ANNEXATION AS A SOLUTION TO THE FRINGE PROBLEM.

An Analysis of Past and Potential Annexations of Suburban Areas to the City of Flint, Michigan

by

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1950

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PREFACE

Flint, Michigan is a new city. Although incorporated in 1855, it could not then be described as more than a collection of dwellings scattered along muddy or dusty Saginaw Street, and a superficial assortment of trading and service establishments--blacksmith shops, a general store, a weekly newspaper. The City of Flint of 1855 was in reality no more than a village surrounded by the wilderness.

It is doubtful whether by any scholarly criterion Flint was a city before 1910, and it is probable that gradually between 1910 and 1920 Flint changed from an overgrown country town into an economic and social unit that could truly be described as a city.

The metropolitan status of Flint is even more recent, for it is only within the past two decades that the governmental problems of the area have consistently been larger and more extensive than the boundaries of the city itself. Yet, at the present time, many governmental problems of the city must logically be considered in terms of the metropolis as a whole. That fact is the primary reason for this study.

The various communities that have grown up around Flint are an integral part of the city economically and socially, but have no effective legal relationship to it. This suburban area or "fringe" is a comparatively recent phenomenon; indeed it is no older than the metropolitan

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status of the city. The suburban fringe has been in existence scarcely more than a quarter of a century. Since Flint has been an incorporated place for virtually one hundred years, it is evident that the fringe area is a modern development. It is, therefore, not surprising to find that Flint has not adjusted itself to the new areas, nor to the administrative problems that arise out of city-fringe relationships.

This dissertation is primarily a case study of Flint, Michigan, although a considerable amount of additional material has been added to provide perspective. Much of the work has been based on field surveys largely in Flint. The approach is historical, legal, analytical, and statistical.

The dissertation traces the evolution of the growth in area of Flint, and attempts to describe the legal, political, and economic environment in which the city grew. Where changes in the present governmental interrelationships are thought necessary, they are recommended. Finally, the paper describes the recent development of the fringe areas around Flint, and suggests remedies for the governmental problems that arise out of their existence. Extension of the corporate boundaries has been the method used by many growing cities in Michigan and elsewhere to integrate the urban community. The alternatives to annexation in Michigan are stated, as well as the arguments for annexation.

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Appreciation is expressed to the many city, county, and township officials and private citizens of Flint for their generous cooperation and assistance. It is further extended to Professor Arthur W. Bromage, chairman, other members of the dissertation committee, and the faculty of the Metropolitan Community Seminar, for guidance in this research project.

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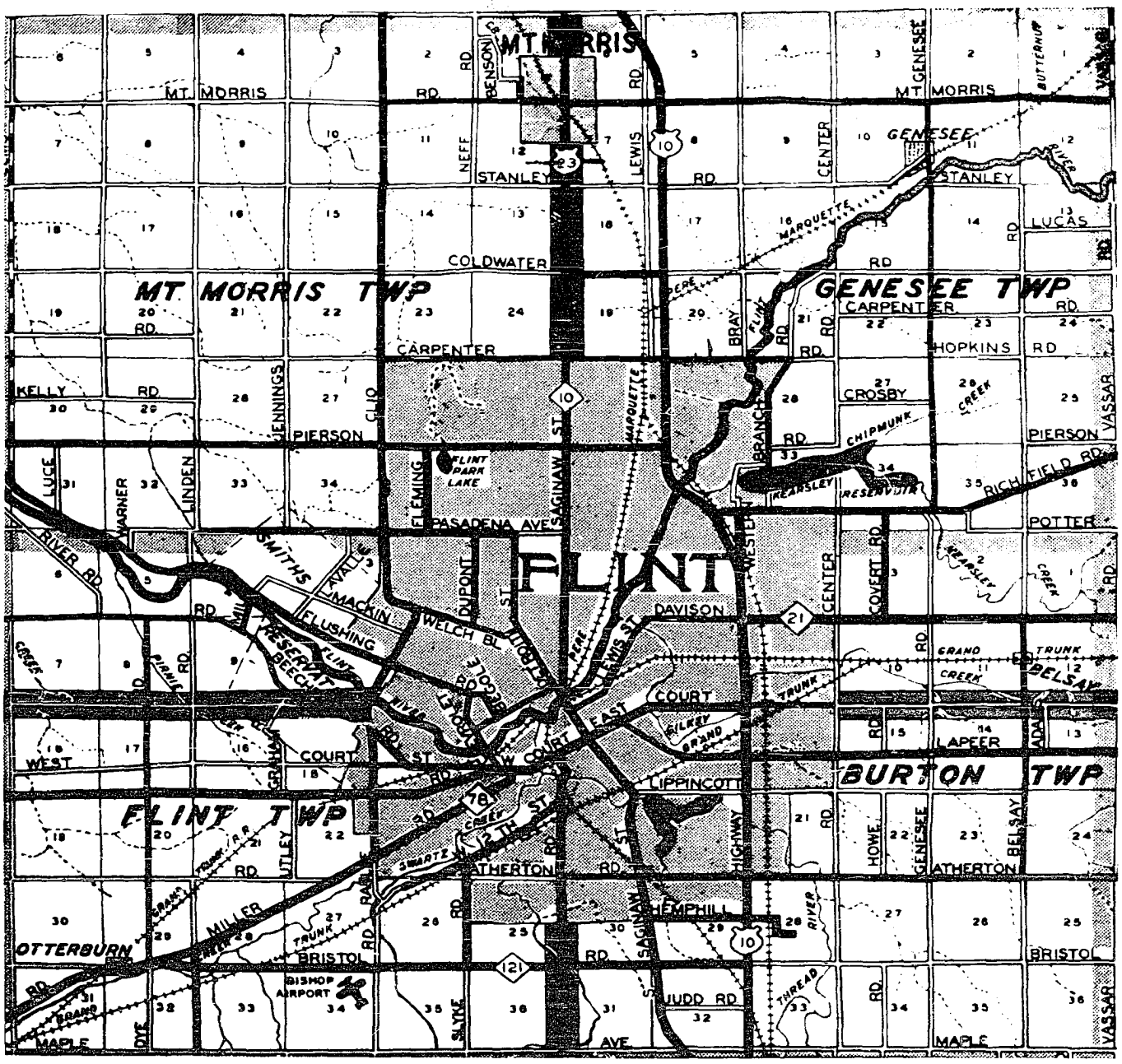
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MAP I



