

THE AUBURN BARGE CANAL PROJECT

A referendum to appropriate \$3,800,000 to complete the Auburn-Port Byron spur, and afford water transportation for 500,000 tons.

Immediate Gains to the Taxpayers of New York State

1. Annual saving of \$205,000 in freight rates.
2. Annual saving of \$300,000 in hydro-electric power.
3. Annual saving of \$52,000 in operating Auburn Prison.
4. Annual saving of \$25,000 in operating Auburn's municipal water works.
5. Immediate saving of \$750,000 for plant extension in both Auburn Prison for Men and Auburn Prison for Women.
6. Annual saving of \$400,000 in hydro-electric power above proposed canal and in the Moravia Valley.

The Auburn Barge Canal Spur is the result of a conviction created by transportation conditions in Central New York that our community is facing a grave menace to its continued development and prosperity.

The United States Census of 1920 shows that in the sixteen cities of New York State now of 25,000 to 100,000 population, all have shown an increase ranging from 10% to 37% during the past ten years with the exception of Auburn, which increased only 4.4%. By decades the same report shows for Auburn the following:

1890-1900	17.4 per cent.
1900-1910	14.2 per cent.
1910-1920	4.4 per cent.

With the further realization that Auburn is the only city in the fertile agricultural and thriving industrial belt across the Empire State that depends upon one-track rail facilities; that it is the only city in the New York State Barge Canal zone not connected with it, altho its Owasco River is a feeder of the Barge Canal; and realizing also that every city in this section of the state surrounding Auburn, viz. Ithaca on the South, Geneva on the West, Oswego on the North, and Syracuse on the East have direct main line railroads and the New York State Barge Canal to serve them, the citizens of Auburn seek to have erected the Auburn Barge Canal Spur in the canalized Owasco River in order to give them an equal chance with all other communities across the state.

The Auburn Barge Canal project involves the following economic benefits to the people of Auburn, Cayuga County and New York State:

1. An annual saving of \$205,000 in freight rates with a probability that this will be largely increased in the near future.
2. An annual saving of at least \$300,000 in hydro-electric power.
3. An annual saving of \$52,000 a year for power and light for operating the Auburn prison for men and Auburn prison for women.
4. An annual saving of \$25,000 a year for steam power to pump the Auburn water supply through the municipally owned water works.
5. An immediate saving in capital outlay by the state estimated by State Architect Pilcher at \$750,000 for a new central steam plant for the Auburn prisons to replace fourteen antiquated plants.
6. An annual increase of water power above the canal basin benefitting the power sites on the Owasco River and in the entire Moravia Valley adding substantially to the economic gains enumerated above.

The history of the Auburn Barge Canal briefly told is this:

When Dewitt Clinton first conceived the Erie Canal he contemplated a trans-state canal which should have a spur at Auburn to go up the Moravia valley to the head waters of the Susquehanna River which he expected Pennsylvania to develop to its mouth at Havre de Grace, Md.

In 1810 Clinton visited Auburn to plan for the canal but when it was finally located one of the locating commissioners, Hon. Myron Holley of Lyons, induced the state to take the northern route having the canal pass through his home town.

After the canal was built Auburn realized its loss, and Wm. H. Seward, later Governor of New York, United States Senator and Secretary of State organized an Auburn Barge Canal Spur movement.

On June 13th, 1827 Elkanah Watson one of the most distinguished engineers of the Revolutionary period came to Auburn as his guest, and surveyed the proposed route. They enthusiastically agitated the erection of the spur, and raised \$100,000 with which to build the first dam, now used by the state in connection with the feeder system of the main Barge Canal; but the panic of 1837 put an end to further development.

Before the project could be revived the Syracuse and Auburn Railroad was promoted, and from that time no canal spur enthusiasm was permitted to be generated.

The railroad, however, remains today as when originally built, a one-track road. And as the New York Central subsequently built its main line 10 miles north of Auburn the prospects of a double track are beyond hope.

