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ideas for a better city



1965

SELECTED BY THE STAFF OF THE
MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICE

EDITED BY MARY BUSH

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IDEAS FOR A BETTER CITY

Selected by the Staff of the
Municipal Technical Advisory Service

Edited by Mary Bush

MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICE

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FOREWORD

MTAS receives virtually all periodicals in the field of municipal government and also obtains many other publications in this field. In the aggregate these contain a "mass of information" (when trying to sift, classify and assimilate, we sometimes wish it were much less in quantity!). These materials are routed to staff members for their examination; in this process they mark any items that appear to be noteworthy, and Mrs. Bush writes the summaries for this publication.

These items are not necessarily "new" ideas, for the term "new" assumes a relative meaning. There is little, if anything, in the field that is really new. What is new to one may be old to another. Nevertheless, we hope that this "catalog of municipal ideas" will be useful to the officials of cities and towns in Tennessee and elsewhere.

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Personnel



PERSONNEL

Residence preference has been waived in recruiting personnel in Seattle by an amendment to the city charter. Previously, all qualified applicants who were city residents had to be appointed before anyone was picked from the non-resident list. Outsiders who were better qualified frequently took other jobs before they were called, and so were lost to the city. (National League of Cities, Mar. 22, 1965)

Counselors at a California high school were briefed on how best to prepare students for employment in the municipal district. Counselors were informed about entrance level positions, including employment requirements, salaries, and trends. Also, methods of recruiting, testing, and hiring were explained. (Personnel News, March 1965)

An internship training program in municipal government is being offered to Drake University seniors in Des Moines, Iowa. Three seniors will work part time in the city manager's office and be assigned to specific staff projects. They will work about ten hours a week and receive college credit. This program, jointly sponsored by the City of Des Moines and the University, is an excellent means of encouraging bright students to choose urban government as a career. (City Managers' News Letter, Mar. 15, 1965)

A letter-writing course was offered recently to personnel in Fairfax County, Va. The course was designed for management, their principal subordinates, and others who write and review correspondence, memoranda, and reports. Four two-hour sessions were scheduled on the course, the cost of which was borne by the personnel division. Each department head was requested to submit names of two persons who could best profit from the course. (Personnel News, April 1965)

School custodial personnel in Metropolitan Nashville are pooled into crews to work on maintenance projects in the school system during vacation months. The custodians are allowed a week and a half at the end of the nine-month school term to get their regular buildings in shape for the summer and an equal amount of time in the fall before school openings. (Nashville Banner, Apr. 5, 1965)

Employee education is stressed in Covina, Calif. The city is picking up the tab for 103 of its employees attending school during off-duty hours, where they study everything from municipal administration to high school general science. (Mayor and Manager, February 1965)

Solving community problems is a task for which five retired civic and business leaders in Providence, R. I., have volunteered. The team meets for three-hour sessions biweekly to tackle assignments, the first of which was an area drainage problem in the city. (Nation's Cities, February 1965)

Personnel costs (line of duty medical expenses, disability pensions, and expenditures for workmen's compensation) can be reduced considerably by a complete and thorough pre-employment physical examination of applicants for municipal employment. Personnel costs customarily are the largest single item in a municipal budget and have been increasing at a rapid rate in recent years. (Municipal Voice, October 1965)

A new kind of economic opportunity is offered to cities under the 1964 Economic Opportunity Act. The federal government will pay 90 per cent of a college intern's salary if the city will pay the remaining 10 per cent. The city serves as an off-campus employer of the students and any public agency is eligible, if within a reasonable commuting distance of the college that has entered into a work-study agreement with the federal government. A city need not have any other connection with the Economic Opportunity Act in order to participate. (Missouri Municipal Review, November 1965)

Water and Sewage



WATER AND SEWAGE

Sea water could be desalted by atomic power at about one-fifth of current costs, according to one of the nation's largest engineering firms. That would put the cost--a minimum of 22 cents a thousand gallons--close to what Southern California expects to be paying for natural fresh water from inland sources within the next five years. The rate would be favorable for other water-scarce sections of the country as well. (New York Times, July 12, 1965)

Chemically treated river and industrial waste-water is being used for flushing city streets in New York. Water hydrants for the treated water have been placed throughout the city to speed up summer litter-removal, the season when "pedestrianism" is at its height. (Sweep, Summer 1965)

The installation of water meters resulted in a 30 per cent usage reduction in Boulder, Colo. Prior to meter installation, residents enjoyed a low flat rate and it was not uncommon for residents to run their sprinkler systems continuously during the long, dry summers. Surveys indicate that some residents used three times as much water as others paying the same rate. Metering residential accounts seemed the only way to make payments more equitable, to encourage water conservation, and to avoid serious problems in water shortages in view of the increasing population. (Colorado Municipalities, February 1965)

The water storage problem in Daly City, Calif., was solved by erecting one reservoir inside another. The large prestressed concrete reservoir is cylindrical, holding 1,500,000 gallons. The smaller interior reservoir holds 50,000 gallons. When it is necessary for the large reservoir to be emptied and cleaned, the 50,000 gallons can be used for the city's emergency water requirements. (The American City, November 1964)

A ceramic tile mural depicting the history of water decorates the walls of the Lowell, Mass., water filtration plant. In addition to its aesthetic value, the ceramic tile is also practical since the high humidity would make it impossible to have painted walls. The mural has become a symbol of the plant to the many visitors who tour the premises. (Water and Sewage Works, November 1964)

Septic tanks have been "outlawed" in new 100-home plus developments in Suffolk County, N. Y. The new regulation requires that a licensed professional engineer design an adequate sewage collection and disposal system which will meet state health department

approval. The developer must form a private sewer company to build the system. (Engineering News-Record, Jan. 14, 1965)