FLINT AND THE METROPOLITAN TOWNSHIPS

Source: Map of Genesee County, Board of County Road Commissioners (1949).

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CHAPTER I

MUNICIPAL ANNEXATION OF TERRITORY

The Background

It has been as natural for cities during the past century to extend themselves in area as it has been for them to grow in population. Few cities were laid out, when they were chartered as municipal corporations, with sufficient land area to take care of subsequent accretions of population. The cities that have been content to remain geographically static have seen themselves slowly ringed by settlements which were mere satellites to the main body of population, but which insisted upon acting as political independents. Even those cities which began with an expansive territory have either faced encirclement, or have had to acquire additional land areas, because population growth, both in size and direction, could not be confined within the original limits.

Historically, most cities of the United States have been presented with the necessity of expanding in area, and this necessity has been met, in large measure, by annexation of lands contiguous to the municipality. Annexation has been used by the very smallest of populated places and by the very largest. In the words of a student of municipal government, "a number of different plans have been tried ... to meet the needs of metropolitan regions. None has proved entirely

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satisfactory. Most commonly corporate limits have been extended. This is still the usual solution. When a city overgrows its boundaries new boundaries are created by law--not so soon as the need becomes apparent, perhaps not until the city has suffered from growing pains for a quarter of a century or more. But eventually ... a new boundary line more suited to changed conditions" is drawn.[1]

Municipal annexation of territory is the method by which the municipality extends its legal, political, and administrative jurisdiction over areas which are organically a part of the natural city. It means in essence that "the boundaries of a legal jurisdiction are extended to embrace additional area within an adjoining unit of local government."[2] Most states have general laws providing the exact method whereby annexation may be effected, though Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, and Rhode Island have no such general laws.[3]

The Nature of Municipal Powers

According to current legal theory the cities are completely subservient to the state. "They are called into being at the pleasure of the state, and may be governed in

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[1] Austin F. Macdonald, American City Government and Administration (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1941), p. 116.

[2] William Seal Carpenter, Problems in Service Levels (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940), p. 71.

[3] Ibid., p. 69n.

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such manner as the state considers best."[4] The doctrine that cities have an inherent right of self-government pronounced by Judge Cooley as dictum in the widely quoted Michigan case of People ex rel. LeRoy v. Hurlburt has never been widely accepted, even though it was eloquently presented:

> The state may mould local institutions according to its views of policy or expediency; but local government is a matter of absolute right; and the state cannot take it away. It would be the boldest mockery to speak of a city as possessing municipal liberty where the state not only shaped its government, but at discretion sent in its own agents to administer it; or to call that system one of constitutional freedom under which it should be equally admissible to allow the people full control of their local affairs, or no control at all.[5]

This doctrine must now be regarded as political theory that the state and federal courts have chosen largely to ignore. That they cannot ignore it entirely, however, is indicated by the opinion of the United States Supreme Court in Atkin v. Kansas.[6] Mr. Justice Harlan wrote that municipal corporations "are, in every essential sense, only auxiliaries of the State, for the purposes of local government." The power of the legislature over the city, however, is subject to "the fundamental condition that the collective and individual rights of the people of the municipality shall not ... be destroyed." It is, of course, not surprising that the

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[4] Macdonald, op. cit., p. 63.

[5] 24 Mich. 44 (1871).

[6] 191 U. S. 207 (1903), quoted in Charles M. Kneier, Illustrative Materials in Municipal Government and Administration (New York: Harper and Bros., 1939), p. 15.

