

1976 Annual Report To The Mayor & Aldermen

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City of Savannah

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February 1, 1977

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Mayor and Aldermen
City of Savannah
Savannah, Georgia

Gentlemen:

Savannah has been recognized as one of the "five most livable cities in the United States". An important element in making this a livable city is the continuing effort by the City government to create and maintain a safe, clean, functional, visually pleasing living environment through its Public Services Programs.

1976 was an active year for the Public Service Program. It was the year that we saw the completion of the city's 30 million dollar Pollution Abatement Program. It was a year in which the city constructed 18 tennis courts, 5 new swimming pools, and started construction on 12 miles of streets. It was a year also in which significant progress was made in controlling crime within the city. There were other important developments. The Broughton Street Beautification Program was carried out. The River Street Redevelopment Program moved closer to completion. The Model Neighborhood Renewal project was finally started on its way after a two year delay over a historical preservation issue.

There were internal improvements as well. After more than a year of analysis and planning, we were able to develop the organization and procedures needed in the Central Garage to reduce delays and cost in vehicle repairs. We discovered that the commercial garbage trucks and the street sweepers were accounting for disproportionate amounts of the cost and work load at the garage. We were also suffering delays in service because of excessive downtime of these vehicles. Both cost and downtime have been brought under control.

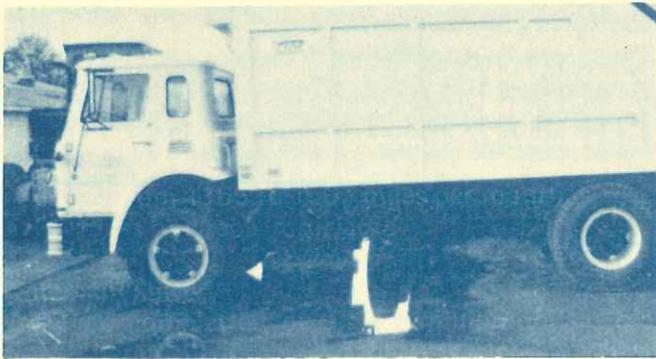
We also instituted a modular pay plan in the Police and Fire Departments and are now working to establish this system in other departments. The key feature in this system is that it provides an incentive for personnel to participate in training and educational programs that will improve their job effectiveness.

The attached report presents in more detail a description of the Public Services programs and the significant achievements for 1976.

Sincerely,



Arthur A. Mendonsa
City Manager



Public Service

Division of Service

Working hard to meet the service demands of our citizens. For example, did you know that. . .

- approximately 12,000 service requests were received and processed
- the City's Sanitary landfill handled approximately 110,000 tons of refuse
- nearly 5 million residential refuse pick-ups were made this year.
- storm water ponding or flood prone areas were identified for a flood map.
- 77 new street lights were installed in 1976. Twenty-six in Ardsley Park as a crime prevention measure.
- an indication of the effectiveness of traffic safety program is that there were 78 fewer accidents per month in 1976 than in 1975 and 133 fewer than in 1974.
- 475 new street signs have been fabricated and will be erected
- approximately 500 new street and park lights were installed under the Broughton Street and Riverfront projects.
- 12 miles of new paving under construction.
- 11 miles of sidewalks installed.
- 16,032 curb miles were swept this year - an increase from 1165 to 1507 miles per month.
- 3½ miles of streets resurfaced.

Water and Sewer

With the completion of the 30 million dollar Pollution Abatement Program, there is no raw sewage being dumped into the Savannah River by the City since Savannah was founded.

Central Garage

As a result of the cost control program and other measures taken to improve Central Garage operations, total expenses were below adjusted budget levels. Expenses were also some 5% - 7% below 1974 expenditures in spite of inflation.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Making Our City As Comfortable and Safe as Possible

Police Department

There has been a reduction in crimes reported for all but one category. The percent of reported murders, rapes, robberies, aggravated assaults, burglaries, auto thefts, simple assaults, and manslaughters has decreased.

Larceny has increased. What activities have been instrumental in crime reduction?

- Reduced response time.
- Thoroughness of patrols - scientific disposition of patrol activity.
- Operation "Fencebreaker" - apprehension of habitual burglars and armed robbers.
- Increased emphasis on business area patrol.
- Small, fuel economical, maneuverable vehicles have enabled officers to maintain close contact with street occurrences.
- Federal grant which places more officers on the street during peak crime periods.
- Radio link to Hardeville which assists in holiday season traffic control and apprehension of fugitives.
- A parade control program instituted

Other innovative tactics are being explored and implemented:

During the year, in service training was provided in crisis intervention, anti-robbery techniques, pursuit and defensive driving, barricaded gunmen neutralization, pistol qualification, and communications with deranged personnel.