Better protective coatings for water storage tanks might be obtained by eliminating the conventional term, "painting," in favor of such terms as "coating," "recoating," and "coating system," which are more descriptive of the materials and methods used to protect steel water tanks. Houses can be painted, but water tanks should be coated. (Journal of American Water Works Association, September 1964)

A butyl rubber cap that slips over the sewer pipe bell is now on the market. The cap, which makes the opening water-tight, primarily is used for house connections and vacant lots where storm water often enters sewer pipe. (The American City, January 1965)

Two-way radios for meter readers in Thorntown, Ind., eliminate the use of field books, pencils, and pens. The meter reader simply presses a button to call in the reading to the ledger clerk, who enters it in the comfort of an office. Besides eliminating difficult-to-read notes, these portable units have trimmed the time required for each meter-reading job by 50 per cent. (The American City, August 1965)

Public Works



PUBLIC WORKS

Building permits can be ordered by telephone and charged to contractors in Stockton, Calif. Contractors who wish to use the system must first post bond for \$100, or twice their average monthly permit fees, whichever is greater. When his application is accepted, the contractor receives a supply of temporary building permit cards. When he needs a permit, he calls city hall and is given a regular permit number. The building inspector, on his first inspection, checks the number of the temporary permit and replaces it with the regular permit. Charges for the temporary permits are recorded each day, and the contractor is billed once a month. (APWA Reporter, January 1964)

An Accident and Damage Board has been established within the public works department at Ogden, Utah. Meeting regularly, the eight-member board investigates damage and major repairs; it also has been instrumental in seeing that vehicles are equipped with safety devices. Since the Board was established, there has been a remarkable drop in the number of major repairs required by abuse or improper operation of equipment. (Virginia Municipal Review, December 1964)

"Speen," a new sign cleaner designed for use on sheeting material, beaded, and enameled surfaces, is now on the market. Non-flammable and non-toxic, the detergent can be used in pressure-type sign cleaning equipment as well as for manual cleaning operations. It requires no special safety precautions. (Western City, January 1965)

A certificate of completion has been designed by Chattanooga's building inspection department to protect the home owner against fraudulent contracting. The form was designed and implemented after the city was plagued with complaints of the widespread "fly-by-night" contractors who propose a job for a small amount and then charge exorbitant rates. (The Chattanooga Times, Aug. 2, 1964)

"Dead End" is a displeasing name for a street, according to the traffic engineers at Louisville, Ky. Street signs are being replaced to read "No Outlet" instead of "Dead End." (The Nashville Tennessean, Jan. 15, 1965)

When laying non-metallic pipe, place a length of fence wire in the trench above the new line and the pipe can easily be located later. The wire will rust away, but the surrounding soil will be saturated with the magnetic field from the corrosion, and a regular pipe finder can be used. (The American City, January 1965)

Plumbing codes should require metallic "dip tubes" in hot water heaters. An investigation in North Carolina disclosed that a hot water heater exploded when the thermostat failed and caused the water to reach such a temperature that the non-metallic dip tube was reduced to semi-liquid form; this blocked the supply line and relief valve, and the explosion resulted. (Southern Building, August 1964)

Sign maintenance cost has been reduced in Coral Gables, Fla., by putting the city's slogan on the backs of school bus signs which are used on the municipal bus fleet. The large yellow school bus signs fasten over the front bumper. When they are not in use as school buses, the drivers flip them over and printed on the backs are the words "The City Beautiful." The signs never have to be removed and stored. (The Municipal South, November 1964)

Rock salt, which often causes expensive rust damage to cars after it has been spread on icy streets, now can be made virtually "rust proof." A new rust inhibitor, called Carguard, is applied to the rock salt. It contains two rust-preventing agents that provide both an electrical and a physical barrier against corrosion. The product cut body rust up to 87 per cent in recent winter road tests. (The Chattanooga Times, Mar. 11, 1965)

Future installation of power lines for all-electric homes in Memphis will be underground, and the Light, Gas and Water Division will bear the additional expense. This underground installation has been approved as an incentive for the customer or builder to go all-electric. Installation costs will be absorbed by the division because revenues from all-electric customers will justify the additional investment. (The Commercial Appeal, May 21, 1956)

Finance and Taxation



FINANCE AND TAXATION

Liability insurance rates in Miami, Fla., have been reduced tremendously--a \$250,000 savings over the last three years. Placing insurance through competitive bidding and instituting a vehicular accident control program stressing driver education and safe driving techniques are the two factors responsible for the insurance rate reduction. (The Municipal South, November 1964)

Money spent by subdividers on subdivision streets in California can be counted as matching money for their state-aid grants. The state requires that all state funds be matched by the municipality. The attorney general ruled that money spent by private subdividers for right-of-way, drainage, street, curb and gutter construction, sidewalks, and street lights would be allowed to count as matching money. (Rural and Urban Streets, November 1964)

Property taxpayers in Bethlehem, Pa., using special pass-books, can make deposits of \$5 or more any time during the year toward their bills and benefit from a discount offered for prepayments. (U.S. Municipal News, Dec. 1, 1964)

A "tax-elimination fund" has been suggested by the Dunn, N. C., city manager. According to his calculations, a trust fund set up by the city could eliminate property taxes in 30 years. He proposed that the city contribute \$30,000 from its general fund, to be augmented by memorial gifts. It is estimated that in 30 years the fund would total \$2 million and would draw \$85,000 in interest annually--about half the present tax income of the city. (Popular Government, December 1964)

