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ideas for a better city



SELECTED BY THE STAFF OF THE
MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICE
EDITED BY GERRY ELLISON

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1969

I D E A S F O R A B E T T E R C I T Y

Selected by the Staff of the
Municipal Technical Advisory Service

Edited by Gerry Ellison

MUNICIPAL TECHNICAL ADVISORY SERVICE

DIVISION OF UNIVERSITY EXTENSION

THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE

in cooperation with the

TENNESSEE MUNICIPAL LEAGUE

January 1970

\$2.00

F O R E W O R D

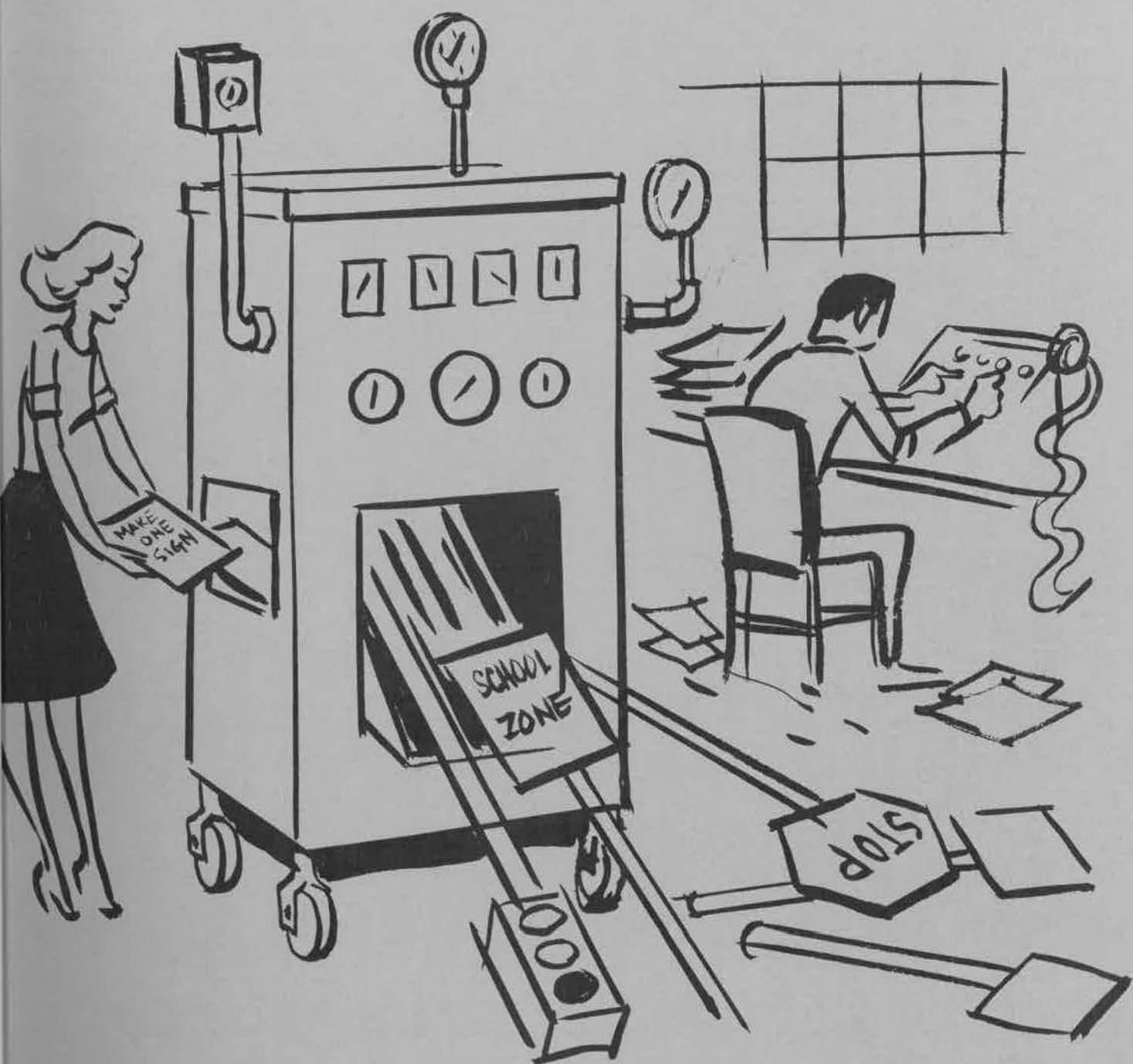
MTAS receives virtually all periodicals in the area of municipal government and also obtains many other publications in this field. These contain a "mass of information" (when trying to sift, classify and assimilate, we sometimes wish it were much less in quantity!). These materials are routed to staff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



FINANCE & TAXATION

A Tax Club Plan has been organized in Waldoboro, Maine. A six-month payment plan was instituted, with payments to be made monthly from July to December 31. Pre-numbered coupon books were prepared with six coupon and stub combinations, one for each month. Payments received are applied to poll and personal taxes first, then to real estate taxes. (The Maine Townsman, October 1968)

A new method of collecting taxes has been adopted in Georgia. A property owner who lacks the cash or the time to come by the courthouse can have ad valorem property taxes charged against his BankAmericard and billed to him later through the local bank offering this service. (National Civic Review, October 1968)

Health, Safety and Welfare



HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE

Sidewalks are installed in newly annexed areas in Toledo, Ohio. Local legislation, passed to protect children walking to school, required that sidewalks be put down. (Traffic Safety, November 1968)

School facilities are put to maximum use in Alexandria, Va. Cooperation between the city and the school board has expanded public programs at reduced cost. Joint planning and construction of school and recreation facilities are used by either unit of government, with the cost of maintenance shared by both. Other uses are: consolidation of the school health program, with the city department of health providing school nurses, immunization programs, health testing and a continuing health information program for the school system; a school-city modern centrex telephone system; joint purchasing of items commonly used by both jurisdictions; joint programs for handicapped children; and joint use of a data processing center. (Intergovernmental Cooperation in Urban Development, by U. S. Department of Housing)

