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REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO THE CIVIC IMPROVEMENT
COMMITTEE

Outlining a Ten-Year Improvement Program for Kansas City, Jackson County, and the
School District of Kansas City.

CIVIC IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE KANSAS CITY, MO.

January 22, 1931.

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CIVIC IMPROVEMENT COMMITTEE

A Representative Group of Citizens Organized for the Purpose of Developing a
Ten-Year Program for the Financing of Public Improvements for Kansas City, Jackson
County and the School District of Kansas City

OFFICE: ASSEMBLY ROOM CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

TELEPHONE GRAND ONE-EIGHT-EIGHT-EIGHT

KANSAS CITY, MO.

January 22, 1931

Conrad H. Mann, General Chairman

Frank Hilmes, Asst, to the Gen. Chm.

Hon. James A. Reed, General Vice-Chairman

Mrs. John E. Patterson, General Vice-Chairman

Mrs. David Benjamin, General Vice-Chairman

Walter S. McLucas, Treasurer

Ray W. Wilson, Executive Secretary

Charles F. Edwards, Assistant Secretary

To the Members of the Civic Improvement Committee;

For a good many years there has been a strong sentiment in Kansas City for the study and orderly planning of the needed public improvements. The first step in this direction was made when the City Plan Commission was appointed. Ever since their appointment the City Plan Commission have been studying the needs of Kansas City and during the administration of Mayor Beach it was suggested that a Committee of 100

be appointed by Mayor Beach and City Manager McElroy to work in conjunction with the City Plan Commission to investigate and recommend a program of public improvements for Kansas City.

160 men and women were selected by Mr. Beach and Mr. McElroy to serve on this committee, but no chairman was agreed upon and the matter rested until the election of Mayor Smith in April, 1930.

In his inaugural address Mayor Smith said;

"I am in favor of a ten-year plan of city improvement, not merely for the special lines of improvement set out, but more especially for the reason that it affords a definite program and time limit. Ten years in the growth of a city is not much. It is but a brief time to make comprehensive developments, but it gives an impetus and a goal toward which to work. At the end of one ten-year period we may attach another, but each decade will witness something done, some

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aim set and attained. The only way to better the city, to improve conditions, is to map out a program and follow it. We may make some mistakes, but we will accomplish something and not waste our time and the people's money in windy speculations. Let's go ahead with the program."

Shortly after this Mayor Smith and others prevailed upon Mr. Conrad H. Mann to accept the chairmanship of the committee. Mr. Mann agreed, provided that the committee was enlarged to take in representatives of every interest in Kansas City. To this end invitations were sent first to the president and secretary of every known women's organization in Kansas City, At this meeting these ladies were asked to suggest 5 names of members of their organizations from whom would be selected the ladies on the committee. Later a meeting of the president and secretary of every men's organization was held for the same purpose, and as a result 990 women and men representing these organizations and every section and interest in Kansas City were named, to study needs of the city and work out a plan for their orderly development.

The studies to be made were divided into 16 groups and a sub-committee was appointed to find the facts and make recommendations. A chairman was appointed for

each sub-committee and these 16 chairmen, together with the officers of the general committee constituted your Executive Committee which developed the final program.

The sub-committees and their chairmen were;

1. Public Buildings, J. C. Nichols, Chairman
2. Parks and Playgrounds, Geo. L. Goldman, Chairman
3. County Improvements, Wm. Southern, Jr., Chairman
4. School Improvements, D. M. Pinkerton, Chairman

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5. Public Health and Welfare, George Reinhardt, Chairman
6. Stadium and Out-Door Theatre, John C. Grover, Chairman
7. Public Safety, Col. Cusil Lechtman, Chairman
8. Trafficways and Boulevards, N. T. Veatch, Jr., Chairman
9. Blue Valley Improvements, Frank J. McGinley, Chairman
10. Sanitation and Sewers, R. E. McDonnell, Chairman
11. Municipal Auditorium, S. J. Whitmore, Chairman
12. Water Supply, John Henry Smith, Chairman
13. Wharves, Levees and River Front Improvement, Judge H. L. McCune, Chairman
14. Airport Improvements, Dr. J. D. Brock, Chairman
15. Ten-Tear Budget, John A. Prescott, Chairman
16. Finance, Walter S. McLucas, Chairman

When he appointed these committees your Chairman said, "Any city-wide plan that is produced must be produced by the citizens. There is no set plan. Even the City Plan Commission which has been working on this since its inception, merely will submit the groundwork and the data, it has accumulated. It will be up to these sub-committees to receive ideas from individuals and groups all over the city, develop them, hold public hearings and after due consideration either recommend them to go into the plan or to be discarded."