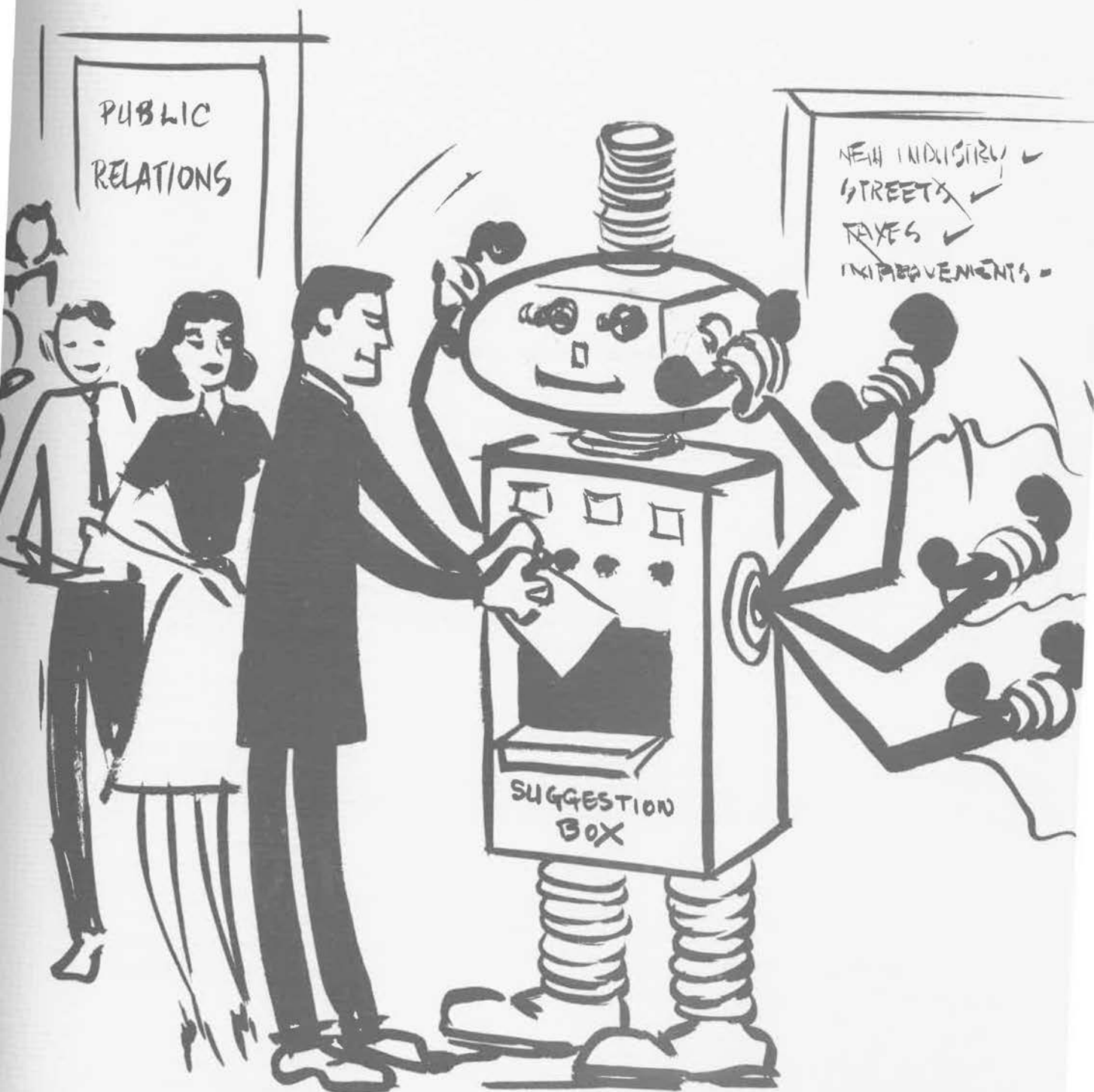
Small-order purchases in Los Angeles County, Calif., are accompanied by a blank check to pay for the material described in the purchase order. This blank-check purchase-order system, which was adopted last year to cut down on "the flow of paper," has resulted in a saving of about \$1,000 a month in administrative costs alone. The system ties the purchase order and a signed blank check into a single package. The vendor fills in the amount of the purchase on the check as his payment. (The American City, May 1965)

Trading stamps were used to purchase new furniture for the reception room of the Liberty, Tex., city hall. When the new city hall was constructed, there was no money for new furniture, so city employees organized a stamp-book program. Everyone cooperated, donating stamps received on purchases, and the new furniture did not cost the taxpayers a penny. (The American City, October 1964)

Underassessment of vacant land contributes to suburban sprawl, according to the executive director of the Advisory Commission on Intergovernmental Relations. This organization found in 1961 that idle lots in the United States were assessed at an average of 20 per cent of actual value, compared with 32 per cent on non-farm homes. Tax-payers are thus encouraged to keep vacant land on the fringes because of the low tax rate, and developers are forced to leapfrog farther into the countryside to acquire land at reasonable cost. (The Chattanooga Times, July 25, 1965)

Urban services in Traverse City, Mich., are available outside the city if the individuals agree to pay an amount equivalent to city taxes. Indirect costs to the city theoretically are recovered in addition to costs of the utilities. Some cities require that fringe area subdivision building codes and standards meet those of the city before services are provided. This is done to insure that fringe growth will not be haphazard and that if annexation does take place the city will not be faced with additional charges for municipal facilities. (Michigan Municipal Review, July 1965)

Public Relations



PUBLIC RELATIONS

"Personal . . . A Word to the Wives," is an educational publication distributed by the Public Employees Retirement System of Ohio. As indicated by the title, the pamphlet is directed to the wives of members of the system, describing the system and the benefits it provides. It is anticipated that the booklet will serve as a valuable management tool, tending to reduce expensive turnover. It will also be used in recruitment of qualified personnel. (MFOA News Letter, Nov. 1, 1964)