Housing



H O U S I N G

Loans will be made in Ottawa, Canada, up to \$1800 to help individuals finance housing repairs required by the city housing codes. The loans, a "last resort" mechanism, go only to owners who show they have not been able to secure funds by other means. Repayment can be made over a 10-year period. The loan amount is registered against the property as a lien and is considered part of the taxes owing on the property. (Journal of Housing, April 1969)

Major emphasis will be on the minimum housing code during the traditional clean-up, fix-up campaign in St. Joseph, Mo. In addition to city housing inspections, a self-inspection checklist is mailed to all households in the city. (Missouri Municipal Review, June 1969)

Relocatable housing units are being used in urban renewal areas while permanent housing is under construction in Atlanta. The units are on steel foundations with floor, roof and siding of plywood. Each "house" is all-electric with stove and refrigerator furnished. Units are pre-assembled at the plant and trucked to the site in three sections. The temporary dwellings can be moved to new sites when construction of the permanent housing is completed. (Engineering News-Record, June 5, 1969)

Parks and Recreation



P A R K S & R E C R E A T I O N

A new latex coating is being applied to tennis courts in Cincinnati, Ohio. The coating deflects the heat and reduces the wear and tear on tennis balls. The coating is obtainable in five gallon cans, and was spread on the courts with push brooms. The surface is ready for use in 24 hours. (Park Maintenance, October 1968)

Opening schools at night for recreation purposes has been used by Boston for 57 years as a method of keeping young people off the streets after dark. The program began as a citizens' effort and in 1912 was taken over by the city school system as one of its regular functions. (Public Administration Review, November-December 1968)

Art students may design vest pocket parks in Dayton, Ohio. City and school officials are working to involve the youth of city target areas in design and development of the 22 park sites. Students in art classes are invited to play the role of architect--meeting with community representatives to discuss recreation needs, then preparing actual design drawings for each park. (Manager's Memo issued by the Office of the City Manager, Dayton, Ohio, January 1969)

A combined roadside rest park, community neighborhood park and children's fishing area is being developed in Brighton, Colo. The park is located on a 10-acre filled dump site. One end of the park (fenced in) will be used for a children's playground. At the opposite end an outdoor camp site is planned. Beyond the playground an area of shrubs and trees, bisected by a clear water stream, has been set aside for fishing with the natural surroundings emphasized and maintained. A walk path was designed through the greenery with two foot-bridges over the stream. A large directory sign with a map of Colorado and its key recreational areas, a city map and local emergency and public telephone numbers plus a telephone booth are also located in the park. In the same general area, a restroom was constructed. (Colorado Municipalities, February 1969)

An ordinance creating a scenic easement has been adopted by the mayor and council of Flagstaff, Ariz. The easement sets aside 200 feet of land, on each side of a highway, to be maintained in its natural state. The ordinance provides that no improvements can be made on the land and even new utilities will be required to go underground. (League of Arizona Cities & Towns Newsletter, February 1969)

A portable park, developed in Little Rock, Ark., is an important part of interim use of cleared urban renewal land in the downtown section. The park, made completely of movable components, was constructed in a short time and with limited funds. It has two bus shelters; numerous park benches; six flowering crabapple trees; and 10 gaslights. (Journal of Housing, April 1969)

An all-season swimming pool, featuring a 500-ton movable steel roof, has opened in Newark, N. J. The roof travels on railroad-type tracks running from the permanently roofed skating rink-basketball complex. Each roof girder has four 7.5 horsepower motors to power the movement. Heaters warm the pool area and water in winter months. (Park Maintenance, July 1969)

Instant playgrounds have been introduced for schools, parks, ghetto lots and streets in New York City. The prefabricated "play-cubes," which can be easily set up in cramped areas, are molded in colorful highstress fiberglass. Individual hollow cube units can be arranged in many different ways to stimulate children's imagination. (Park Maintenance, July 1969)

An unused 4.5-acre tract under a Miami expressway has been converted into a fully-equipped playground. (United States Municipal News, Aug. 15, 1969)

Personnel



PERSONNEL

A national professional recruiting service for administrative and managerial personnel in local, regional and state governmental units is being started by the American Society for Public Administration. Free help-wanted listings, available to officials who ask for them, will be carried in twice-monthly ASPA bulletins. (United States Municipal News, Nov. 15, 1968)

A new type of training program, for management personnel, operators and technicians for municipal or county public works programs, has been undertaken by the Oregon chapter of APWA and the Division of Continuing Education of Oregon System of Higher Education. A short course for public works construction inspectors is recorded on videotape and the complete set--tapes and portable replay units--is made available for use by interested groups. The same method could be used for adult training in other public works fields as a means of taking the instruction to the man on the job. (Public Works, January 1969)

A summer internship program for college undergraduates from all academic fields has been launched by Fort Worth, Texas, to expose students to the challenge of government service. The program also provides brainpower for a work backlog resulting from critical staff shortages. A majority of the interns asked to continue their work into the school year on a part-time basis. (Public Management, January 1969)

City employees are all going to be "inspectors" in St. Louis. All personnel have received forms for reporting any condition in the city which requires attention and which might otherwise be overlooked. The forms are to be carried in both city and private vehicles and filled out whenever a condition that needs correcting is discovered. The employee records the location and his findings and turns the sheet over to his department supervisor. Reports are investigated and corrected by the department concerned. Among the items on the checklist are traffic hazards, unauthorized parking, street defects, storm sewer stoppage and health hazards. (Minnesota Municipalities, February 1969)

City employees in Saginaw attend a city hall class on how to handle telephoned complaints courteously. (United States Municipal News, March 1, 1969)

A new approach to collective bargaining has been taken by municipalities in the Minneapolis metropolitan area. A managers' negotiating committee and representatives from one union have negotiated for 90 per cent of the cities in the seven-county metropolitan area. No binding commitments on behalf of public employees and city councils are made. The aim is to reach a mutually-acceptable settlement which can then be presented to participating cities as guidelines. (Public Management, June 1969)

Walking employment "offices" are used by the Pacific Telephone and Telegraph Company. Six Negro and Spanish-speaking recruiters go wherever they feel the hard-core unemployed can be found--including barber shops, poolrooms and bars. (Solving the Crisis in Our Cities, by John B. Babcock, President, American Business Press, Inc.)

