

# Governmental Research and City Planning Department

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## ECONOMIES

## TAX AND ASSESSMENT

## SOCIAL SERVICE

Activities of Department which serves only the principles of good and clean municipal government gives outline of a vast program covering the issues of Charity Endorsement; City Planning; Study of Public Utilities; and review of the County Road controversy.

## CITY PLANNING

## HEALTH

## LAW

This is a brief synopsis of the work accomplished and being carried on by the Governmental Research and City Planning Department of the Chamber of Commerce, covering period from April 15th, 1919 to Dec. 24, 1919.

Complete details and full reports on every phase of work undertaken by this Department are on file.

The purpose of this department is to serve as a connecting link between the public officials and the citizens in matters of public efficiency and economy. This department is continuously interested in the methods and procedures of doing public business as distinct from personalities and politics.

The activities of the departments fall under six Committees and six Committee Chairmen, which Committees are in turn under the Board of Directors of the Chamber of Commerce. The Committees and Committee Chairmen are as follows:

Economy Committee—J. Krakauer, Chairman.

Tax Committee—W. Cooley, Chairman.

City Planning Committee—J. L. Marr, Chairman.

Health Committee—Dr. H. Crouse, Chairman.

Legal Committee—Mason Pollard, Chairman.

Social Service Committee—Dr. F. Swift, Chairman.

A record of meetings and work handled by the above Committees is shown below:

### Committees

Economy Committee—Number of meetings, 6. Work handled, Sinking Fund; Water Works Budget; Water Cost Analysis; Schools; City Tax Rate; District No. 1; County Roads.

Tax Committee—Number of meetings, same as Economy Committee. Work handled, same as Economy Committee.

City Planning Committee—Number of meetings, 7. Work handled, Washington Park; Castle Heights Park; General City Planning.

Health Committee—Number of Meetings 3. Work handled, Charity Endorsement.

Legal Committee—Number of meetings, same as Health. Work handled, same as Health.

Social Service Committee—Number of meetings, same as Health. Work handled, same as Health.

### Review of Work Undertaken.

#### Accomplishments:

A few of the accomplishments of this department have been:

Installed an improved method of handling the City's Sinking fund, resulting in a \$50,000 saving to the tax payers.

Installed a budget in the Water Work Department resulting in the Water Department carrying the cost of its own debt service, which this year relieved the City's tax rate of about \$40,000.

Placed all street intersection charges on the City's general fund; relieving district No. 1 tax payers of double intersection payments and causing a 100% reduction in district No. 1 tax rate.

Co-operated with school board in eliminating about 30 unnecessary teaching positions in the elementary grades, in granting teachers about a 20% increase in salaries, and in im-

proving school organizational and administrative methods.

Prepared a report on present water costs and developed a plan of financing the High Line Canal under which the El Paso Water Consumers would receive from a 20% to 50% reduction in water costs, and at the same time carry El Paso's cost of the proposed canal.

Co-operated with the City Council in fixing this year's tax rate which puts into effect both sinking fund and water works savings, as recommended by this department, and enabled a tax rate of only 4.5% more than last year, while general fund expenditures will necessarily be 30% more this year than last.

On request of the Mayor and City Council made examination into reasonableness of rate charged by the Telephone Company and submitted report on same to city, as a basis for fixing the Telephone rate.

### Services Rendered:

Some of the direct services rendered to Public Officials are:

Determination of average rate of interest on sinking fund holdings for City Attorney.

Presentation of various methods of redeeming bonded debt to City Attorney.

Calculation of daily interest refunds on new City bond issues for Mayor Davis.

Calculation of Tax Levies on each issue of the City's debt for Alderman Pitman.

Presentation of the economical advantages of the serial type of bonds over the long term type to the County officials.

Secured about a 40% decrease in the water rate for Baptist Sanatorium.

Prepared and published in the El Paso Herald a series of ten educational articles on budget making.

### Work in Progress Now:

Work not yet completed, but being carried on, is as follows:

**Charity Endorsement:** Through a Charity Endorsement Committee, under the Chairmanship of Dr. Hugh Crouse, continuous efforts are being made to collect information on all organizations that appeal to the public for financial aid with the view of protecting citizens from unworthy appeals.

**City Plan:** Through the City Planning Commission, under Chairmanship of J. L. Marr, studies are being made with the view of developing a comprehensive plan for the growth and improvement of the City of El Paso and with the view of assisting the Mayor and Council in fulfilling the City's immediate recreational needs.

**County Roads:** Continuous efforts are being made through the Tax & Economy Committee, under Chairmanship of Mr. Krakauer, to secure economical expenditure of the \$800,000 recently voted for County roads.

### Cost of Work.

The total cost of this department from April 15, 1919 to Dec. 24, 1919, according to statements from Finance Department, is \$3,172.33.

The cost of each piece of work done by this Department, as based upon the total charges made by the Finance Department and prorated according to the number of days spent on each assignment is shown below:

Assignments	No. of Days	Cost of Assignment	Estimated Saving
Schools .....	45	\$577.80	\$25,000.00
Water Works Budget .....	31	398.91	40,000.00
Water Costs .....	22	282.48	Informational Study
Financial High Line Canal .....	20	256.80	Results not known
Sinking Fund .....	32	410.88	50,000.00
District No. 1 .....	18	231.12	5,000.00
City Tax Rate .....	15	192.60	Includes above
Telephone Investigation .....	25	321.00	Results not known
City Planning Commission .....	15	192.60	Results not known
Charity Endorsement .....	3	38.52	Results not known
County Roads & Bonds .....	4	51.34	Results not known
Sinking Fund Interest Rate .....	1	12.84	Informational data
Sinking Fund Tax Levies .....	1	12.84	Informational data
S Debt. Funding Plans .....	2	25.68	Informational data
Interest Refunds .....	1	12.84	Informational data
Reports & Publicity .....	12	154.08	Informational data
Total .....	247	\$3172.33	\$120,000.00

Departmental Cost, \$12.84 per day.

### Program of Work Which Should be Done in 1920.

Completion of a comprehensive plan for the development and growth of the City of El Paso, including a zoning program, a street and boulevard program and a park and recreational program.

Promotion of charter changes with the view of giving the City Planning Commission a legal status.

Intensive study and survey of each city department with the view of establishing them upon a more efficient and economical basis. Due to special problems, which have demanded the attention of this department, this im-

portant piece of work has never been comprehensively undertaken. The undertaking of this assignment should place each of our City departments on a par with the best in the country.

Continual attention to matters currently considered by the Mayor and Council and by the Board of County Commissioners with the view of assisting in promoting efficiency and economy.

Continual promotion of a complete budget plan in all the jurisdictions of our Governmental affairs, with the view of running public business on the same basis as private business is run.