An Information Center, designed and built by Glendale, Calif., city employees, is located in the city hall lobby. The center facilitates the location of service offices for inquiring persons by means of a panel board and a lighted map. (Western City, November 1964)

City councilmen in El Cajon, Calif., advertise their city by wearing blue blazers adorned with the municipal seal. (United States Municipal News, Nov. 1, 1964)

A "Friday Memo" which goes to all public works divisions and other departments has been initiated in Tucson, Arizona. The memo provides capsule descriptions of the department's activities over the past week and keeps the employees informed as to what is going on throughout the public works operation. (APWA Reporter, December 1964)

In order to help citizens better understand the organization of municipal government, the mayor of Selma, Ala., recently published a card showing the line organization of the city council and various committees. On the back of the card he listed parliamentary procedures covering action of the council during its business meetings. Also included were other municipal data to acquaint the citizen with the importance of city government and the value of its relationship to the citizen. The cards were distributed to professional people who frequently have business dealings with the council. (Alabama Municipal Journal, March 1965)

An office of neighborhood planning has been established in Anchorage, Alaska, to encourage citizens to participate directly in the city's development. City residents are encouraged to hold home meetings with their neighbors. Planners sit in on the meetings, noting tips and suggestions for area improvement. (Public Management, April 1965)

"Information coffees" have been inaugurated in Odessa, Tex., to inform local businessmen and prominent citizens on the operations of council-manager government. A selected group of around 250 is invited to each monthly coffee, where the activities of one or more departments are spotlighted. Department heads are present to explain the display of services, and to answer questions. (Public Management, January 1965)

Certificates of merit are being awarded to Memphis service stations that maintain high standards of beauty and cleanliness. Attractive aluminum signs reading "City Beautiful Commission Merit Award Service Station" also are presented as part of the award and may be displayed so long as the station continues to maintain high standards. Participating stations are inspected by Commission representatives and awards made on the basis of the representatives' findings. (The Commercial Appeal, Sept. 3, 1965)

A city historian can provide a very valuable service in preserving tradition. Rochester, N. Y., established the office of City Historian in 1921, and many tasks have been undertaken since then in the fields of research, lecturing, editing, and writing to promote a consciousness of community heritage. Among many other duties, the historian works with high school and college students on the preparation of historical term papers and helps local industries and societies to prepare materials for celebrations, pageants, and other civic ceremonies. (The American City, May 1965)

Courtesy keys are issued to out-of-state overtime parkers in St. Petersburg, Fla. Enclosed in the citation envelope, the silver key excuses the owner from paying the parking fine, but for only one offense. Traffic violations other than overtime parking are not excused. (The American City, June 1965)

"No peddler" stickers have been distributed to residents in Lakewood, Calif., as a result of citizen complaints about door-to-door solicitation. A blue and white adhesive sticker that residents may post near their doorbell warning peddlers not to call unless they have a valid city permit was mailed recently to each residence in the city.

Self-guided tours to five areas of interest in and around Miami are facilitated by color-coded road signs erected throughout the city. Supplementing the signs is a brochure listing guide information to help tourists. (Mayor and Manager, June 1965)

Health, Safety and Welfare



HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE

A birth control diet is being tested to cut the pigeon population in New York City. Grain, treated with a chemical which reduces pigeon egg production by 80 per cent, is being fed to two flocks in the test. (National League of Cities, Apr. 26, 1965)

An electronic device to prevent book thefts has been approved by the American Library Association. The Association executives were interested in the development of the invention since libraries have suffered tremendous losses from theft in recent years. The device is simple: it involves pasting the signal-giver into the card pocket at a cost of a fraction of a cent. The device would alert a library's staff if anyone tried to leave with the library book, whether carried openly or concealed. (New York Times, July 12, 1965)

Badges must be displayed by door-to-door salesmen who are not local residents in Brighton, Colo. If salesmen do not have such a badge, bearing the city's name, citizens are urged to report it to city hall. (Colorado Municipalities, September 1964)

A school crossing sign has been designed in Montgomery, Ala., to be used only when it is needed. The simple device, when bolted into the "U"-type sign post, allows the sign to be locked into position facing traffic when it is needed, and turned 90° out of position when not needed. Since the sign is not continuously exposed to traffic, there is no need to show the hours of enforcement, thus reducing the cost. (Rural and Urban Roads, January 1965)

Pay telephones for emergency service are provided as a public convenience in several cities. Arrangements are made with the telephone company, at a very nominal cost to the city, for using any coin (which is returned by the operator) in dialing emergency numbers. (National League of Cities, Feb. 8, 1965)

Typhoid and para-typhoid inoculations are given annually to all new employees of the Minneapolis-St. Paul sewer plant. Employees previously inoculated are given booster shots (APWA Reporter, December 1964)

An ordinance prohibiting pedestrians, bicycles, and other nonmotorized traffic on the freeways in Chattanooga has been recommended for adoption by the Mayor's Safety Committee. The ordinance also would prohibit vehicles powered by motors of five horsepower or less. (The Chattanooga Times, Nov. 10, 1964)

Firecrackers were used to drive blackbirds out of the courthouse park in Iola, Kan. Officials had experimented with numerous methods of driving off the birds but they had no "lasting" luck. They now use a gun designed to loft two-inch firecrackers lighted and timed to explode above the tree tops. They have found that by shooting the firecrackers once a week for several weeks, the birds stay away permanently. (League of North Dakota Municipalities, February 1965)