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court should note that there are individual rights of citizens upon which the legislature of the state cannot transgress, but "collective rights"--is not this an echo of the Cooley doctrine?

Since the state is supreme over the city, municipal extension of boundaries is a matter governed almost exclusively either by general or special acts of the state legislatures. In Texas, it is true, annexation has been held time and again to be a matter of local concern.[7] But even in Texas the municipality must act within the limits of enabling legislation and court decisions.

Characteristics of Annexed Areas

Until the present day, it has been a characteristic of cities to absorb by annexation land already rather fully devoted to urban uses. It has been typical for cities to absorb communities, the character of which has been indelibly stamped upon them long before the city gained jurisdiction over them. Sometimes the city "has suffered from growing pains for a quarter of a century or more" before expanding. Where undeveloped lands have been included in the newly acquired area, it has usually been because of accident or because the lands could not be conveniently excluded from the areas proposed for annexation.

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[7] Fort Worth v. State, 186 S. W. (2nd) 323 (1945); also City of Houston v. State ex rel. City of West University Place, 171 S. W. (2nd) 203 (1943).

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Since subdivision control outside the city limits has been even more lax than it has been within the city, the city in expanding in area gets a variety of subdivisions that represents every stage of development. More often than not the actual appearance of the subdivision completely belies its fetching title and the promotional brochure concerning it gotten out by the real estate agent. The street plan is confused and irrational, street names have no rime or reason to them. Very little paving or other durable surfacing has been laid on the streets. Water run-off is uncontrolled by curb and guttering, the proper kind of street grades, and storm sewers. There are no sidewalks, and as a final indignity, residential and business development is spotty. Weed-grown, trash-littered lots separate the dwellings, and shacks, garage and basement dwellings, and other types of substandard housing are apt to spot the subdivision. Under the circumstances, it is a wonder that cities have been willing to burden themselves with any save the most well-developed areas by annexing them.

A further characteristic of annexation in the past was its use to absorb unincorporated areas; in other words, areas taken from counties or townships. In the expansion of Flint, Michigan, from an original land area of one and one-half square miles to a present-day one of 29.4 square miles not once was an incorporated place absorbed. It has been categorically stated that "most annexations are of

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unincorporated territory."[8] The reasons are easily explained: it is often politically and legally impossible for a city to annex a satellite municipality. When a fringe community has become a municipal corporation, there is generally more resistance on its part to annexation than there was before incorporation.

Most of the core cities of our metropolitan regions have at least one satellite municipality on their outskirts. Flint has one, and in 1940 Chattanooga, Norfolk, and Trenton had six; Albany and Miami had thirteen; and Scranton, Pennsylvania, had forty-nine.[9] For most of the fifteen metropolitan districts listed in Table I, however, all of them similar to Flint in size of population, a larger proportion of the fringe population resides in unincorporated areas than in the satellite incorporated places.

Annexation has not been limited entirely to the absorption of unincorporated areas. In many metropolitan districts, and indeed in some of the smaller communities throughout the country, incorporated places have been absorbed by annexation. An incorporated suburb of Denver, Colorado, with a population of seven thousand, for example,

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[8] "Cities Score Record Growth," Southern City, XI (June, 1947), 20.

[9] U. S. Bureau of the Census, Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Population, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942).

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TABLE 1

Population Distribution in Selected Metropolitan Districts

Metropolitan District	Population 1940 Metropolitan District	Population 1940 Outside Core City	All Fringe Municipalities Population 1940	Unincorporated Fringe Areas	
				Population 1940	Percent of Fringe Population
Bridgeport	216,621	69,500	10,971	58,529	84.2
New Haven	308,228	147,623	43,905	103,718	70.3
Chattanooga	193,215	65,052	11,438	53,614	82.4
Knoxville	151,829	40,249	--	40,249	100.0
Nashville	241,769	74,367	2,061	72,306	97.2
Des Moines	183,973	24,154	6,150	18,004	74.6
Flint	188,554	37,011	2,237	34,774	93.9
Grand Rapids	209,873	45,581	6,465	39,116	85.8
Jacksonville	195,619	22,554	--	22,554	100.0
Miami	250,537	78,365	50,110	28,255	36.0
Trenton	200,128	75,431	19,993	55,438	73.5
Tulsa	188,562	46,405	19,992	26,413	56.9
Reading, Pa.	175,355	64,787	35,934	28,853	44.5
Richmond, Va.	245,674	52,632	--	52,632	100.0
Salt Lake City	204,488	54,554	19,371	35,183	64.5

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 16th Census of the United States: 1940. Population, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942).