The Police Chaplain Program is a success. The chaplains have proven to be invaluable in relaying death messages, comforting families of victims, comforting families of slain officers, counseling police officers, dealing with potential suicides, and training officers to deal with personal problems of citizens.

Gasoline consumption has been reduced by 6,300 gallons per month resulting in a \$2,900 per month savings since the department purchased its new compact vehicles.

Fire Department

Preventing fires, saving lives and property are the goals of our Fire Department. In 1976, there was a 50% decrease in the dollar loss by fire, and the department is expanding its fire fighting capabilities.

- Education: A modular training program was instituted. Training required by the modular system is designed to augment the regularly scheduled department training and provide more highly qualified personnel.
- Prevention: Through lectures in schools, practice fire drills, the annual Fire Show demonstration, residents learn what they can do to prevent fires.
- Inspections: The expanded home inspections program reached 8,645 residences. Department personnel surveyed commercial, institutional, warehousing, manufacturing, and multi-family residential buildings to identify potential risks and available fire suppression aides. Diagrams and information sheets were drawn for each building and filed for fast references.
- Emergency services: 2,309 fire or emergency calls were answered.

Always keeping in mind the safety and welfare of our citizens. The Fire Department began a blood pressure check program in conjunction with the Cardiovascular Association in an attempt to reduce the number of deaths due to high blood pressure.



PUBLIC PROPERTIES, PARKS & RECREATION

Giving our residents the opportunities for rewarding leisure time, maintaining city owned parks and recreation areas, promoting the beautification of Savannah through tree preservation and planting.

In 1976, approximately \$1,030,249 was spent on recreation facilities. Federal and State funds coming into the City have opened the doors to the improvement of our citizens leisure time.

- 18 new tennis courts built.
- A new tennis clubhouse for the Bacon Park Tennis Complex.
- 5 new swimming pools.
- Lighting for a baseball field in Daffin Park.
- Purchase of 5.76 acres of land for the development in Hudson Hill.

The Leisure Services staff is maintaining a high level of service to city residents.

- There are 5 neighborhood centers with activities for ages 3 to 103.
 - Activities available in centers are: art, ceramics, music, creative dramatics, and sports.
 - Revenue for the Civic Center was up 5.5% over 1975.
 - Leagues for 65 basketball teams were organized.
 - Plans were finalized for a soccer program.
- Savannah is noted for its parks and trees. The Park and Tree Commission supervises and maintains this heritage. The staff cares for 26 downtown squares and around 185 acres of grass plats.
- 200,000 trees were maintained in streets and lanes.
 - 7,000 trees were trimmed.
 - Approximately 500 trees and stumps were removed.
 - About 500 trees were planted.



Public Development

Enhancing the life of our residents through various programs.

Community Planning and Development

This staff is involved in planning the physical, economic, and social future of our community.

- Findings from the Housing Program Study were used to design the three part housing program to be found with \$4 million of the Community Development Block Grant.
- Staff investigated working with the county to jointly seek funding to determine the extent of the rodent problem in the City and to establish a rodent control program.
- Staff established a methodology and identified a sample which can provide reliable population estimates.

Citizens groups throughout the city were invited to meetings where their input for programming was solicited.

- The Department commissioned an exhibit on City Government, how it works and what it does for people.
- Citizens and architects met with City staff to design the play areas on the recently purchased 5.76 acres of land in Hudson Hill area.
- Through the new Homeowner Rehabilitation Program, it is projected that at least 200 low and moderate income owner occupants will be able to bring their homes up to code standards.
- Savannah was selected as one of 18 cities in the nation to work with the Urban Reinvestment Task Force in an effort to revitalize deteriorating neighborhoods.

Human Services

460 disadvantaged children participated in a Day Care Program; 53 visually impaired adults received training services from the Program for the Blind; 419 disabled and homebound persons received services from the Homemaker Program; and 285 persons received construction training from the Apprenticeship Training Program.

Labor Resources Development

Provided 634 economically disadvantaged unemployed individuals the opportunity to attend vocational technical school and receive skills training; negotiated contracts with 41 agencies providing economically disadvantaged, unemployed individuals the opportunity to get and hold temporary transitional jobs with public and private non-profit agencies; provided work experience to 1,568 in-school youths, dropouts, and older workers; 289 enrollers participated in the pretrial intervention program which gives economically disadvantaged or unemployed youths accused of crime, an alternative to imprisonment.

Inspections Department

This staff works to keep our high standard of living intact. It guarantees high quality in overall safety of our structures through systematic inspection of all commercial and residential structure.