Parks and Recreation



PARKS AND RECREATION

"Clean-up" sentences are being handed out by judges in several states. Litterbugs are sentenced to clean-up tasks along state highways in lieu of fines and jail terms. (The Nebraska Municipal Review, November 1964)

Service club offers to help with municipal projects in Albuquerque, N. M., were responded to by city officials who posted 37 renewal tasks which required hard work and skill more than money. The civic clubs were invited to take their choice. (U.S. Municipal News, Mar. 1, 1965)

A "swapfest" of sports equipment, held in Jefferson County, Ky., was a tremendous success. The Recreation Board asked all sportsmen to bring an old gun, boat, motor, long johns, trailer, or hunting dog that they would be willing to swap for an equally old fishing rod, canoe, rowboat, oars, boxer shorts, or pet coon. Traders arrived early, boasting of the whopping trades they had made in the past. No limits were placed on trading, so several items swapped hands a number of times. Owners were allowed to sell as well as trade their items. (Recreation, April 1965)

A Teen Center has been established in the new municipal building in Lauderdale, Minn. Three rooms are used: a large one for dancing and games; a small one for typing and study; and, another for small table games. The Council approved use of the hall at certain hours and furnished a caretaker as well as a paid supervisor during these hours. Administrative and policy-making power rests with the teens themselves. Teen Town has raised money for equipment, has its own rules, and a membership fee of 50 cents. (Minnesota Municipalities, May 1965)

A recreation center for handicapped children will be built in Memphis. The center, with an indoor swimming pool, arts and crafts room, and especially designed physical facilities, will be a place where handicapped children can go for tailor-made enjoyment. (The Commercial Appeal, Oct. 8, 1965)

Rust can be rinsed away with water by the process of coating the surface with a layer of jelly rust remover. The result is bare metal, ready for coating. It removes rust from iron, stainless steel, brass, copper, bronze, concrete, and tile. In its present form, the rust remover does not affect existing paint; it removes only the rust. (Recreation, November 1964)

Flower boxes filled with bright, blooming plants, enhance the beauty of the town of Neosho, Mo. As an experimental project in city beautification, service clubs, the local chamber of commerce, garden clubs, schools, and churches joined wholeheartedly in dressing up the city. Flower boxes were settled on as a practical beautification method because they would be easy to care for during dry summer weather. The 1963 "flower census" counted 2,852 boxes, and more than 600 flower beds. (Mayor and Manager, November 1964)

"Winter Kill" is the title of an eight-page booklet which has been distributed to the customers of St. Louis County Water Company. Winter kill is the loss of trees, shrubs, and other plant life, due to lack of sufficient moisture during fall-winter weather conditions. The purpose of the booklet is to encourage the watering of trees and shrubs during the winter--a practice that is rarely followed. (Willing Water, November 1964)

A new community house in Branford, Conn., was built and furnished by fund raising drives by local citizens. The local women's club launched the project, but the youngsters of the town engaged in over 800 money-raising activities. One youngster raised radishes and sold them at a fair, netting some \$3,000. Other donations came from alumni basketball games, the sale of worms, bottle drives, fruit-cake sales, penny dances, card parties, sales of second-hand comic books, a backyard circus, sales of potholders, and innumerable service projects. Virtually every organization, business, adult, and child in the area contributed dollars and cents, time and labor, or both, to the building of the new community house. (Recreation, December 1964)

Police and Fire



POLICE AND FIRE

Battery-operated bicycle horns installed in Cincinnati fire-boxes sound off automatically when they are pulled, calling attention to persons who may have turned in false alarms. (United States Municipal News, Aug. 1, 1965)

Taxicab drivers in New Orleans have agreed to use their radio equipped cabs as a patrol service supplementing regular police units. The drivers do not have the power of arrest, but they have eyes and ears and a detailed knowledge of the city, and that's exactly what the authorities want and need. Immediately after the program went into effect, a holdup man was spotted, his description was flashed over the taxi hookup, and he was arrested. (Louisiana Municipal Review, September 1965)

A cadet recruiting program in Lincoln, Nebr., has remedied the police department's problems of continued turnover and training. The program is essentially a plan to furnish the department with young men, usually high school graduates between the ages of 17 and 21, who can perform simple police duties. The cadets will fill regular police jobs when they satisfactorily perform their duties and complete the required amount of college training. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, December 1964)

An incentive pay plan has been provided for policemen in Oceanside, Calif. Under this plan, patrolmen, sergeants, and lieutenants may increase their monthly pay by taking courses in police science and liberal arts. City officials stress that completion of courses alone will not automatically qualify a man for increases; improved performance on the job also will be required. Poor performance, even after one is receiving incentive pay, will result in elimination of the pay increase. (Public Management, March 1965)

A public service was rendered by the press when a newspaper in a mid-western city recently instituted a program offering rewards leading to the solution of a crime. The incentive was offered to help obtain evidence or information from the public which would assist the police in their work. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, March 1965)

Foam is used to fight fire with a new foam-blowing machine now on the market. Concentrated foam is fed into a fan which shoots it through a large burlap sleeve that expands to fit any door. The foam completely snuffs out any blaze. This equipment lessens the risk firemen must face in entering burning buildings. (Bristol Herald Courier, Jan. 28, 1965)

An electromagnetic door holder/release is being marketed in the automatic fire protection and plant security line. This device helps the architect, engineer, and owner to design or remodel any building for maximum utility in traffic flow, while providing a vital emergency control over spread of smoke and fire in corridors, stairwells, etc., by automatic release of swinging-type self-closing doors. (International Association of Fire Chiefs, May 1965)