In all, 585 members of the main committee actively served on the various sub-committees in the work of developing the program. These sub-committees began their work early in July and each of them has now finished its work and turned in its

formal report. These reports when bound together constitute a volume of 586 pages, with numerous illustrations, charts, maps and tables. The sub-committees, with their subdivisions, held more than 450 meetings. In addition to this, numerous informal conferences were held and inspection trips were made. Each

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of the sub-committees conducted hearings to which the public was invited and encouraged to participate and to express its views.

Interest of the public, as expressed through its participation in these hearings, was gratifying. In all, more than 600 separate improvement projects were considered by the various subcommittees. These projects originated from suggestions by civic groups and individuals, from public officials, and in the subcommittees themselves. The total expenditures involved in all the projects suggested is estimated roughly at more than Three Hundred Million Dollars (\$300,000,000), much beyond the ability of the community to finance. Each suggestion was carefully studied and those found to be of greatest merit were recommended favorably by the sub-committees and careful cost estimates were prepared.

The sub-committees have had the benefit of technical advice, not only of the public officials most closely concerned with the problems under consideration, but of engineers, architects, doctors, lawyers, accountants and others who volunteered their services. This voluntary assistance, if paid for at usual rates, would have cost the community many thousands of dollars.

The work of most of the sub-committees was completed early in December and their recommendations, calling for over Seventy-One Million Dollars (\$71,000,000), were sent to the Executive Committee, who spent a great deal of time in the months of December and -January considering them. Again, a series of public hearings was held, and so far as can be determined, everyone who wished to express his views on any part of the program has been given an opportunity for a hearing. The hearty cooperation of the public in appearing at these hearings has been particularly helpful in enabling the Executive Committee to gauge public opinion on the different aspects of the program.

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As a result of its study of sub-committee reports, the Executive Committee was faced with the task of determining which of these improvements were the most urgently needed and would be of the greatest aid in the well-rounded development of the community.

This program after careful study was reduced greatly. All of the improvements suggested were found necessary, but it was found that a good many of them would have to be postponed or the financial burden at this time would be too great.

The improvements recommended by the Executive Committee for which bonds will be asked are summarized below, and will take care of the needs of every section of the city and county:

I. City Improvements

1. City Hall and Site	\$ 4,000,000
2. Parks and Playgrounds	2,750,000
3. Public Hospitals	2,000,000
4. New City Market	500,000
5. Stadium and Out-Door Theatre	750,000
6. Eire Department	375,000
7. New Police District Stations	125,000
8. Trafficways and Boulevards	8,500,000
9. Blue Valley Flood Protection and Improvements, Including acquisition of land	1,000,000
10. Water Supply Improvements	3,500,000
11. Municipal Auditorium, including site	4,500,000
12. Sewers	1,500,000
13. Airport Improvements	500,000
Total	\$ 30,000,000

These city projects are itemized and described in Exhibit A.

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II. County Improvements

1. New Court House and site in Kansas City	\$ 4,000,000
2. Remodeling Court House in Independence	200,000
3. New Detention Home and site	250,000
4. County Roads	3,500,000
5. County Parks	500,000
Total	\$ 8,450,000

These county projects are itemized and described in Exhibit B.

III. School Improvements

The Committee on School Improvements, after consultation with the Board of Education, reported that \$10,000,000 of school improvements would be required in the ten-year period, but that there is authorized but as yet unissued approximately 4 million dollars of school bonds which will take care of the needs of the School District for four years. Inasmuch as school bonds are submitted at School District elections, held independently of the city or county, it was agreed that school needs should not be considered as a part of the program to be financed now, but that this should be left to the judgment of the Board of Education when the need for submitting such bonds arises. However, the anticipated needs of the School District, as set forth above, are taken into account in the estimating of tax requirements for the next ten years.

Careful consideration is being given to the financial aspect of this program by the Budget Committee. Preliminary calculations made by Mr. John A. Prescott, with the assistance of the staff of the Kansas City Public Service Institute, show that with all the bonds taken into consideration including the bonds which the School Board may issue during this period, the combined city, county and school tax rate, provided the bonds are issued in the manner to be suggested by this

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committee will necessitate an increase in taxes from 3.4% in 1931-32 to 16.3% in 1940-41, the peak year of the period.

In making the estimates of tax requirements it was assumed that bonds would not all be issued immediately but would be spread evenly over each year of the period. The calculations were based on conservative estimates of the growth of assessed valuations.

