

Mileages in the various participating provinces, when completed, will be as follows: British Columbia, 692; Alberta, 292; Saskatchewan, 414; Manitoba, 305; Ontario, 1,412; New Brunswick, 388; Nova Scotia, 310; Prince Edward Island, 74 and Newfoundland, 610. This makes a total of 4,580 miles when an additional 83 miles in the National Parks is included.

Under the terms of the agreement each province designates the route of the Highway within its own borders, provided that adjacent provinces agree on locations where it crosses provincial boundaries, and that routes selected are the shortest practical east-west distances.

Mileage through the National Parks of Canada is constructed entirely with Federal Government funds. With this additional construction and Quebec's connecting route, the Trans-Canada Highway is some 5,000 miles in length. As well as St. John's and Victoria, cities on the route include Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island; Moncton and Fredericton, New Brunswick, Ottawa, Peterborough, Orillia and Kenora, Ontario; Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie, Manitoba; Regina, Moose Jaw and Swift Current, Saskatchewan; Medicine Hat and Calgary, Alberta; and Kamloops, New Westminster, Vancouver and Nanaimo in British Columbia. In Nova Scotia the Highway will pass through Sydney and Truro, and over a 4,000-foot causeway which has been built across the Strait of Canso on the route. The causeway itself is a separate federal project, the cost of which is not included in appropriations for the Highway.

Nine provincial governments signed agreements with the Federal Government to complete their share of the project by December 9, 1956. But progress has been slower than had been hoped for. At the end of 1955, just one year away from the anticipated completion date, about one-third of the total mileage remained unpaved and for some 250 miles of the route there was no highway of any kind. However, the problem was re-examined and a new formula devised providing for increased federal assistance. It was designed particularly to close the gap and it is now expected that the Highway will be a completed reality by the end of 1960.

Ironically, a major obstacle to the Highway's progress is the fact that Canada is enjoying a period of unparalleled prosperity. For engineers, surveyors, contractors, equipment, steel and other essentials, the Highway has to compete with urgent defence construction priorities, a nation-wide demand for more homes, and a record-breaking program of industrial growth.

Timing is a factor too. Unlike some earlier road-building projects in both the United States and Canada, the Trans-Canada Highway is not a government-sponsored measure to provide employment. Instead, it is proceeding during a period when skilled and unskilled labor alike are in short supply. For both men and supplies the Highway has to stand in line.

The Highway's specifications are impressive, particularly to those who in recent years have crossed Canada from Atlantic to Pacific by automobile. Trips by car have been made, but there have been a number of inconvenient stretches. The Highway's right of way will have a minimum width of 100 feet except through urban areas, where 66 feet is acceptable. The minimum finished width is 32 feet, including five-foot shoulders and 22-foot width of pavement. The maximum width will be 44 feet, including a pavement width of 24 feet with 10-foot shoulders on each side. Curvature will generally not exceed six degrees and where possible flatter curvature will be used. Maximum gradient is 6 per cent. Sight distance provides for a clear view from the driver's eye to a small object on the pavement at least 600 feet ahead.