Police and Fire



POLICE AND FIRE

Clues from unsolved crimes are televised one night each week by a West German television station. Viewers are given pertinent facts on cases, shown pictures of wanted subjects, and asked to act as "armchair detectives." Those who think they have clues to help in solving one of the cases are requested to call the network studio, where a direct line connects them with police headquarters. Police officers also are in the studio to assist in handling leads. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, June 1968)

A bicycle patrol may help police departments catch purse-snatchers and muggers. Bicycles are quiet and easy to maneuver. They have sufficient speed to overtake suspects fleeing on foot and they are economical. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, November 1968)

Psychiatric and psychological screenings for Omaha, Neb., police department jobs in recent years have shown a steady rise in intelligence and reliability ratings of candidates. (United States Municipal News, Dec. 1, 1968)

A rude awadening concerning the whereabouts of their children is in store for parents in a Western city. The district juvenile court has an officer on duty until late hours on weekdays and through weekends to handle young offenders found loitering or otherwise getting into trouble on the streets. Youngsters apprehended by the police are brought to the detention center, where the officer on duty calls the parents and asks them to come to court immediately. Those parents refusing to come are assessed \$17 a day in costs for keeping their children at the center. The object of the program is to eliminate the detention of children who should not be detained and to call forcefully to the attention of parents the fact that youngsters are out in the streets at a time when they should be home. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, December 1968)

A gripe session for policemen has been started in Indianapolis. All policemen air their gripes without regard to rank or protocol. (Knoxville News-Sentinel, Jan. 5, 1969)

A fire department car patrols areas where phone service is out in Knoxville, Tenn. Since residents cannot telephone the fire department in case of a fire, the department comes to them. (Knoxville News-Sentinel, Jan. 27, 1969)

Narcotics prevention is a leading feature of the district attorney's Young Citizens Council in Los Angeles County, Calif. Comprised of representatives of more than 130 high schools, the council also has undertaken such projects as the publication of a simplified booklet explaining laws and the maintenance of "youth gripe" centers to refer complaints about the communications gap between youth and the police. These young people study and promote all aspects of law enforcement from crime prevention to courteous driving. (National Civic Review, January 1969)

Wallet cards carrying a calendar on one side and listing police job requirements on the other are passed out by Philadelphia policemen to likely recruit candidates they encounter on their beats. (United States Municipal News, Feb. 15, 1969)

A driver training course is being taken twice a year by police officers in Baldwin Park, Calif. The course was begun two years ago after the police chief learned that his officers were at least partly responsible for more than two-thirds of the accidents involving police vehicles, with virtually all of them occurring at speeds below 40 miles per hour. Since the training started, the accident rate for such situations has been cut a third. The program includes use of a half-mile track and special tires and simulated driving conditions. (Nation's Cities, January 1969)

A new technique for removing disabled motor vehicles from busy intersections and heavily traveled streets has been developed by the police department in a midwest city. Rubber-covered brackets, for pushing the stalled vehicles are attached to the front bumpers of police cruisers. Tow trucks remove the vehicles later to insure road safety. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, February 1969)

Teachers in Salt Lake City will become temporary police officers to give teachers and students a better understanding of law enforcement and to acquaint high school students with the rewarding careers offered in police work. This course will be part of the social studies curriculum in the city's high schools. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, February 1969)

A new security system has been devised for resident managers of apartment buildings. When movers, tradesmen and other outsiders need to borrow keys to the storage rooms, garage and other facilities, they are required to leave their driver's licenses at the apartment house office. When the keys are returned, the licenses are returned. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, March 1969)

Detectives in New York City are assigned to a post-burglary detail to advise owners of looted stores what preventive action could provide more security. (United States Municipal News, Mar. 15, 1969)

A new type of uniform for staff officers of the Cover Township, N. J., police department consists of a dark blue blazer, grey trousers and striped tie. The only identification is a patch on the left breast pocket and a pocket flip-out badge. The entire uniform costs about \$100, including a navy blue top coat with zippered lining and a matching fedora hat. (New Jersey Municipalities, April 1969)

Fire fighters in Dayton, O., are acting as referral specialists. They direct people with problems to the city or private agency best able to help. (Public Management, April 1969)

New telephone equipment allows officers of the Lexington, Ky., police department to dial a number on any standard telephone and give field reports orally. In the past, reports were hand written, then given to a typist who sent them through the proper channels for action. Now processing can be done immediately. (The Kentucky City, April 1969)

A police testing procedure which reportedly produces "at least 95 per cent accuracy" in weeding out recruit applicants who are not suited for law enforcement work, has been developed by a team of University of Chicago psychologists. A report on the method noted that aggressive individuals are bad risks as policemen. Cooperative rather than competitive temperments are good attributes. (Personnel News, April 1969)

Flyers warning teenagers of the consequences of shoplifting are being distributed in East Orange, N. J., by the mayor's office. (United States Municipal News, Apr. 15, 1969)

A home inspection service has been initiated by the fire department in Liberal, Kans. Any resident may request inspection of his house for fire hazards. (Kansas Governmental Journal, May 1969)

A new program called "Signal 27" has been initiated by the police department in Tipp City, Ohio. Named for the radio signal used for an emergency run, the program includes a file with the names of all persons in the area who might require emergency care. A dispatcher keeps close tabs and a patrolman is sent out if any of these people don't call in by a certain time. (Ohio Cities and Villages, June 1969)

A program for dealing with unruly school children is being conducted by the police department in Jersey City, N. J. A mother rides in a patrol car during lunch breaks and at the end of the school day. Police believe that parental presence will encourage better student behavior en route to and from school. (New Jersey Municipalities, June 1969)