To help combat juvenile delinquency, Memphis plans to create a volunteer force of auxiliary probation officers. The juvenile judge stated that he hoped about 100 professional lay people would volunteer their services. There will be no pay, only the reward of possibly knowing that they saved some young person from going to the penitentiary. The idea is to keep officers in the field, checking on youth within their assigned district--checking homes, schools, street corners, and trouble spots for those already under the court's jurisdiction. (The Commercial Appeal, July 27, 1965)

The "AMA Auto Identification Manual" contains photographs of all makes of cars from 1951 to the present time. Officials who have used the publication state that it is a valuable aid in making faster and more accurate identification of automobiles. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, April 1965)

Applicants for employment as policemen and firemen in Billings, Mont., are required to take the Minnesota Multi-Phasic Test, a personnel inventory which, according to the mayor "prevents the placing of square pegs in round holes." The test is administered by the chief of police, and the results are evaluated by the psychology department at a local college. The evaluation is sent to a psychiatrist who, at a breakfast meeting with the mayor, interprets the results. The city thus may be very selective in employing personnel.

Drunken drivers in a midwestern city receive a stern lesson on the harmful effects of alcohol. The offender is required to study a 10-page booklet on alcoholism and pass a written examination to make sure he has absorbed its contents. The examination is in addition to the usual sentences imposed--which are harsh in this particular city--and attendance at the defensive driving school required of all motor vehicle operators involved in accidents or convicted of drunken driving. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, December 1964)

A powerful air-and-water device has been invented to extinguish fires. The outfit consists of a 250-horsepower surplus army tank engine mounted on a truck-borne tower. It is capable of deluging a fire area with 1,000 gallons of water per minute. (The Commercial Appeal, Dec. 25, 1964)

A law book designed especially for use by police officers is to be produced by Vanderbilt University and sponsored by the metropolitan government of Nashville-Davidson County. The book will be concerned primarily with the laws of arrest, search, and seizure affecting police officers in the State of Tennessee. Recent decisions of the U.S. Supreme Court have made it necessary for policemen to be acquainted with the very fine points of criminal law. The police manual will incorporate the new interpretation of the laws. (Nashville Tennessean, Sept. 11, 1965)

"Phantom" patrol cars have cut crime and vandalism to a minimum in Hellertown, Penna. The cars, equipped with large antennas, belong to members of the Citizens Band Radio League, Inc. Volunteers patrol different areas in the town, directing police to pick up suspicious characters. Actually, potential criminals stayed out of town after seeing the number of patrol cars with large antennas. (Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association Bulletin, Winter 1965)

A Police Emergency Reporting System has been installed in Louisville, Ky., for the convenience of motorists on public thoroughfares throughout the city. The communication medium consists of emergency telephones, plainly marked and conspicuously located. They are primarily for public use, but are also a great asset to patrolmen since they provide free, direct-to-headquarters contact. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, November 1964)

Whisky rations are given Chicago police for personal Breathalyzer tests so they can figure the probable condition of drunk-driving suspects whose alcoholic intake is measured by the device. (United States Municipal News, Nov. 15, 1964)

Telephone coin-box burglaries in suburban areas have diminished as a result of a rewardingly successful technique developed to trap the burglar. Telephone booths in strategically located places have been equipped with tiny FM radio units secretly located behind the box. When the coin box in the booth is tampered with, a lever moves to activate the radio, which gives out a tone signal audible for one block. Police units staked out within range of the tone signal report that results have been excellent. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, September 1964)

Refuse



REFUSE

The holiday refuse collection problem in Tucson, Ariz., was solved by decreasing regular collection days from five to four. All homes and businesses now appear either on a Monday-Thursday or Tuesday-Friday schedule. When a holiday falls on one of these days, the schedule is moved up a day to collect on Wednesday or Saturday. (The American City, March 1965)

Sanitary landfill operations in Illinois help to provide needed recreation areas. The landfill "hill" method used in Evanston will ultimately become a park area with a toboggan slide. Landfill plans are also being developed on a site adjacent to an abandoned quarry. Here a "hill" will slope into the quarry creating a ski bowl. The "hill" method is of particular value because sites may be created anywhere, building contours that can be put to a good final use in the recreation program. (Illinois Municipal Review, February 1965)

A \$15 annual trash collection fee, payable in advance, has been instituted in New Cumberland, Pa. Residents will find the charge attached to their county and municipal tax bills and will pay through the borough tax collector. Previously the bills were mailed quarterly and paid to a local bank. It is estimated that sending one bill instead of four and collecting through the tax collector will save the borough \$1,800 annually. (Pennsylvania, July 1965)

Refuse containers are rented by Scottsbluff, Nebr., as a service to commercial establishments and to provide better storage and collection facilities. The 1 1/2 yard detachable containers are rented for \$2.50 per month. (Public Works, December 1964)

Trash cans on the sidewalks of Lake Geneva, Wis., are decorated on all four sides with attractive paintings. Local artists, known as "the Receptacle Rembrandts" painted the sides to attract attention to the cans. The artists created bear cubs, deer, cardinals, and blue jays to make the cans attractive and to inspire people to dispose of their trash in these containers instead of on the sidewalk or street. (The American City, September 1964)

Contract maintenance of 75 new refuse trucks will save Chicago approximately \$500,000 during the six-year term of the contract. The city provides oil and gasoline and pays for truck body damage exceeding \$50. The maintenance company provides labor and parts, maintains 24-hour towing service, and makes all road repairs and minor body damage repairs. The new contract has already enabled the department to reduce the number of maintenance personnel. (APWA Reporter, July 1965)

Traffic and Parking



TRAFFIC AND PARKING

Flexible rubber highway posts have replaced many conventional rigid posts in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, and have greatly reduced accident-caused personal injury and vehicular damage. Installed ten years ago, rows of these hollow rubber cylinders with steel inserts protect property by becoming increasingly resistant to flexing as they are forced from the vertical position. (Highway, Third Quarter, 1964)