A detailed estimate of the tax requirements will be made public, after the City Council and County Court have taken definite action upon this report when submitted.

The only projects recommended in this program which are not to be paid for entirely by bond funds are trafficways and boulevards and your committee is recommending to the Council that none of these projects be started for a period of two years unless found that delay would greatly increase the cost to the property owners.

In submitting this report your Executive Committee feels that it has presented a picture of the immediate needs of Kansas City and Jackson County and we doubt if the people have ever been called upon to decide an issue of more vital importance to their future than the adoption of this program.

Respectfully Submitted,

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Conrad H. Mann, General Chairman

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EXHIBIT A.

CITY IMPROVEMENTS

1. New City Hall \$4,000,000

Building, 4,000,000 cu. ft. capacity, to house office of all city departments, including

Police Headquarters \$3,000,000

Site, south half of block bounded by 13th, 14th, McGee and Oak Sts. 1,000,000

2. Parks and Playgrounds \$2,750,000

Zoological Garden 400,000

Swope Park, General Improvements 350,000

Station Approach and Kessler Road 450,000

Playgrounds 750,000

Fencing all major playgrounds in the city 75,000

Mulkey Square, Community House 50,000

Lykins Square, Community House 25,000

Sheffield Square, " " 60,000

Ashland Square, " " 60,000

Montgall Square, and Wading Pool " " 35,000

Community House in Northeast Industrial District (East Bottoms) including site 30,000

The Parade, Community House with Auditorium and Swimming Pool 120,000

Gillham Road Park, concrete seats along east terrace for reviewing parades and games
8,000

Central Park, improvements 15,500

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Brush Creek Parkway, Community House, athletic field, and playground equipment
150,000

17th and Winchester, land and improvements 25,000

Purchase of land north of Horace Mann School and improvements 50,000

Purchase of land adjacent to Dunbar School (colored) 5515 E. 36th, and improvement
25,000

Purchase of land adjoining Linwood Plaza and improvement 5,000

22nd and Paseo, equipment for children 1,500

Spring Valley Park, north of 27th Street, improvements 5,000

Spring Valley Park Connection with Troost Park, improvements 10,000

Nelson Art Gallery Approach, acquisition of land and improvement 350,000

Beautification of Ward Parkway 12,500

Beautification of Meyer Boulevard from the Paseo to Swope Park 12,500

Beautification of Paseo - 47th to City Limits 15,000

Beautification of Swope Parkway, Sebree Bridge to Swope Park 10,000

Brush Creek Parkway, improvement from Main Street east to the Blue River 300,000

Loose Memorial Park, improvements 100,000

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3. Public Hospitals \$2,000,000

Remodeling South Wing General Hospital with equipment for 100 patients \$ 50,000

Power Plant, Laundry, Ice Plant, Incinerator, tunnels and equipment 250,000

New Isolation Hospital of 200 bed capacity, including site 325,000

New North Wing, six floors, for dispensary, public health laboratory, operation rooms, X-Ray Department, and 150 hospital beds 750,000

New Nurses' Home, General Hospital No. 2 (colored) 75,000

Radium for cancer treatment 50,000

Leeds Tuberculosis Sanitorium New third floor for 50 adult beds; new children's building, 50 beds; new building for heating plant and laundry; new ventilating system; X-ray and laboratory equipment; new administration building; new wing for white adults 300,000

4. New City Market \$ 500,000

New market structure on block occupied by old City Market and present City Hall, and remodeling of Farmers' Market north of Fourth Street and provision for parking space.

5. Stadium and Out-Door Theatre \$ 750,000

First unit of structure, horseshoe type, built so that it can later be double-decked and extended, seating capacity of 30,000 with ultimate capacity of 80,000; movable stage for converting into Out-Door Theatre in closed end; including site, accessible and with ample parking space, to be determined later.

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6. New Police Stations \$ 125,000

For Leeds, Woodland Avenue, and Sheffield Districts, including sites

7. Fire Department Improvements \$ 375,000

New district stations and apparatus

8. Trafficways and Boulevards \$8,500,000

9. Blue Valley Improvements \$1,000,000

Flood Protection and other improvements, including \$500,000 for acquisition of land

10. Water Department Improvements \$3,500,000

Turkey Creek Station \$ 220,000

East Bottoms Station 100,000

North Kansas City Station 610,000

Holly Street Reservoir, Concrete Cover 150,000

Northeast Reservoir, Concrete Cover 225,000

Miscellaneous Construction and Betterments 50,000

Distribution System (new mains to give adequate water supply to sections not now properly served) 1,595,230