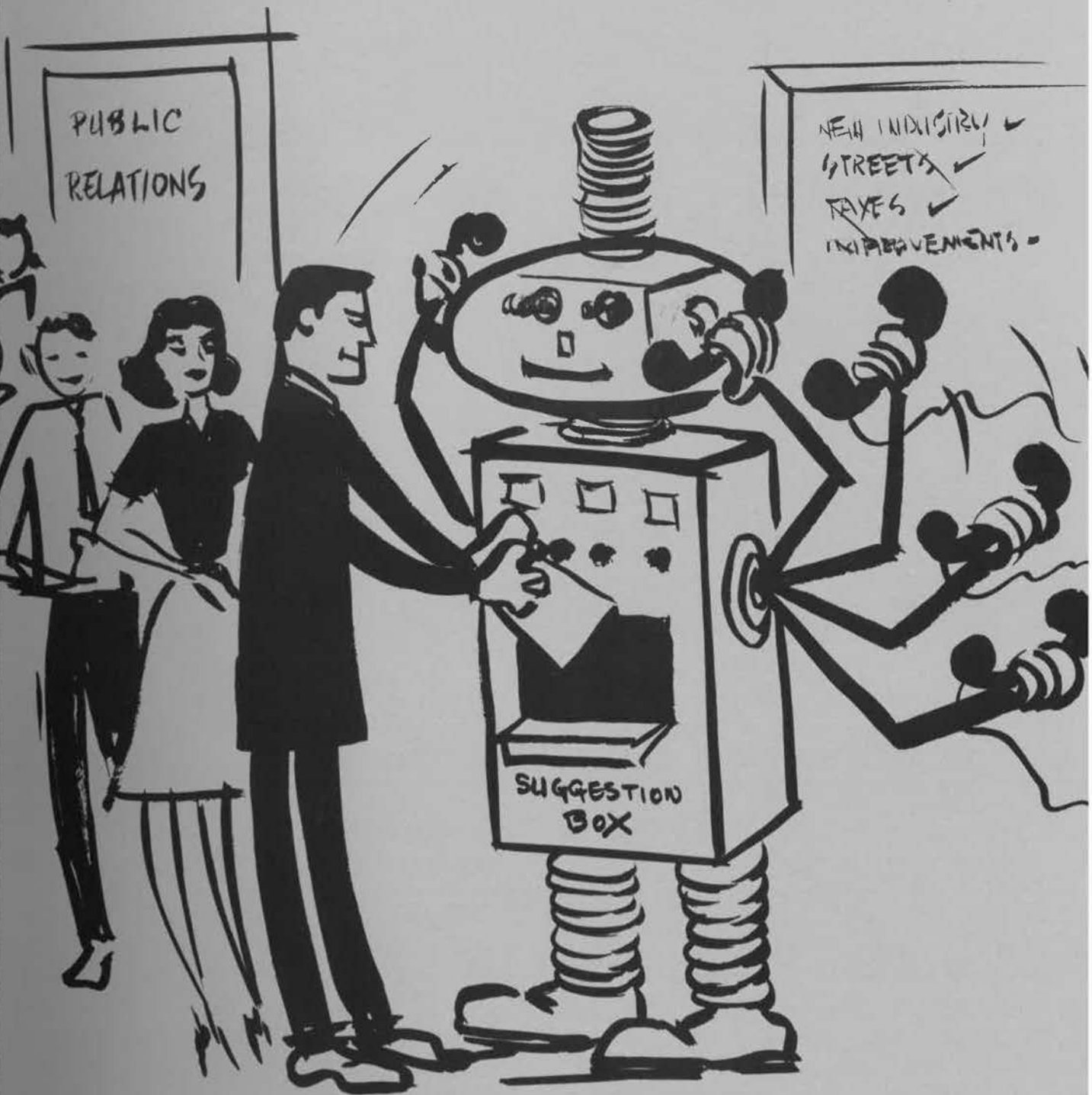
A new method of neighborhood police cadet recruitment in Denver is designed to interest promising high school seniors in police work. An intensive drive is conducted in all high schools in the city to encourage seniors to become police cadets and participate in a work-study program in conjunction with Metropolitan State College. Tuition is paid by the city. The cadet receives a starting salary of \$320 a month with an opportunity for increases as his work progresses. (Personnel News, June 1969)

Sign language is being studied by policemen in a Midwest city so they can identify themselves to deaf-mutes. Police encountered communications problems when they contacted deaf-mutes who either did not understand the questions or did not realize they were being questioned by police. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, July 1969)

Police cruisers in Oakwood, Ohio, have been painted a butternut yellow color with blue "racing stripes." It's a safety factor and the crime-discouraging aspects of the new look already are paying off for the community. (City of Oakwood, Ohio, Newsletter, July 1969)

The police department in Albuquerque, N. M., has a new program for combating the rising crime rate, "Crime Check--If You See It, Report It." Police have distributed to citizens a brochure explaining the program and urging people to report: (1) any crime that is witnessed, (2) suspicious activities and (3) strange or unusual events. A detachable tag or label in the brochure is marked "Crime Check--Police" and gives the police telephone number. (FBI Law Enforcement Bulletin, August 1969)

Public Relations



PUBLIC RELATIONS

How do you get women interested in redevelopment and housing? The Norfolk, Va., Redevelopment and Housing Authority did it with fashions. Each fall, downtown merchants cooperate in a "Fashion With Flair" promotion. Last year, the theme was "Progress and Fashion in Action in the New Norfolk." To illustrate what had been done, "before" shots of downtown in years past were coupled with "after" photographs of the same locations after redevelopment. Models wearing the latest fashions posed on the site of various city face-lifting projects. The photos were displayed in downtown stores and a color slide presentation was shown to women's civic, garden and church groups. Not only did this sales promotion pay off for the local merchants, it also made citizens more aware of the constantly changing face of their city. (News Release from the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Oct. 30, 1968)

High school teachers were given a first-hand look at the operation of a modern city government in Phoenix, Ariz. Through the cooperation of the City of Phoenix, the Phoenix Union High School District and Arizona State University, teachers received actual work experience in city government, as well as graduate level academic credit, while making the benefits of their services and their fresh insights available to the city. The teachers spent 40 hours per week in the city hall, dividing their time between specific work assignments and activities designed to increase their over-all knowledge of local government. Educational activities included attendance at city council meetings. Work projects included writing for the City Manager's Newsletter, preparation of a brochure on city government, and organizing and developing recommendations for training programs. (League of Arizona Cities and Towns Newsletter, November 1968)

Coffee break at city hall has been transformed into an information session for invited guests in Odessa, Tex. Once a month, business and civic leaders (200-250 of them) are invited to city hall for coffee and a briefing on one or more departments of the council-manager government. (The American City, December 1968)