TABLE 2

Characteristics of Selected Cities--Population, Area, Number of Satellite Municipalities

City	1940 Population[a]	Area in Sq. Mi.[b]	Inhabitants Per Sq. Mi.	Incorporated Places Outside Core City[c]
Albany	131,000	19.6	6,683	13
Bridgeport	147,000	17.9	8,212	1
Chattanooga	128,000	27.9	4,588	6
Des Moines	160,000	53.8	2,974	4
Flint	152,000	29.4	5,170	1
Grand Rapids	164,000	23	7,130	1
Hartford	166,000	18.6	8,925	8
Jacksonville	173,000	39.4	4,391	0
Miami	172,000	38.1	4,514	13
Nashville	167,000	22.0	7,591	1
New Haven	161,000	22.5	7,156	5
Norfolk	144,000	35.9	3,175	6
Salt Lake City	150,000	52.5	2,857.14	6
Scranton, Pa.	140,000	19.5	7,179	49
Springfield, Mass.	150,000	33.1	4,532	4
Trenton, N. J.	125,000	7.7	16,234	6
Tulsa	142,000	22.0	6,455	4
Youngstown	168,000	33.1	5,075	14

[a] The International City Managers' Association, The Municipal Year Book 1948, eds. Clarence E. Ridley and Orin F. Nolting (Chicago: 1948).

[b] U. S. Bureau of the Census, Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Areas of the United States 1940 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942).

[c] Ibid. Population, Vol. I.

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has recently voted to annex to the core city.[10] During the 1930's there were several instances in which the core cities of metropolitan districts absorbed adjoining incorporated places. In 1930, Lincoln, Nebraska, annexed Havelock; in 1932, Jacksonville, Florida, annexed South Jacksonville, and Los Angeles absorbed Tujunga. In 1935, Waterloo, Iowa, took in Cedar Heights, and Buffalo absorbed parts of Lackawanna.[11]

Some state laws specifically provide that municipalities above a certain population cannot be annexed. In Virginia one city cannot annex another, but "incorporated towns of 5,000 or even more population are annexable by court order."[12] In Texas, a city cannot annex another of "equal dignity" (a term coined by the state courts).[13]

The Influence of Environment

It is patent that annexation has taken its characteristics from the environment. The generally negative attitude toward government in the United States, which was more than an attitude since it was imbedded in the national folkways,

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[10] "Cities Score Record Area Growth," Southern City, XI (June, 1947), 20.

[11] U. S. Bureau of the Census, Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Population, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942).

[12] Thomas H. Reed, "Progress in Metropolitan Integration," Public Administration Review (Winter, 1949), 4-5.

[13] R. E. Rouer, "Power of Home Rule City to Annex Adjacent Territory," Texas Municipalities, XXXIV (April, 1947), 76.

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arrested the development of community controls on the local level as well as on the state and national levels. Government, and especially local government, it was thought, had to be kept in its age-old channel and even that channel must be severely restricted. It was a cliché of popular thinking that government must not be adventurous, positive, or experimental.

No better example of this refusal to use government as a positive instrument of community betterment could be given than that of land use control through zoning regulations. Although it has long been customary for cities to control the height of buildings, prohibit the erection of frame structures where they would be potential fire hazards, and in other ways limit the manner in which the owners of property could develop their land, zoning is relatively new. One observer declares that forty years ago "not a single American city had adopted a comprehensive zoning ordinance."[14]

Even in the cities which have adopted zoning and have administered it well, the effect has been prohibitory rather than developmental. The reason is at once obvious. Zoning ordinances because of their comparatively recent appearance have very largely applied to areas that are already more or less fully developed. They have not eliminated existing nonconforming uses, but have only prohibited the increase of them.

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[14] Macdonald, op. cit., p. 426.

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There has been in the past a direct correlation between building and other economic activity in land and the amount of land annexed by the city. One of the important reasons for the insignificant use of annexation by most cities during the depression and war years was the comparatively restricted activity in the building of shelter and in the utilization of new land for urban purposes.

Another environmental characteristic which has put its stamp upon annexation has been the lack of perspective of city officials. Research and planning in most of its phases was notably absent from city government until the last two or three decades. This provincialism came to a considerable extent from the lack of professionalism in city government. Neither the commission, nor the weak- or strong-mayor type of government historically made for that continuity in government which is so necessary to its effectiveness. The spoils system, and corrupt machine politics, coupled with inadequate governmental structure, caused the cities of America, large and small, to function without administrative plans, or with only rudimentary ones.

But the environment in changing, and with that change should come a type of annexation that is basically different from that of the past. The attitude toward government "doth suffer a sea-change." Two major wars and especially a major depression have deeply imprinted upon the consciousness of the people the awareness that government cannot be restricted

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to its age-old channel. This is not so true of local government as it is of national government, and that is a pity, but the change is nevertheless being felt at the local level. An awareness of the necessity of land-use controls has led communities to modernize and effectively to administer their zoning laws, and to draw up comprehensive city plans. Research and planning is being extended throughout city government in the United States.[15]

Government can be a positive agent in the development of the local community. A prominent city manager has commented:

> I believe the day has come when most city officials are cognizant of the fact that their duty is to plan their community for the future and to play some part in the building of a city of better proportions in years to come. If city councils are interested only in the problem of making better and more efficient police, fire and public works departments for the current years in which they serve--worthy as these objectives are--they have missed their big opportunity.[16]

The increasing professionalism in local government is affecting the concept of municipal annexation of territory. The rise of the professional city manager and the professional department head has brought a continuity and perspective to local government that has heretofore been notably lacking, and these changes in the local administrative environment will inevitably change the characteristics of annexation.