Auburn grew slowly but surely because of its water power, and in spite of inadequate rail facilities, but as the census figures quoted above indicate, the demands for transportation far exceed the supply, and the community faces economic strangulation unless relief is afforded.

Stirred by the situation the community induced the Legislature to have our Barge Canal Spur surveyed, and State Engineer Williams reported favorably on the project in 1917.

The entry of the United States into the war temporarily stopped any further progress. But today the matter is being again undertaken with the urgent support not only of all local civic and commercial bodies but by the advocates of improved waterways in Buffalo, New York City and throughout the State.

Suffering under increased economic pressure the people of Auburn seek relief not only as a matter of justice to this generation but in order to meet competition with our neighbors in the future.

ECONOMIES IN FREIGHT CHARGES.

The report shows that 492,102,160 pounds of inbound freight could move by canal at a yearly saving of \$118,271.15 and taking 70 per cent. of this on the basis of the open season of the Barge Canal would be \$82,789.81.

The report shows that 275,929,000 pounds of outbound freight could move by canal at a saving of \$173,932.75 and taking 70 per cent. of this on the basis of the open season of the Barge Canal the saving would be \$121,752.93.

This shows a total saving on Inbound and Outbound freight of \$204,542.74.

The foregoing report, moreover, lacks some tabulations which some shippers, for reasons known to themselves, refuse to divulge. They omit, moreover, any figures for hard coal for shipment by canal. The estimated savings, moreover, could be substantially increased to the larger shippers if they were to operate their own boats. The capacity of the proposed spur is 500,000 tons.

HYDRO-ELECTRIC POWERS.

By the erection of the Auburn Canal Spur additional storage and the erection of dams in connection with the Canal Locks will produce, according to Engineer Silas Taber, who is better informed than any other engineer concerning the Owasco watershed through his connection with the Moravia Light and Power Company for many years, the following horsepowers, as indicated:

10,310 horsepower with 100 per cent. collection of waters
7,732 horsepower with 75 per cent. collection of waters
5,155 horsepower with 50 per cent. collection of waters

The average precipitation for the past 50 years is 36.75 inches. The area of the watershed is 180 square miles. The lake area is 11 square miles. With this precipitation and catchment area, there is a total yearly precipitation of 16,293,096,664 cubic feet of water. The evaporation in the lake for the past forty years has averaged 36 inches, making a total evaporation from the lake of 949,872,000 cubic feet. Neglecting any evaporation from the ground this leaves a total run-off of 15,343,224,664 cubic feet per year or an average daily run-off of 42,036,232 cubic feet or 486.53 cubic feet per second.

Engineer Taber also computes that there will be 1900 H. P. additional generated in the Moravia valley through the conservation of water necessitated by the canal spur.

Omitting the values of all these water powers excepting those to be generated by canal locks and dams the value of the canal power alone is over \$300,000 per year based upon 50 per cent. collection of waters.

AUBURN PRISON GAINS.

At the present time Auburn Prison spends \$46,000 a year for coal for fourteen old steam plants to operate the prison industries. It also purchases additional electric power and light for approximately \$13,000 per year.

Omitting the cost of coal that would be necessary to heat the prison, it is called upon to make an expenditure in excess of \$1,000 per week for light and power.

This entire cost could be eliminated by use of hydro-electric power from the locks and dams.

There would not only be all the power that Auburn Prison industries could ever utilize but the surplus could be profitably sold by the state at the switchboard as it is now sold at Seneca Falls.

Sixty per cent. of the power used in Auburn comes from outside and there is an increasing demand for additional power. The entire supply generated in the Barge Canal project would find an immediate market.

GAINS FOR AUBURN MUNICIPAL WATER SUPPLY.

The erection of the Barge Canal Spur through its water conservation would furnish sufficient water above the canal to enable the City of Auburn to save approximately \$25,000 a year now spent for coal to pump the water supply to the consumers of Auburn.

