City councils, commissioners, and boards of aldermen, boards of education or school boards, park departments, engineering and highway departments, and mayors' offices are among these sponsors. Because of the concentration of unemployed persons in metropolitan centers, the report adds, it is not unexpected to find that cities of at least 100,000 population have sponsored almost a third of WPA projects, as judged by total project costs.

More than a fourth of the projects sponsored by cities involve street work. Other important types among the municipally sponsored projects are projects for improvement of parks and recreational facilities and construction and repair of sewer systems and of public buildings.

The report groups as "township sponsors" the various political subdivisions of counties other than incorporated cities and towns. Although generally known as townships, in the East these county subdivisions are known as towns; elsewhere as wards, districts, beats, or precincts, it is explained. Also included in the township group are districts covering part of a township or parts of several townships.

Projects sponsored by township bodies represent 6 percent of the value of all WPA projects but, usually being small undertakings, they account for nearly 15 percent of the total number. The bulk of the township work (60 percent) is on roads. Also frequently sponsored by township agencies are public buildings, sewer system and other utility, and goods projects, each of which represents nearly 10 percent of the total estimated cost of township undertakings.

Agencies of county governments or of intra-county districts (but not of townships) include such bodies as county commissioners or supervisors, boards of education, farm bureaus, and road commissions. Projects sponsored by county bodies account for 23 percent of the estimated cost of all projects placed in operation through August 31, 1937. Since county sponsors are often concerned with the needs of a rural population, the report points out, "it is not surprising that more than half (55 percent) of the projects they promote involve highway, road, and street work." County organizations frequently act as sponsors of goods projects (chiefly sewing rooms). This type of work accounts for 15 percent of all undertakings sponsored by county bodies and is second in importance only to road and street projects. Conservation and public buildings projects each comprise 7 percent of the total.

Predominant among State sponsored operations are highway projects, representing 36 percent of the total for States. White collar and goods projects are the only other major types which represent more than 10 percent of the cost of the projects sponsored by State agencies, although sanitation and health work also comprises a substantial part

of the total. State sponsoring agencies include State highway departments, industrial commissions, hospitals, universities and colleges, departments of health, and other State departments or establishments directly subordinate to them. A large number of sanitation and health projects and also white collar and goods projects are co-sponsored by the local communities in which they operate.

Two-thirds of the federally sponsored WPA undertakings are white collar projects - censuses, surveys, research studies, library work, and the WPA arts program. Although Federal projects comprise only 3 percent of the estimated cost of all WPA projects, they include 20 percent of all white collar work. Predominating among the federally sponsored projects not involving white collar work are those in the public buildings (representing 14 percent of the total) and conservation groups (5 percent), all of which are nationwide in scope.

The Federal Works Progress Administration is sponsoring two-thirds of all federally sponsored projects. Other Federal agencies that have acted as sponsors include a number of bureaus of regular departments and of both emergency and permanent agencies. Among these are the Forest Service and the Bureaus of Home Economics and Agricultural Economics in the Department of Commerce, the Office of Indian Affairs and the National Park Service of the Department of the Interior, the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Immigration and Naturalization Service of the Department of Labor, the Public Health Service of the Department of the Treasury, and the Corps of Engineers

and the Quartermaster Corps of the War Department. Other Federal agencies acting as sponsors of WPA projects include the Federal Reserve Board, the National Resources Committee, the Securities and Exchange Commission, the Smithsonian Institution, and the Veterans' Administration.

(Attached is a table showing, by types of sponsors, the number and total estimated cost of WPA projects which had been started by August 31, 1937.)

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NUMBER AND ESTIMATED TOTAL COST OF WPA PROJECTS  
PLACED IN OPERATION THROUGH AUGUST 31, 1937  
BY TYPES OF SPONSORS

(Subject to Revision)

Type of Sponsor	Projects		Estimated Total Cost	
	Number	Percent	Amount	Percent
TOTAL	155,037	100.0	\$4,539,075,664	100.0
Federal Agencies	<u>5,715</u>	<u>3.7</u>	<u>142,360,579</u>	<u>3.1</u>
WPA	4,349	2.7	101,595,825	2.2
Other	1,466	1.0	40,764,754	0.9
States	24,261	15.6	819,119,066	18.0
Counties	41,355	26.7	1,037,996,621	22.9
Townships	22,488	14.5	275,465,708	6.1
Municipalities (Population)	<u>60,908</u>	<u>39.3</u>	<u>2,239,832,053</u>	<u>49.4</u>
500,000 and over	3,281	2.1	986,891,871	21.8
100,000 - 499,999	8,523	5.5	429,119,219	9.5
50,000 - 99,999	4,602	2.9	153,494,292	3.4
25,000 - 49,999	6,275	4.1	143,883,878	3.1
10,000 - 24,999	9,465	6.1	169,508,969	3.7
5,000 - 9,999	6,878	4.5	107,029,757	2.4
2,500 - 4,999	6,063	3.9	84,335,621	1.9
Under 2,500	15,821	10.2	165,568,446	3.6
Miscellaneous	310	0.2	24,301,637	0.5

Source: Tabulations based on copies of Statement of Project Estimate Detail, WPA Form 701-R, giving the estimated cost of projects from their inception through completion.

WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION  
Division of  
Research, Statistics and Records