- 6,015 Building Code Inspections made; Electrical Code, 5,268; Mechanical-Plumbing, 6,632. A total of 17,915.
- 9,450 Housing Code Inspections.
- 2,601 lots inspected.
- 3,866 Fire Code inspections.
- 2,113 zoning inspections .

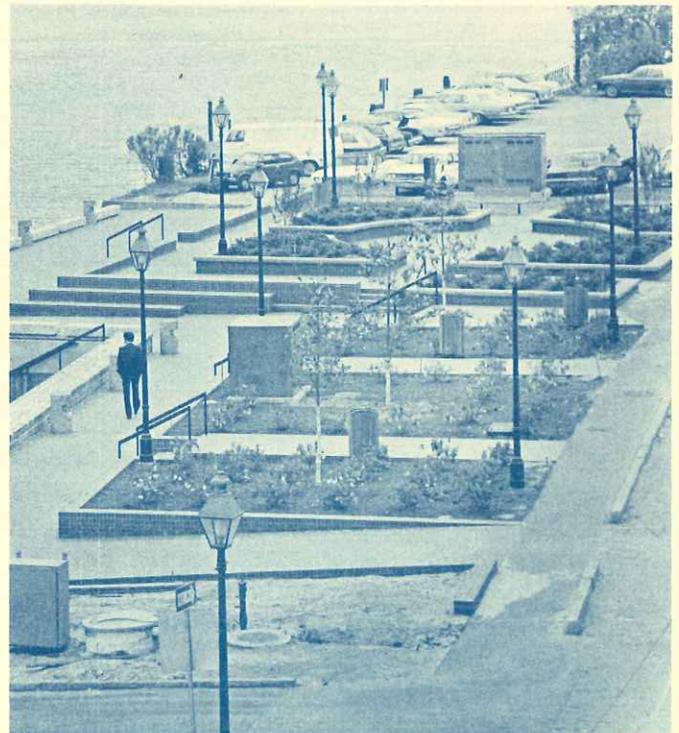
Engineering Department

Engineering provides planning, design, construction and administration of Capital Improvements Projects to meet community needs while emphasizing concern for environmental quality and minimizing negative impact. This department institutes programs for improving existing streets, storm drainage, water, sewer, and other public facilities.

- Plans for 18 minor (in-house) capital improvement projects completed and for 20 major projects (out-of-house)
- Approximately 8,800 engineering service requests answered.
- 60 petitions answered and 30 other requests answered.
- 75 reviews of private development plans.
- 60 map updates completed.

Some projects engineering has worked on include the following:

- Street and lane improvements in the Urban Renewal area.
- Storm & Sewer improvements in the Fell Street & Tatemville systems. The Carver Village study and the Oakdale Storm Outfall Line design.
- Broughton Street Revitalization
- Riverfront Urban Renewal.
- Plans for repair of Railroad Shed behind the Visitor's Center.
- Cloverdale Park Improvements.
- Plans and analysis for the Savannah Bicentennial Park.



SUPPORTIVE SERVICES

Their job is to research, analyze, and advise thus enabling service departments to better meet the needs of the community in the most effective and cost beneficial manner.

Data Processing

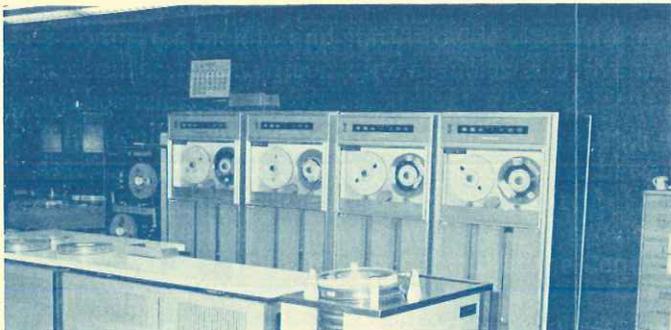
The computer facility and staff provide vital information services to seventeen city agencies and five external agencies.

- A Detective Assignment reporting system and a case reporting system were developed to give better statistics on high crime areas within the City.
- A new Vehicle Management System provides records which facilitate cost control at the Central Garage.
- A cost tracking system for Leisure Services implemented.
- City of Savannah-Chatham County Credit Union Computerized recordkeeping system instituted.
- A system for the Bureau of Public Development to collect and provide housing and demographic information has been designed.

Management Services Bureau

In the past year the staff contributed to the improved management of the City's resources in a number of areas.