Warnings halt wrong-way drivers at an interchange near Sacramento, Calif. When a driver enters a freeway exit ramp, the vehicle's wheels touch an inconspicuous detector buried in the pavement. A twelve-inch red light goes on, a horn blows, and a red sign which reads "Go Back, You Are Going the Wrong Way" appears. At the same time, an amber light flashes the other way, warning on-coming drivers to be cautious. (Engineering News-Record, Aug. 13, 1964)

An employee handbook has been issued by the Wilmington, Del., Parking Authority in an effort to make the employee more public relations minded and the customer happier. The booklet points out that a person has many choices when he parks downtown, and will park primarily where it is most convenient. However, he will return to park where he has experienced good service and likes the way he and his car have been treated. (The American City, October 1964)

Safe drivers are rewarded in Roanoke, Va. When the police department makes its routine check for permits and city licenses, officers present a small box of candy to ladies who have their seat belts fastened and a cigar to the men. (The American City, April 1965)

A device to illuminate street signs at night has been proposed by a New York engineer. His invention, patented recently, is a lens and reflector arrangement attached to the street lamp, which may be some distance away. The inventor calls dimly lit street signs such as "One Way," "No Left Turn," and "Dead End" a prime cause of motor accidents. (The Chattanooga Times, Dec. 19, 1964)

Night fog has ceased to be such a troublesome problem for motorists in Long Beach, Calif. The traffic engineer persuaded residents to turn on their porch lights to increase visibility of streets and parked cars. (Traffic Safety, May 1965)

"Smile ! You are on radar" reads a sign in Big Springs, Tex. The gimmick has made drivers more speed conscious and has also created much good will. Since the sign was erected, the city has

received few complaints about the use of radar as a device to help control speeding. (The American City, February 1965)

Motorists renewing their driver's licenses in the District of Columbia will soon be required to pass an eye test. The department of motor vehicles will do the testing at no cost to the motorist. Those who fail to pass will be required to have their eyes examined by a doctor and to purchase glasses or replace glasses that are no longer adequate. (Traffic Safety, December 1964)

Icy streets are no longer a problem in Kettering, Ohio. For faster melting action, the street superintendent "recommends mixtures be used on hills because they are the most hazardous locations. Mixtures work faster and longer than salt alone. You can make one application and move on to other areas." When the temperature calls for mixtures, they begin with a 3-1 blend of salt and calcium chloride. At 10°, they increase the ratio to three parts salt and two parts calcium chloride. The blend produces bare pavement fast and keeps streets safe at all temperatures. (Ohio Cities and Villages, December 1964)

Traffic conditions at signalized intersections should be checked periodically. Signals may no longer be needed and can be reassigned to other locations. Periodic rechecking will also reveal obsolete equipment, which can often be traded in for new equipment. Through signal reassignment, the city traffic engineer can discover a hidden tool to provide more efficient movement of traffic with a minimum of expense.

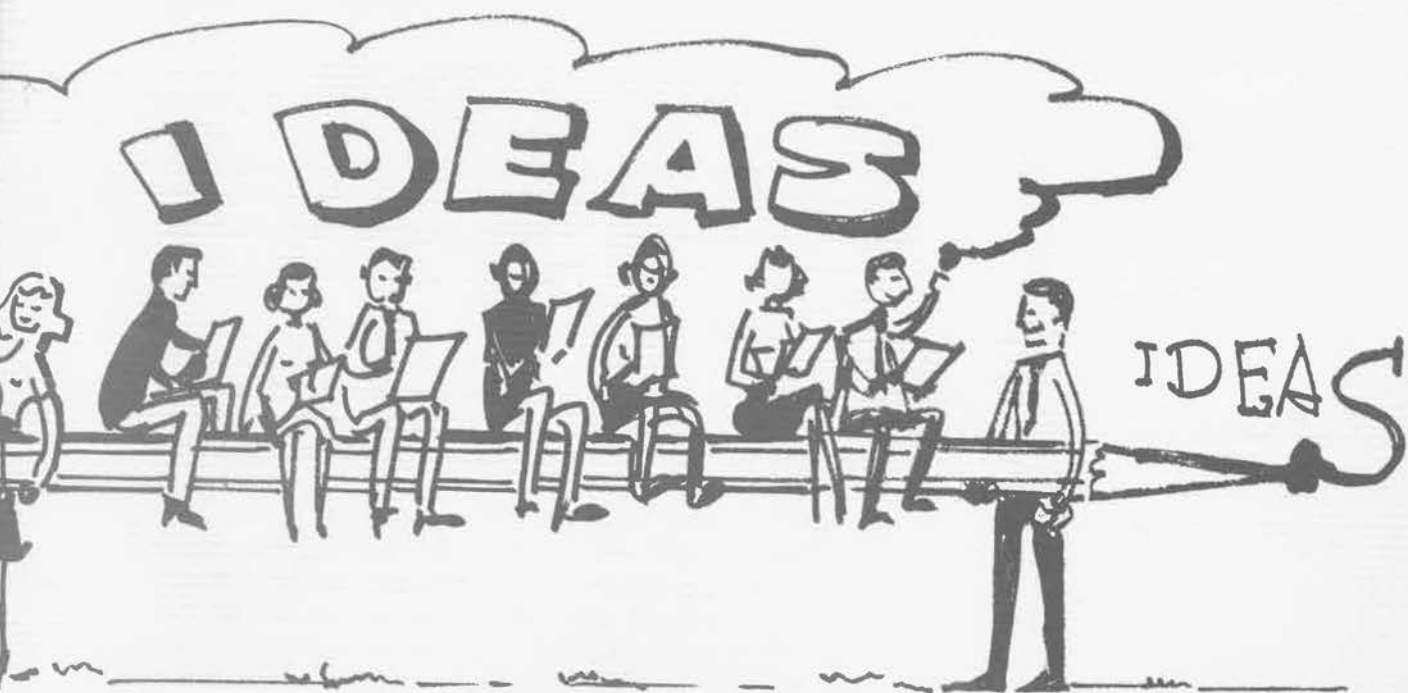
An automatic toll-collecting system in a New York City garage eliminates parking attendants. As a car enters the garage, it passes over a treadle which activates a ticket-issuing unit located at the front gate. The gate, which remains closed until the driver picks a ticket from the issuer, prevents motorists from driving past without a ticket, eliminates the need for an attendant at the entrance, and prevents cars from exiting through the entrance lane to avoid the toll. An automatic counter calculates space available and refuses to issue tickets when the garage is full. (Civil Engineering, August 1965)