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[15] Ladislas Segoe, "City and County Planning," Planning for America, by George B. Galloway and Associates (New York: Henry Holt and Co. Inc., 1941), pp. 539-558.

[16] Roy S. Braden, "Extension of City Limits and Subdivision Control," Southern City, XI (Oct., 1947), 6.

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Annexation Between the Two World Wars

After being used for more than a century to keep the area of the city proportioned to its population and the community integrated under a single governmental authority, annexation went into decline shortly after the first world war. The history of Flint, Michigan well illustrates this point. Incorporated in 1855 as a city by legislative enactment, Flint made major land additions in 1871, 1910, and 1920, and minor ones several other times. But after 1920, in spite of the fact that suburban areas gained rapidly in population, no annexations were accomplished and indeed were not even contemplated.

During the 1930's most central cities either lost population or gained very slowly. What was true of the core cities was also true, though generally to a lesser extent, of their fringe areas. After what was in some cases phenomenal growth earlier in the century, cities were suddenly faced with an abrupt change in their rate of growth, and in some cases actual decline in population. (Flint had a population of 156,492 in 1930 and one of 151,543 in 1940.)[17] While this trend could have been reversed somewhat by wholesale annexations, there was little sentiment in its favor. The cities were too busy with the pressing financial problems of the depression, among other things, to take on the burden of

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[17] U. S. Bureau of the Census, Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Population, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 517.

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additional land. In 1935, twenty-five cities over 10,000 population annexed land; in 1936 forty-five; in 1937 fifty-two; and in 1938 forty-five.[18]

Other factors influenced the decline in the use of annexation. Before the first World War suburbs had developed, particularly in the older communities, which maintained a jealous individuality of their own, and thus the centrifugal effect of the core city was in evidence early in the century. But the separatist tendency of fringe areas, which became almost pathological during the period of decline, had not yet developed fully. It was not until after the first world war that widespread antipathy for the parent city grew up in the suburbs. In Flint, the annexations of 1910, 1918, and 1920 were all of them made under the law which still governs addition of land area by home-rule cities. Under this law a simple majority against joining the city in the area to be annexed is sufficient to override a vast majority in the city for annexation. Between 1910 and 1920, however, the suburbs so strongly desired to join the city that they voted overwhelmingly to annex. It has only been in the past twenty or twenty-five years that in Flint and elsewhere "the chief opposition to annexation has come from the territory to be annexed."[19]

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[18] The Municipal Year Book 1939, p. 172.

[19] Charles M. Kneier, City Government in the United States (rev. ed.; New York: Harper and Bros., 1947), p. 356.

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There was another reason for the decreased use of annexation. That cities have not generally embarked upon a consistent program of annexation is evidence of the 'silent' opposition to annexation in the cities themselves. This opposition stems from various sources: (1) the belief by the people of the city that the areas which might be annexed would be financial liabilities to the city, rather than financial assets; (2) the belief that the city already has too many problems, administrative and otherwise, with its present area and population to take on any added burdens; (3) a general inertia and lack of imaginative planning. Any one of these reasons could be used to explain why cities annexed little territory between the wars. There is little doubt but that cities have often been just as unwilling to annex fringe communities during the past two decades as the communities themselves have been to be absorbed by the city.

A notable exception to the tendency noted in the foregoing paragraphs has been the experience of Virginia cities. Professor Reed notes that "except for some Texas cities which took time by the forelock in annexing by simple council resolution wide stretches of unincorporated territory, there have been almost no annexations of importance outside of Virginia in the last quarter century."[20]

In Virginia, "there has been continued progress in

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[20] Reed, op. cit., p. 5.

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metropolitan integration, little noticed by the rest of the United States. Virginia is unique among the forty-eight states in providing a general scheme of city-county separation." Cities over 5,000 population are almost entirely separated from the county, but it is obvious that city-county separation "would not in itself do anything to solve the metropolitan problem. It would not promote but rather discourage integration if it were not coupled with a practical plan for expanding the boundaries of cities as their populations spread into the surrounding country."[21] Virginia has such a plan, which enables a city to annex land by court order. As a result, annexation in Virginia, according to Professor Reed, has been "a regularly recurring process."

In the past ten years, Richmond has added substantial territory to itself. Roanoke almost doubled in size when it added approximately eleven square miles to its area in 1948. Petersburg, Portsmouth, Williamsburg, Waynesboro, and Front Royal have made substantial annexations. "Front Royal . . . . in 1948 doubled its population and quadrupled its area in one of the most forward-looking efforts to unify politically a whole natural community centering on a great industrial plant."[22]

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[21] Ibid., p. 4.