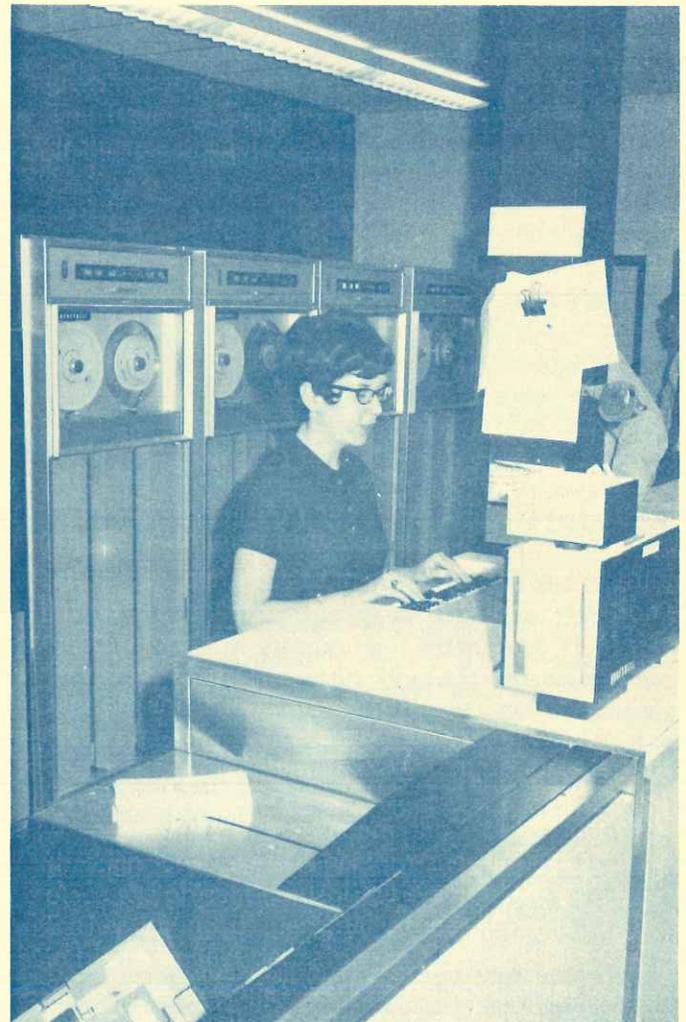
- The personnel study recommendations suggested methods which brought most of our classes into line with prevailing wage rates, minimized adverse impact and implemented progressive pay classification compensation systems.
- The steady growth of the City fleet was halted and a net reduction of 25 vehicles has been achieved.
- Management Analysis and two interns prepared an annexation study which included for the first time, calculations of cost savings to residents.
- Implementation of recommendation arising out of a two-year study has brought about substantial savings in Central Garage costs.
- Tight controls on expenditures have held the growth of General Fund spending to only 4.8% for the last two years combined.



Finance & Administration Services

Meeting new demands to improve service and fighting inflation are on going objectives of this staff. Some projects undertaken in 1976 include. . .

- Revision of Formal Bid Package to make completion and submission of bids easier for vendors.
- New system for processing and controlling advertisements which helps to match up proofs with newspaper bills.
- A new telephone system has been identified through cost benefit-performance analysis to replace the present inadequate system.
- Earlier billing of personal property taxes resulted in higher collection ratio.
- Sales tax revenues were greater than projected, making it possible to reduce the 1977 property tax rate to 10 mills.
- In 1976 the consulting firm of Wise & Associates conducted a business license study and proposed a gross receipts license system.
- The Revenue Department developed a new taxicab ordinance proposal.



FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The financial picture of the City is extremely healthy. Not only was the City awarded "AA" bond rating by both Moody's and Standard and Poors, but also received low interest bids on the 1976 issue comparable to Bonds with a "AAA" rating.

**GENERAL FUND
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND
EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR ENDED
DECEMBER 31, 1976**

REVENUE	
Property Taxes	\$ 9,208,724
Sales Tax	2,904,629
Other Taxes	2,377,735
Taxes, Fees, and Interest	59,066
Licenses and Permits	2,096,020
Fines, Forfeits, and Penalties	406,463
Interest Earned	225,148
Rents, General	91,118
Leisure Services	272,843
Other Agencies	731,405
Inspection Fees	67,318
Cemetery Fees	68,643
Refuse Fees	637,316
Interfund Fees	1,748,959
General Services	103,302
Federal Revenue Sharing	2,290,701
Other Revenue	1,132,008
TOTAL	\$24,421,398

EXPENDITURES	
General Administration	\$ 352,570
Finance and Administrative Services	1,268,096
Management Services	505,329
Public Services	6,386,322
Inspections	381,841
Police	4,537,431
Recorder's Court	171,802
Fire	2,960,752
Leisure Services	1,593,389
Park and Tree	518,878
Interdepartmental	2,548,250
*Revenue over Expenditures	3,196,738
TOTAL	\$24,421,398

*Revenues from sales tax will be placed in reserve to offset the loss of advolorum taxes.