Engineer George A. Lewis has made detailed estimates showing that this is a conservative figure, and he has fully tested the plan by pumping the entire city water supply by water power during a high water period. With the canal water conservation there would be adequate water for this purpose 365 days in the year.

SAVING ON NEW PLANT FOR AUBURN PRISON.

In addition to the saving in operating the prison industries the introduction of hydro-electric power would obviate the proposed erection of a central steam plant which State Architect Pilcher has estimated will cost \$750,000. The proposed central steam plant is to take the place of fourteen existing old plants which require constant repairs and replacements and take up considerable space within the prison walls as well as requiring the service of approximately seventy-five men.

By the introduction of hydro-electric power generated by the Owasco River and owned by the state the prison industries could be modernized and made increasingly profitable.

POWER GAINS ABOVE THE SPUR.

In addition to all of the above gains enumerated there will also be considerable increase in the power sites in the watershed above the canal spur.

These range in head from 8.87 feet to nearly 200 feet, and in the aggregate will produce more than 6,000 H. P.

Under existing conditions the uncontrolled waters vary in flow from 37 cubic feet per second in dry seasons to as high as 3,000 cubic feet per second in flood.

Obviously they cannot be profitably utilized under such conditions, and the erection of the canal spur would enforce the water conservation which only the state can originate and maintain.

These benefits would enable the entire district to be developed and would make also a considerable economic gain to the people of the Finger Lake region as a result of the erection of the Auburn Barge Canal Spur.

CONCLUSION.

"One of the foremost railroad authorities in the country has stated that if the railroads were hauling 100 per cent of their capacity there would still remain 30 per cent. of traffic which they could not move at all," declared the late superintendent of public works Gen. W. W. Wotherspoon in Utica October 14, 1917.

Vice President Elisha Lee of the Pennsylvania railroad declared before the Inter-state Commerce Commission in December, 1921: "It is more vital than the reduction of freight rates that there be a large increase of the volume of railroad transportation service. We shall in all probability be confronted with a congestion of railroad traffic and the greatest inadequacy of railroad facilities ever experienced when the country has a real revival of business. If we should have a moderate revival of business say next Fall (1922) which is entirely possible, even if not especially indicated at the present time, there is every reason to believe that we would experience a marked freight congestion. Nothing can more quickly check a wave of prosperity than the inability of railroads to handle the traffic which good times would create."

The Chairman of our committee wrote to the heads of the departments of the ten greatest railroad systems of the country quoting this statement of Mr. Lee and they unanimously confirmed his prediction.

President Schwab of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation speaking in New York City recently stated that the railroads of America would require a billion dollars a year for the next five years to provide them with rails, locomotives, cars and terminals necessary to handle normal commerce of the country.

Walker D. Hines, former director general of the railroads declared before the Inter-state Commerce Commission recently that 65% of the freight charge is the terminal charge while only 35 % of the cost covers "on the road." He reiterated the need of terminal expansion to meet the needs of the immediate future. Canals greatly reduce terminal costs because of the flexibility of unloading conditions.

Alfred P. Thom, General Counsel of the American Railway Executives, speaking of the "panic of plenty" of 1907 before the Newlands Committee said it "was brought on by the inability of communities to deal with each other because the railway facilities were inadequate."

Whether you go back more than a decade or take present conditions, the evidence is overwhelming that rail transportation is woefully inadequate, and that water transportation must be utilized.

With an economic gain of upwards of \$600,000 a year the Auburn Barge Canal Spur is justified both as a profitable feeder to the New York State Barge Canal system, and as the removal of a serious transportation discrimination against Auburn and in favor of all its surrounding cities.

With the entire nation stirred as never before in our history to improve waterways, and with Canada menacing our commercial supremacy at this time it is urgent that the Empire State prove both to the West and to Canada that we intend to complete our Barge Canal system and to utilize it to its full capacity for the benefit of the people of New York State as well as for those outside of the Empire State!