Water Softener Plant 549,770

No.	DESCRIPTION	LAND & IMP. TAKEN	GRADING	VIADUCTS & UNDERPASSES	TOTAL COST	CITY SHARE	COST TO CITY FOR PAVING ETC.
1.	Winner Rd - City Limits to 12th & Van Brunt			1,150,000	1,150,000	1,150,000	
2.	S. E. Trafficway - 100' on trunk	1,070,650	120,000	170,000	1,360,650	497,663	36,000
3.	Oak-Pershing Rd & 25th (Oak to Charlotte)	61,075	120,000	50,000	231,075	125,270	415,000
4.	S. W. Trafficway	1,594,050	338,500	110,000	2,042,550	677,763	89,728
5.	20th St. (SW Blvd - McGee) Balt. (6th to 9th, 19th to 20th) and Southwest Blvd	1,231,000	4,000		1,235,000	222,250	
6.	4th St. - Madison to Lydia	398,400	170,000		568,400	184,600	38,804
7.	Independence Avenue	322,650	5,000		327,650	83,163	2,672
8.	East Blue & Manchester (17th St. to Highway #40)	7,000	126,000	140,000	273,000	204,750	
9.	19th & 23rd St. Conn. to East City Limits	2,047,225	254,000	540,000	2,841,225	1,178,806	41,424
10.	11th & 12th Sts. (Oak to Winner Road)	1,256,375	30,000		1,286,375	329,094	5,260
11.	Grand - Warwick Connection	372,425	195,700	50,000	618,125	240,956	4,000
12.	34th & Harrison St.	319,200	10,000		329,200	84,800	
13.	39th Street	672,875	280,000	130,000	1,082,875	438,219	31,984
14.	Westport Avenue - 40th - Oak	597,375	25,000		622,375	161,844	8,000
15.	Charlotte - 4th to 25th	616,700	100,000		716,700	204,175	12,348
16.	Beardsley Road		92,000	25,000	117,000	117,000	30,000

17. Allen Avenue	4,400	8,000	10,000	22,400	15,100	22,000
18. 12th to 15th St. Conn.	472,490	36,000		508,490	136,123	
19. Brush Creek Bridges			305,000	305,000	305,000	
20. 63rd St. (Elmwood to City Limits)	7,000	10,000	200,000	217,000	206,750	
21. Brush Creek Parkway				171,671		171,671
22. Paseo - S of 47th St.						125,000
23. Swope Park Conn. to Blue R. Blvd				75,000	75,000	
24. Mill Creek Widening				35,000		35,000
25. 12th St. Viaduct			89,000	89,000	89,000	
26. Hickory St. Approach			50,000	50,000	50,000	
27. Street signs				50,000	50,000	
28. 31st Street	1,193,900	20,000		1,213,900	308,475	40,800
29. Walnut St. Viaduct			500,000	500,000	100,000	
					7,235,801	1,109,791
City's share cost of paving, etc.					1,109,791	
30. Traffic Control					154,408	
					<u>\$8,500,000</u>	
				<u>TOTAL</u>		

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Program of Trafficways and Boulevards Civic Improvement Committee
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11. Municipal Auditorium \$4,500,000

To house large public gatherings, conventions, exhibitions, etc. Building 3,500,000

Site, block bounded by 13th, 14th, Wyandotte and Central Streets 1,000,000

12. Sewers \$1,500,000

Town Fork Sewer, cost of entire project estimated at \$2,500,000 of which it is planned to
build a part now 1,000,000

Blue River Sewer Outlet, land 150,000

Prospect Pumping Station 300,000

Unassigned 50,000

13. Airport Improvements \$ 500,000

Dikes and grading 365,000

Underpass 20,000

Lighting 30,000

Taxi Road 50,000

New Office Building 35,000

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EXHIBIT B

COUNTY IMPROVEMENTS

1. New Court House \$4,000,000

Building, 4,000,000 cu. ft. capacity, to house all county offices, courts, and jail 3,000,000

Site, north half of Block bounded by 13th, 14th, McGee and Oak Streets 1,000,000

2. Remodeling Court House at Independence \$ 200,000

3. New Detention Home \$ 250,000

Building in Kansas City separate from Court House or Jail, and site

4. County Roads \$3,500,000

82 1/2 miles of new concrete roads to complete construction of system originally planned in 1927; also new bridges at several points

5. County Parks \$ 500,000

Acquisition of land and improvement of system of county parks, including parkway along the course of the Little Blue River