Hair-dryers in beauty parlors hold a captive audience. So do barbers' chairs and dentists' and doctors' waiting rooms. These are distribution points for brief brochures published by Wyoming, Mich., on city assessments, the commission, the water treatment plant and the fire and recreation departments. (The American City, December 1968)

"Talking Time" before monthly council meetings in Mantua, Ohio, has stimulated interest in city affairs and attendance at council meetings. The mayor makes himself available to citizens who want to tell, talk, suggest, complain or praise. The before-meeting talk sessions do two things: cut out lengthy statements in council and make it possible for timid citizens to be heard in private. (The American City, December 1968)

A professional public relations program for recruiting policemen for Fairfax County, Va., drew 1,000 phone calls within 48 hours. More than 2,000 responses have been received to date from as far away as Florida and Massachusetts. Color ads were used in conjunction with a follow-up community-relations effort, including speeches by policemen, slide presentations and

seminars. All local radio and TV stations cooperated and the national wire services picked up the story. (Public Relations Journal, December 1968)

A new link, combining the ombudsman concept and neighborhood associations, is being forged between the city hall and urban communities of Stockton, Calif. Two "neighbor-men," familiar with the community, were employed and trained in city functions and services. The neighbor-men's personal contacts with the public are extended through work with various service organizations. Considerable time has been spent helping service groups and community agencies coordinate various projects. It is also hoped the neighbor-men will increase city government awareness of potential problems which could be solved before they reach the crisis level. (Western City Magazine, December 1968)

Drab plywood construction barricades were transformed into bright artistic creations by over 200 young people in Birmingham, Ala. In tattered overalls, shorts, blue jeans and paint-smearred smocks they came--from every corner of the city and suburbs--rich and poor, black and white. On the 328 feet of barricades they aired their youthful ideals together in design--some serious, some comic. Five-member teams from 41 schools competed for \$25 savings bonds, school art equipment and trophies. Each group painted its 4' x 8' panel to the contest theme, "Happiness is . . ." (The Alabama Municipal Journal, February 1969)

"Start Now Atlanta Week," as proclaimed by the mayor, included invitations to citizens to tour slums to get first-hand looks at problems of poverty. (United States Municipal News, Feb. 15, 1969)

Slides are used to dramatize budget data in Ormond Beach, Fla. Each page of the budget is flashed on the screen and then illustrated with slides of the personnel, equipment, buildings or activities those columns of numbers are to buy. (The American City, March 1969)

Packets of 12 pre-addressed envelopes, for mailing their utility bills, have been sent to Knoxville, Tennessee., Utilities Board customers. (The KUB Reporter, March 1969)

A handbook, "A Guide for Young Citizens and Their Parents," has been released by Montgomery County, Md., to help young people understand their community. The four-part handbook will be used as a supplementary text for seventh and tenth grade social studies classes. It outlines, in question-and-answer form, the local government structure, county laws and how they are enforced, treatment of juveniles under the law, 39 agencies in the county that offer community services to youth and their parents and "tips for teens." The booklet also includes a glossary of legal terms, a bibliography on narcotics and drugs, and true-false quizzes for classroom use. (Public Management, May 1969)

A map of the residential area is being mailed to every residence in Edina, Minn. This service is being performed because of the rapidly growing community and also because of a relatively high turnover of residents. Certain basic information about the village is included. (Minnesota Municipalities, May 1969)

Citizen interest in Sparta Township, N. J.'s, pending \$6.4 million sewer system is being kept alive through the imaginative use of a billboard. The banner heading, "Municipal Sewers for Sparta," remains unchanged but the tag-line following it is changed weekly to provide information on various aspects of the project, such as the cost and completion schedule. (New Jersey Municipalities, May 1969)

A series of "city-community dialogues" on a wide range of civic issues is being conducted at the San Diego city administration building. Three municipal officials join taxpayers and spokesmen for schools, private agencies, neighborhood groups and local firms in no-holds-barred discussions. One typical "dialogue" drew representatives of 40 of the city's organizations. (United States Municipal News, May 1, 1969)

A letter to all residents, inviting them to volunteer for municipal service work, is getting good response for the mayor of Florissant, Mo. Residents are asked to fill out questionnaires listing areas in which they have special qualifications for assignments. Members of official city hall advisory boards will be chosen from among those responding. (United States Municipal News, May 1, 1969)

Boy Scouts are discovering urban affairs in Highland Park, Ill. The boys choose a monthly activity related to law and government. Some of the activities the city hopes to have available in the next year are learning about crime laboratories in the area, attending a city council meeting, observing the local court in action, touring a large law firm, talking with representatives from federal agencies, and drafting a model ordinance and conducting a mock council meeting to adopt it. (Public Management, May 1969)

Boston's majestic city hall was the stage for a youth opportunity program fashion show in which contestants won 27 scholarships to schools for designers and models. (United States Municipal News, June 15, 1969)

A regional youth council has been established in State College, Pa., to encourage more understanding and participation in local affairs. The 22 members study the actual operation of local government and offer suggestions to the city council; board of health; shade trees, planning and air pollution commissions; the township board of supervisors; and the recreation parks commission. (North Dakota League of Cities Bulletin, July 1969)

A computer answers customers' questions at the Orlando, Fla., Utilities Commission. Customer service clerks no longer have to dig through files for information about a customer's water or electricity bill. The data comes to the clerks as they tap out inquiries on typewriter-like terminals linked to the computer system. (The Municipal South, July 1969)

A small blue bus lettered "Stop! Let's Talk!" is used as a mobile city hall in Miami. Residents have dubbed it "True Blue" because city staffers who man it follow up complaints. (United States Municipal News, Aug. 1, 1969)

Public Works



PUBLIC WORKS

Simplified street-widening resulted when Los Angeles adopted its so-called R-3 Ordinance. This requires applications for building permits in R-3 (multiple residence) zones and in commercial and manufacturing zones to dedicate whatever portions of their frontages are needed for street purposes and to install the required improvements (curb and gutter, sidewalk and street paving, if necessary to conform). (The American City, October 1968)