A bicycle safety program is a part of the public school curriculum for second, fourth, and sixth graders in Wisconsin Rapids, Wis. The bicycle course was laid out on the playgrounds of the city's four elementary schools. With the help of the city painter, standards, stop signs, and traffic lights were improvised. The children are taught the proper way to ride so that they will have had experience in obeying traffic laws by the time that they are old enough to have a driver's license. (Traffic Safety, March 1965)

A tourist-aid device, displayed on a 200-button-operated board which will show by tracks of light the quickest and best routes to destinations in the city, is being planned for installation in San Francisco. (U. S. Municipal News, Feb. 15, 1965)

Improving driving attitudes of teenagers who have committed traffic violations is a project receiving the attention of psychologists at George Washington University. The discussion group technique was adopted to encourage young violators to critically examine their traffic attitudes. The driving problems described by teenagers--how they saw a problem--and their feelings about driving were noted. If a teenager gave a particularly vivid account of a driving violation or experience, this was jotted down for possible future use in case-history material. After a case-history was obtained, the data were combed over, tested, revised, and re-tested to provide the basis for a new manual of group discussion material designed specially for younger traffic violators. (Traffic Safety, June 1965)

Miscellaneous



MISCELLANEOUS

Community "tinker libraries" for underprivileged urban children have been suggested by a Southern Illinois University student. The idea of the libraries is to give children access to things like automobiles, clocks, and radios with which they might tinker. The stock of materials might include junk cars, appliance trade-ins, and miscellaneous items contributed by townspeople. (National League of Cities, Feb. 8, 1965)

An organizational inspection procedure has been set up in Raleigh, N. C., to keep the new city hall neat and clean. Under the system, each department becomes the owner-occupant of the office space assigned to it, and assumes responsibility for the care and maintenance of the physical properties involved. An inspector for each floor is appointed from within the department. Inspections are held on week-ends or after working hours on Fridays. (The American City, January 1965)

The Zoning Information Service has been established in East Orange, N. J. Utilizing this service, persons involved in property transactions can find out in advance whether intended uses are in violation of city ordinances. (United States Municipal News, Feb. 15, 1965)

Loans for residential electrical wiring improvements are being made by the Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division. Under this plan, \$100 can be borrowed for improvements and the loan amortized on the customer's bill over a one-, two- or three-year period at 4 per cent interest. The customer may select his own contractor and get at least two bids on the planned improvements. (The Commercial Appeal, Sept. 18, 1964)

A source of potential industry is being explored in Alabama. Marketable inventions in great number spring from the minds of local people and could be used to start new industries within the state rather than having to go outside the state to bring in industries. (Alabama Municipal Journal, April 1964)

A new concept in class scheduling will eliminate the arbitrary hour-long class period in the Memphis high schools next year. The hour period will be replaced by greatly shortened periods, probably 20 or 30 minutes. The idea behind the technique is simple. "It sets a time to do a job rather than setting the job to the time." For example, an art student needs more than an hour to give form to an idea with a lump of clay. A language or typing student doesn't need a full hour to grasp a segment of information or practice a new

technique. The key is the segment of time considered the shortest desirable class period for any work and the smallest desirable group of students, thus allowing the student to do more on his own time. (Commercial Appeal, Oct. 30, 1964)

Specially trained communications consultants are being made available by the Bell System to work with city officials in determining the need for public telephone service. As a first step, Bell makes a comprehensive study of the city, including pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns, telephone usage rates, consumer habits, and population characteristics. Information acquired from this survey, together with experience gained from working with other cities, is the basis for a recommendation to the city on how many booths are needed and where they should be located. Following city approval, the Bell System installs the booths and provides for their continued maintenance at no cost to the city. (Mayor and Manager, January 1965)

An automatic record of gasoline used by city vehicles is handled by remote control in Gastonia, N. C. The base unit of the system is a small office console which controls gas pumps up to half a mile away. The system has an intercom unit, the pump power control switch, and read-out meters. The shop man talks on the intercom to the driver needing fuel, who identifies himself and gives his license number and mileage. The desk man records this information and pushes the "pump on" switch so that the driver can operate the pump. When fueling is complete, the desk man turns the pump off, reads the individual sale meter, and completes the record. (The American City, March 1965)

A promotion drive to push products made by firms in the city is under way in Memphis. The campaign, a frank appeal to the more than half-million consumers to support home-town industries at the store counters, will include everything from bumper stickers to poster contests. It is anticipated that this idea will help bring new industries to Memphis, expand those already there, create new job opportunities for young persons, and help solve tax problems through stepped-up business activity and bigger payrolls. (The Commercial Appeal, Jan. 8, 1965)