[22] Ibid., p. 5.

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The Revised Use of Annexation as a Means of Solving the Fringe Problem

Since the second world war, Virginia has not been completely alone in seeking to effect metropolitan integration by means of annexation. In the past several years, annexation has acquired increasing momentum throughout the nation. In 1945, eighty-nine cities over 10,000 population reported annexations to the editors of the Municipal Year Book, and the number has increased each year since then.[23]

TABLE.3

Annexations of Territory 1945-1948

Type of City	Number of Annexing Cities	Cities Annexing One-half Square Miles or More
Over 10,000:		
1948	194	52
1947	170	53
1946	154	30
1945	89	22
5,000 to 10,000:		
1948	95	7
1947	128	15
1946	105	13
1945	63	3

[23] The Municipal Year Book 1949, p. 92.

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California cities have begun using annexation extensively. Stockton, according to the assistant city manager, in an annexation effected November 1, 1948, received "the largest population gain made by any California city in recent years."[24] This annexation was "one of the major objectives of the city of Stockton for the year 1948."[25] Other California cities have been proportionately as successful as Stockton.

TABLE 4

Population Gains from Annexation
Six California Cities

City	Population Gain
Susanville	4,200
Merced	3,450
Pasadena	5,568
San Luis Obispo	2,334
Santa Rosa	2,298
Compton	2,229

Source: Western City, XXIV (Nov., 1948), p. 48.

San Jose, California, has successfully completed as many annexations in the post-war years as in the preceding thirty-five, though the amount of land included in each of

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[24] Jerry Keithley, "Stockton Adds 5658 Population in Single Record Annexation," Western City, XXIV (Nov., 1948), p. 47.

[25] Ibid.

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those recent annexations was relatively small.[26] During the 1930's there were three annexations (one of which resulted in the absorption of the city of Willow Glen), and during the war two were made. Since March 29, 1946, there have been nineteen separate annexations. No incorporated places now lie next to the city, but Santa Clara is approximately two miles away, and three other incorporated places are included within the San Jose Metropolitan District.[27]

Walla Walla, Washington, from 1940 to 1946, gained about six thousand in population and about one-half square mile in area. In Oregon, a committee appointed by Governor Snell inspected nine Oregon cities in 1946 to ascertain the desirability of rural protection were found to be the most pressing needs of the fringe areas. It was also found that the "unplanned growth of business and residential building [has] created an undesirable situation along highways leading into most of the state's urban centers."[28] All but one of the cities visited have extensive fringe areas. That one, Bend, Oregon, "because of its extensive city limits . . . does not have a fringe area problem at present."[29]

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[26] City Planning Commission, "Planning San Jose," Biennial Report 1947-1948 (San Jose: 1949), p. 17.

[27] U. S. Bureau of the Census, op. cit., p. 132.

[28] Western City, XXII (Oct., 1946), p. 55.

[29] Ibid.; underscoring mine. Bend had a 1940 population of 10,021.

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Two Texas cities, Dallas and Fort Worth, have accomplished some of the most sensational annexations of the post-war period, and another, Houston, envisages one. In 1946, Fort Worth annexed more area than any other city in the country--thirty-five square miles--by charter amendment election on December 17. "This triples the city's topographic size by increasing its area from 17.1 to 52.1 square miles."[30]

Dallas has annexed a total of 54.8 square miles since January 1, 1945. Most of this land was undeveloped and the city wished to control its development by means of zoning and other regulations. The city also wished to prevent the further territorial expansion of the two largest municipalities on the outskirts--Highland Park and University Park. Since the beginning of these annexations, Dallas has extended city water mains into the new areas, and this action has stimulated considerably the development of the areas.[31]

TABLE 5

Territorial Growth of Dallas in Post-War Years

Date	Area of City Square Miles	Increase
January 1, 1945	50.664	
January 1, 1946	90.570	39.906

[30] Southern City, XI (June, 1947), p. 20.

[31] Letter of Sept. 23, 1949, to the writer from Mr. E. A. Wood, City Plan Commission, Dallas, Texas.

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TABLE 5 (Continued)

Date	Area of City Square Miles	Increase
January 1, 1947	93.110	2.540
January 1, 1948	104.742	11.632
January 1, 1949	105.503	.761

Source: Letter of September 23, 1949, Dallas City Plan Commission.

Kansas City, Missouri, after annexing an area containing a population of 10,000, distributed a booklet entitled "A Message of Welcome from Your City Government" to the residents of the area. In addition, the municipal electorate, in 1946, voted to annex nineteen square miles of land which is in another county and across the Missouri River. This latter annexation is to be effective January 1, 1950, unless the Supreme Court of Missouri disallows it.