Color has come to Main Street as part of a street-improvement program that has brought new life to downtown Sanborn, Iowa. If you go to town, you will drive over a new black asphalt street, step over a bright white curb and walk across a rose red sidewalk to enter the shops or business establishments. And if you look up and down Main Street, you will notice another touch of color -- blue light standards. (The American City, December 1968)

A new air filtration system eliminates odor problems in auditoriums and theaters in Mobile, Ala. The system will also cut air-conditioning operating costs. To handle odor problems, air circulates through 63 air handlers containing a total of 25,000 pounds of a chemical odoroxidant called Purafill which oxidizes odor molecules--destroying them. (The American City, January 1969)

Standardized factory-made structural components are used to supply critically needed classroom space without resorting to temporary structures in Baltimore. The city is fielding a team of experts in architecture, engineering, construction and education to design loft-type buildings as additions to existing schools. (Engineering News-Record, March 6, 1969)

A new method of building box culverts, developed jointly by the engineering division of the Henrico County, Va., Planning Office and a local concrete company, utilizes a pre-cast top and side section. The bottom section is poured in place as usual except that a keyed slot is provided on each side. After the concrete bottom hardens, the pre-cast section is set in place. Joints are sealed with an asphalt compound or wet mortar grout. Backfill operations then can begin immediately. (Virginia Town & City, July 1969)

Refuse



REFUSE

Youths, between the ages of 16 and 21, have been employed to remove old tires, tin cans, and other trash along the river bank, which otherwise would wash back into the waterways. Approximately 100 youths were hired in the river bank debris removal program in the District of Columbia area. The youths are paid \$1.60 per hour, and are divided into groups of 10, with each team directed by a college student supervisor. The trash is placed in piles at designated riverbank sites where it is put on barges and taken to landfill sites for burial. (Public Works, September 1968)

Comminutors chew up bulky items, such as cupboards, tables, beds, big boxes, mattresses, logs, timbers, tractor tires, iron drums and refrigerators, into small pieces so they can pass through the incinerator. The advantages of such comminutors include: a simple feeding system to cope with the bulkiest items, comminution of all materials without pre-sorting, no noise, no dust, no explosion hazard, low power consumption, minimum personnel, low cost and economical operation. (The American City, January 1969)

The "Litterpig" has supplanted the "Litterbug" in East Orange, N.J. As people became more accustomed to the litterbug, its effectiveness lessened. As a result, a new anti-litter symbol has been created that is more in keeping with the new breed of litterers. The young and vigorous "Litterpig" promises to renew the fight for community cleanliness with vigor. (The American City, January 1969)

A bulk-trash garbage truck is being tested in New York City. The truck can grind up and carry away things as big as abandoned refrigerators. (Civil Engineering, February 1969)

A one-man garbage truck is saving money on garbage collection in Inglewood, Calif. Right-hand drive trucks were purchased with side loaders located behind the cab since drivers also act as collectors and dumpers. The maximum age allowed for the driver is 45. Training is essential. A six-week course emphasizes driving safety and other elements of the job. (The Kentucky City, February 1969)

Traffic and Parking



TRAFFIC AND PARKING

A special purpose marking material for highways has been introduced by Kentucky Department of Highways. The new material dries in approximately three minutes, causing very little congestion for the motorist. Another material, "Greenlight Powder," is being utilized extensively at major intersections. Its name is derived from the fact that it dries in about the length of time it takes a green light to change, thus allowing traffic to flow with very little interruption. (Highway User, November 1968)

Coins inserted in Van Nuys, Calif., business district parking meters trigger a mechanism which ejects tokens for shoppers to redeem at nearby stores. (United States Municipal News, Nov. 15, 1968)

Miniature towns--traffic parks--that contain all the traffic hazards of the city are scattered throughout Tokyo. These parks serve two purposes. They are year-round playgrounds and are also used as a place to teach traffic safety to children. A policeman is on duty every day in the traffic parks. Twice a month police traffic instructors visit the parks to give safety lessons. (Traffic Safety, December 1968)

Portable battery-powered dictating machines are used by inspectors in San Diego, Calif., to study and report on street conditions. This procedure greatly increases the amount of data that can be collected in a day. (American City, January 1969)

Mini-skirted flag-gals, college girls hired to direct traffic along road construction sites in North and South Dakota, get more attention and more compliance from motorists. (Texas Town & City, February 1969)

The parking plan used by the Board of Parking in Buffalo, N. Y., provides financial aid to encourage construction of private facilities. (Municipal Affairs, April 1969)

Pre-addressed stamped envelopes for convenient payment of fines are attached to Honolulu traffic tickets. (United States Municipal News, May 1, 1969)

Traffic signals for the blind have been installed in Japan. A self-standing steel cylinder, linked to the conventional traffic system vibrates when the traffic light is green. A blind person, by touching the cylinder with his hand or cane, can find out if it's safe to cross. Sidewalks at intersections with these special signals are paved with braille-marked tiles indicating the signals are there. A complete intersection system has eight cylinders, two to a corner. Units cost \$140 each and operate from a 74-watt AC motor. (The American City, May 1969)

An interconnected computer traffic signal system is operating in New York City. Traffic stops have been reduced by 70 per cent and running time by 35 per cent during morning rush hours without interfering with regular traffic. (Public Automation, July 1969)

Parking meter repairs are done on the site in Nashville. Meter maids-- and other sources--file faulty meter reports. The meter repairman arranges the slips by routes and services the route from a vehicle equipped with a little work bench and a supply of spare parts. Nashville reports that about 95 per cent of all faulty meters can be repaired in just a few minutes. This procedure saves hauling and shop time. The service van also carries a dozen replacement meter heads for those meters whose malfunction or damage is serious enough to require shop service, which is reserved for rainy days.