Although annexation may well be thought of as an alternative to city-county consolidation, it has been used recently in conjunction with such consolidation. The City of Baton Rouge and the East Baton Rouge Parish were consolidated as of January 1, 1949, and at the same time the city itself was considerably extended. The new city has an urban area of thirty square miles instead of its former four square miles.[32] In enlarging seven times, the city was increased in

[32] Reed, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

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population from 30,000 to 106,000, and its limits were made co-extensive with the urbanized region of which it formerly had been merely the core.

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CHAPTER II

THE LAW AND PROCEDURE OF ANNEXATION

The Evolution of Annexation Laws in Michigan

Whether a Michigan town or city expanded geographically during the 19th Century, or whether it remained static, was solely for the legislature at Lansing to decide. Before 1873 virtually all laws passed by the legislature that applied to villages, towns, and cities were local in effect. Each law extended, in other words, to only one municipality.

The first time the legislature acted to enlarge a Michigan city was in 1849. In that year the state legislature passed an act which extended the boundaries of the city of Detroit.[1]

All during the 1850's and 1860's the legislature was busy passing special acts incorporating municipalities and extending their boundaries. If an important group of citizens in a given community wished to enlarge a city, the only recourse was to petition the state for action. But such action could not have been too hard to obtain, at least in Flint's case, for its boundaries were extended twice during this period.

The state legislature in 1873, perhaps weary of spending so much of its time during each biennial session with local acts, passed Michigan's first general act of

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[1] Michigan Acts (1849), No. 41.

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incorporation for cities.[2] This act contained a general proviso in regard to annexation.

As a result of the statute enacted in 1873, the citizens of a community could obtain for the first time the enlargement of their municipality directly by their own action. All the proceedings for accomplishing expansion were local in nature, and appeal no longer had to be addressed to the legislature.

Two procedures were outlined in the statute, either of which was adequate to accomplish annexation:

(1) The inhabitants of territory adjacent to a city could initiate the action:

  (a) A majority of the freeholders of the affected area could petition the county board of supervisors, and in the petition fully describe the area to be annexed;

  (b) Before the petition was presented to the board, at least thirty days of 'adequate' notice had to be given;

  (c) If no serious objections to the annexation were presented to the board at the hearing, the board could at its discretion consent to the annexation;

  (d) The board's approval had to be certified to the city council and the council could then declare the area annexed.

(2) The city council could initiate the proceedings:

  (a) A resolution of the council could specify the territory the city desired to annex;

  (b) Ample advertisement of the anticipated annexation had to be given;

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[2] Laws of Michigan (1873), No. 178, c. II.

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(c) The resolution had then to be presented to the county board of supervisors. If approved, formal notification was sent to the city council, which passed an ordinance of annexation;

(d) When notice of board and council action was received by the Secretary of State, the territory was legally and finally annexed.[3]

In spite of the rather liberal provisions of the act of 1873, the people of Flint never took advantage of it. Instead, they relied upon the state legislature to legalize the expansion of the city by local act.

In 1909 the legislature passed an act which provided that certain municipalities in the state could elect to write their own charters. This home-rule act contained annexation provisions and these provisions have governed annexations for home-rule cities from 1909 until the present day. Annexations by special charter cities are also governed by provisions of this act. According to this law, annexation may be accomplished in the following way;

(1) A petition must be circulated and signed by at least 1% of the qualified voters residing in the townships, villages, or cities to be affected. There must be at least one hundred signatures, of which at least 25 must be from each township, village, or city affected;

(2) The petition must describe the boundaries proposed for the new territory;

(3) The petition shall be addressed to the board of supervisors of the county in which the proposed change is to take place. If the petition is adjudged correct, the board shall submit the question to the qualified voters of the districts to be affected within 40 to 90 days;

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[3] Ibid.

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(4) Two separate majorities are required: in the district to be annexed, and in the city and township from which the district is to be taken.[4]

There is a wide difference in the two acts considered above. Under the 1873 act, annexation proceedings could be initiated either by action of interested citizens, or by the action of the governing body of the city affected. Approval or disapproval was largely the responsibility of the county board of supervisors, in which was vested the quasi-judicial power of reviewing the proposals and of weighing the objections voiced to them. This process was comparatively simple, direct, and inexpensive.

The present law--the one described above--is awkward, and the procedure outlined in it is tedious and expensive. Although it might be argued that a popular referendum as required by the present law is highly democratic, it does not follow that the same result could be obtained in no other fashion. Indeed, the democratic aspect of the popular referendum in this case is much more apparent than real. Actually the process of annexation is so designed that a minority of the whole community can checkmate the desires of the vast

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[4] Michigan Statutes Annotated, Vol. IV, Sections 5.2085-5.2088.
Although the law seems perfectly clear in stipulating that only two majorities are required, a recent opinion of the Attorney General states that "the ballots in the city, the territory added, and the ballots of the township are counted separately and there must be a majority in each to effect a consolidation (or change of boundaries)". Opinion No. 388, Office of the Attorney General, State of Michigan: 1947.