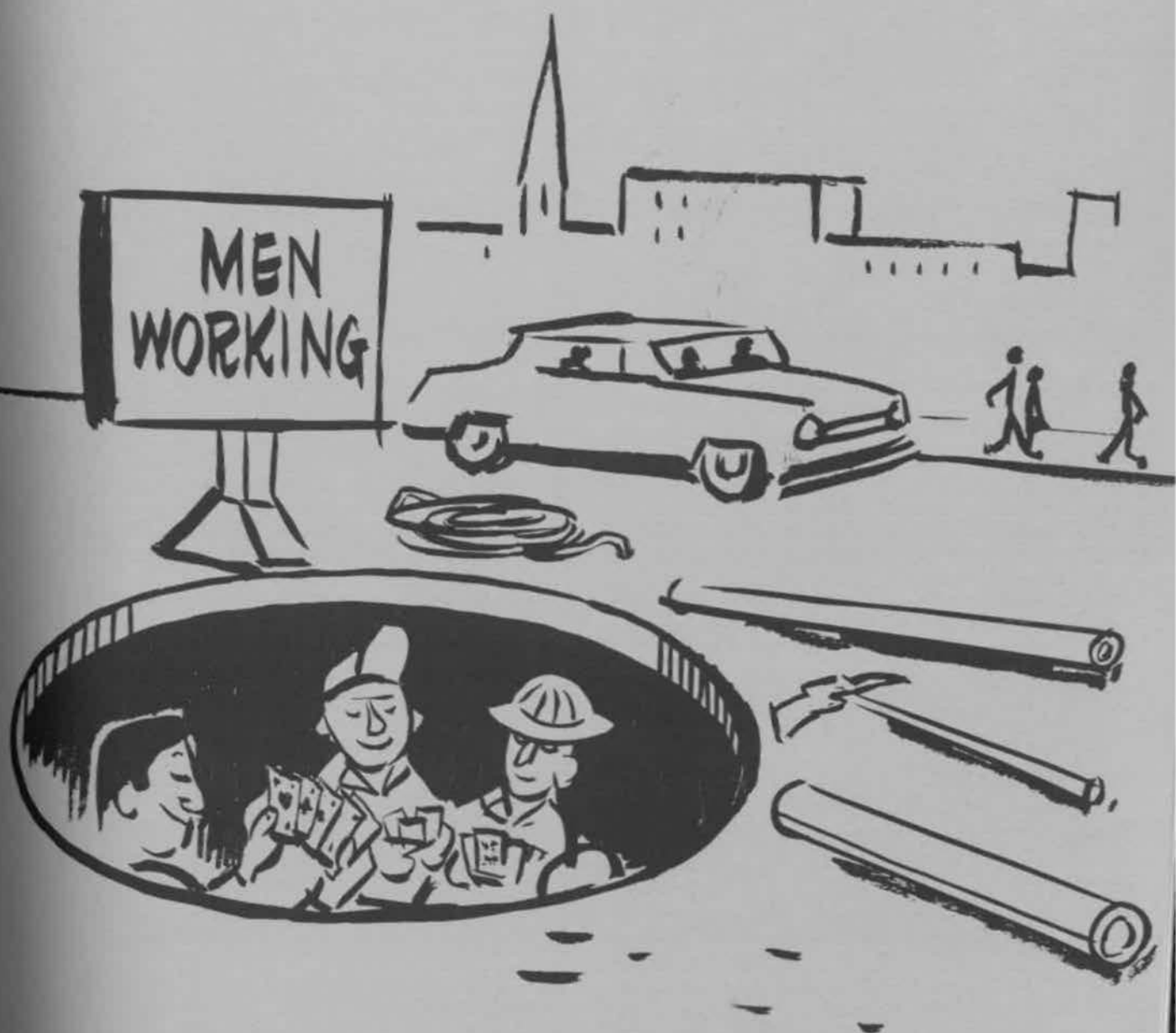
Transportation



T R A N S P O R T A T I O N

A new type bus service in Fond du Lac, Wisc., involves a cooperative composed of local citizens. Memberships were set at \$5 minimum so the general bus riding population could afford to participate in the venture. Preferred stock at \$10 per share, 5 per cent interest, also was sold. Now there are approximately 280 voting members in the co-op. (The Municipality, March 1969)

Water and Sewage

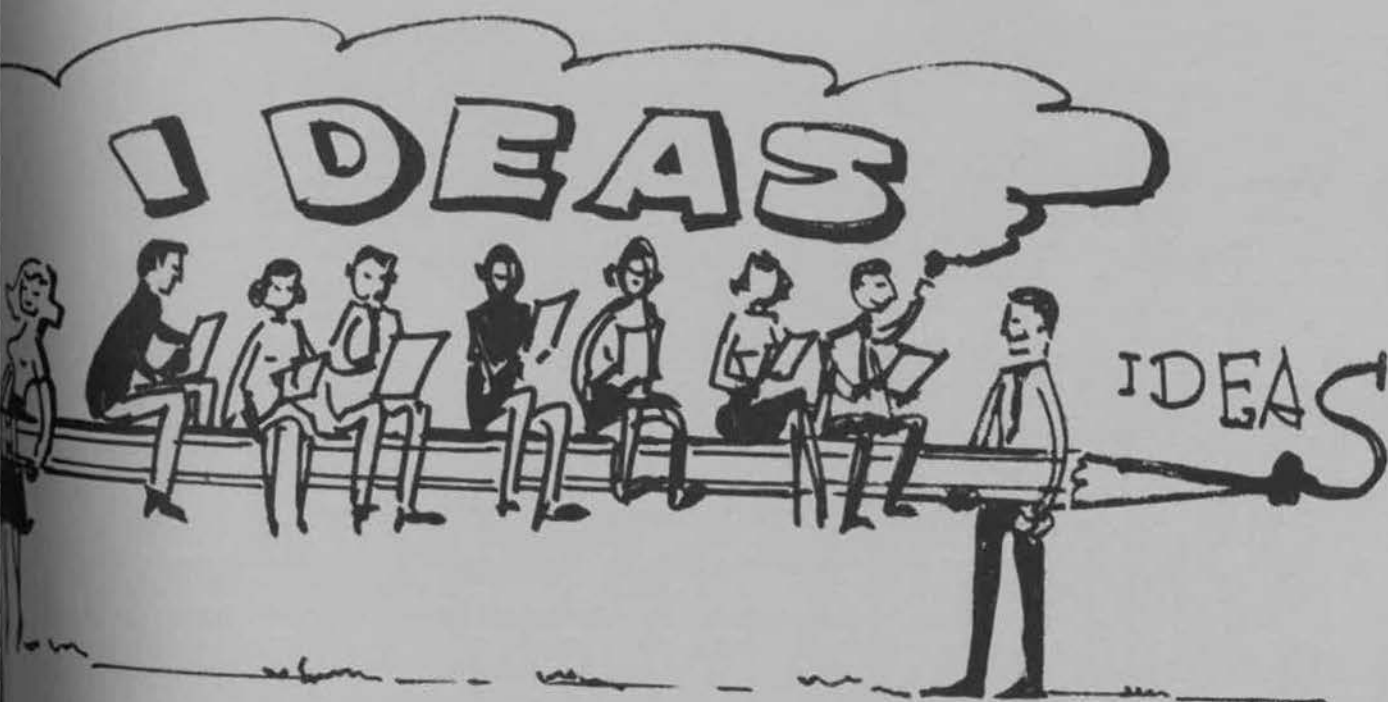


W A T E R & S E W A G E

Old leaky sewers do not have to be dug up to alleviate infiltration. In Key West, Fla., the leaks are being sealed by filling the section between man-holes with a sealant. This waterborne material pours out through pipe cracks and deteriorated joints, congealing there to prevent future leaks. When huge voids exist, the city drills down to the general area from the surface and jets a different type of sealant around the pipe. (The American City, October 1968)

Utility bills are marked "paid" for the month of December for patrons who have their previous utility bills paid up in Maddock, N. D. This is the sixth year the "city fathers" have presented a "Christmas gift" to city utility users who have kept their bills up to date. According to records, this has amounted to a great savings because it encourages prompt payment of utility bills. (League of North Dakota Municipalities Bulletin, January 1969)

Miscellaneous



M I S C E L L A N E O U S

Neighborhood governments, with power to operate a limited range of programs, have been created in Philadelphia as a new way to increase citizen involvement in local government. Consideration is being given to the establishment of five subcity school boards. Each, with its own chief executive, will have a great deal of flexibility and autonomy. (Western City, June 1968)

Color-coded street signs are being used in St. Paul. North-south streets have green backgrounds. Backgrounds on east-west streets are antique brown. Black progression numbers are used, and the signs are fully reflectorized. (Minnesota Municipalities, September 1968)

"Ready Fare" has gone into effect for the city-owned bus system in Detroit. Drivers will no longer carry any cash or tickets and will not have a key to the fare box. Passengers boarding a bus must have the exact fare or a ticket purchased in advance. This new system may prevent robberies of bus drivers. (The Knoxville Journal, Nov. 26, 1968)

Crownvetch is being planted along roadsides in Pennsylvania. Apart from its beauty and appeal to motorists, the plant helps combat erosion. Most important, its use results in estimated savings of more than \$100,000 in maintenance funds annually. Crownvetch is virtually maintenance free, requiring no special feeding and only occasional watering during the first few weeks following seeding. It remains green from June until December, then becomes brown and dormant through the winter. Statistics show the cost of mowing grass is \$4.50 per acre per cutting and mowed grass continues to grow. Crownvetch is the result of more than 20 years of research and experiment by private, state and federal agronomists. (Public Works, November 1968)

A Spanish language edition of its drivers manual, Rules of the Road, has been published by Illinois. It has been pointed out that Illinois and the nation are experiencing a continuous influx of Spanish-speaking people who need to understand traffic laws and regulations thoroughly if they are to be safe operators of motor vehicles. Spanish-speaking drivers will still be required to read and understand traffic control signs in English to pass the driver license examination, but by having the law and regulations presented in their own language, they will be better prepared to avoid traffic law violations and, possibly, accidents. (Traffic Safety, December 1968)

Teens help run the Town of Atlantic, Iowa. The town's street numbering system had become a jumble. City officials concluded that what was needed was a house-by-house survey to pin-point dwellings where addresses should be changed, plus a new numbering pattern that would assure future uniformity. This could have been very costly, but the town is getting it done free. Teenagers, serving without pay and armed with city maps, drove or hiked down every block in the picturesque, tree-shaded county seat to perform the necessary fieldwork. In consultation with postal officials, fire department representatives, utility workers and city planning commissioners, they drafted a master blueprint for address clarity that is now awaiting approval by the city council. Atlantic teens also have conducted traffic surveys, outlined and followed through on plans for protecting the city's giant Dutch elms from disease, embarked on an ambitious program of beautification, helped the chamber of commerce determine the relative merits of various

business locations, contacted prospective new industries and made the town's sole tourist attraction a going concern. Now in the works are many other such projects, all on a voluntary, no-charge basis. (Nebraska Municipal Review, January 1969)

A day away from city hall was just what Tucson, Ariz., officials and staff members needed. A "mayor-council-city staff retreat" at a nearby ranch provided the often-sought opportunity to discuss city programs and plans in depth. (Nation's Cities, January 1969)

"Pot Pourri" is the title of a new report to citizens issued by cities in Missouri. The newsletter replaces a combination calendar-annual report formerly sent to residents. "Pot Pourri" is scheduled for three or four publications per year. (Missouri Municipal Review, January 1969)

Builders now have the option of using the many individual forms or a new single form, covering construction, plumbing, electrical work and heating-cooling installation, to obtain building permits in Kansas City, Mo. The new permit form applies to single-family residences only. (The American City, January 1969)

A system of inter-community cooperation, developed by the New Jersey Department of Community Affairs, allows one city to borrow personnel with needed expertise from another city. The Department reimburses the lending municipality for the time spent by its officials in the other community. (Personnel News, March 1969)

Birth control pills for pigeons are now on the market and are being used to control the growth of the pigeon population in Ocala and three other Florida cities. The pills are bits of corn coated with a drug and then with something to hide the taste. The drug is said to be effective for three to six months. (The Knoxville Journal, Apr. 24, 1969)

Local merchants in Vienna, Va., are given an advantage of up to 1½ per cent on competitive bids on city purchases. (Nation's Cities, May 1969)

A new inter-agency committee, to coordinate the planning, construction and use of municipal buildings and parks, has been established in Fort Worth, Tex. The committee is composed of two members each from the board of education, the city council and the park and recreation board, plus the superintendent of schools, the city manager and the director of parks and recreation. Their goal: less duplication of facilities and greater use of present facilities by the entire community. (Mayor & Manager, May-June 1969)