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majority of an area. In the apt words of Harold M. Groves, "the 'Wilsonian principle of self-determination' in setting the boundary lines for cities works badly. Some appeal to a neutral authority, such as the judiciary or a state commission on municipal affairs, might be an improvement."[5]

The tediousness of the Michigan statutes on annexation greatly exceeds that of the statutes of the neighboring states. This situation makes Michigan slow, to say the least, in moving toward a solution of one of the most compelling problems of local government in the state--that of the government of the state's many metropolitan areas.

Annexation Provisions in the Laws of Ohio, Indiana, and Wisconsin

An interesting evolution during the past decade has taken place in the Ohio statutes governing annexation. Previous to 1941 annexation proceedings could be initiated either by the people who lived in the areas outside the city, or by the city itself. When the inhabitants of adjacent territory desired annexation, they submitted a petition (signed by a majority of the adult freeholders residing in the area) to the commissioners of the county. After checking on the validity of the petition, the county commissioners submitted the petition to the auditor or clerk of the municipality. After an interval of sixty days, the council could accept or

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[5] Harold M. Groves, Financing Government (rev. ed.; New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1945), p. 115.

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reject the application for annexation.[6] This same procedure governed when the initiative was the city's.[7]

In 1941, these provisions, which on their face seem equitable, were attacked by an organized group of township officials. "For many years," wrote a spokesman for the township organization, "the townships of Ohio were defenseless when cities decided to expand their boundaries," since a vote by the inhabitants in the area to be annexed was not allowed by statute. "This undemocratic procedure was changed by a statute advocated by the Ohio State Association of Township Trustees and Clerks which became effective September 6, 1941."[8] This statute required that a vote be taken in the affected area. In 1947 the law was amended to require that a vote be taken in the entire township.[9]

It is highly questionable whether this altered procedure in Ohio, which closely follows that in Michigan, will work to the advantage either of the urbanized townships or of the cities. The difference between rural and non-farm townships is vast, and the type of government that may work

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[6] Page's Ohio General Code Annotated (1938), secs. 3548-3550.

[7] Ibid., secs. 3558-3561.

[8] William B. Guitteau, Ohio's Townships the Grassroots of Democracy (Toledo: The Toledo Printing Co., 1949), pp. 115-116.

[9] Page's Ohio General Code Annotated (cum. supple., 1948), sec. 3561.1.

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reasonably well in rural Ohio is not going to measure up to the demands made on it in the urbanized areas surrounding Ohio cities.

In Indiana, the common council of any city has the power to annex by ordinance any contiguous territory whether or not platted. This ordinance must after passage be published daily for two consecutive weeks in a daily newspaper of the city.[10] When the territory is annexed, any person thinking himself injured may file an appeal from such annexation with the circuit or superior courts of the county within ten days after publication of final notice in the newspapers, and "such written remonstrance or complaint shall state the reason why such annexation ought not in justice take place."[11]

If the court should be satisfied after the hearing that less than 75 percent of the property holders in the area to be annexed have protested, and that the addition of the new territory to the city will be beneficial to all concerned, and will result in no manifest injury to the property holders of the annexed territory, he shall permit annexation. In other words, the law requires an extraordinary majority of the residents of the affected area protesting the proposal to defeat it in the courts. Defeat is not certain then, for

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[10] Burns Annotated Indiana Statutes (1933), sec. 48.701.

[11] Ibid. (cum. suppl., 1947), sec. 48.702.

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even when more than three-fourths of the property holders in the annexed area have protested the ordinance, the court may still order annexation, if it finds from the evidence "that the prosperity of such city and territories will be materially retarded and the safety of the inhabitants and property thereof endangered without such annexation."[12] Thus if the judge so decides, he may order the ordinance to be put into effect over the protests of the inhabitants of the area. The law recognizes that a small minority of an urban community cannot safely be allowed to flout the will of the rest of the community merely because of its being separated from the city by a highly artificial boundary.

The procedure for annexing territory in Wisconsin is basically similar to that of Ohio previous to 1941, though the details vary. The law provides for no referendum on the annexation issue. Territory adjacent to a Wisconsin city may be annexed by that city in this way:

(a) A petition calling for annexation may be presented to the city council:

(1) by a majority of the electors of the adjacent territory and by the owners of 1/3 of the taxable property, or

(2) by owners of 1/2 of the taxable property if no electors reside in the territory, or

(3) by a majority of the electors and the owners of 1/2 of the real estate.

(b) The city council may then act: "An ordinance annexing

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[12] Ibid.

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> such territory ... shall be introduced at a regular meeting of the council after the filing of the petition, be published once each week for four successive weeks in the official paper and thereafter be adopted at a regular meeting by three-fourths of all the members of the council."[13]

Annexation Procedure in Virginia

To Virginia must go the distinction of having one of the most imaginative and effective approaches to the problem of annexation that can be found in this country. It is the opinion of Thomas H. Reed that "the State of Virginia leads the country in dealing with the problem of the urban fringe."[14] Virginia has two advantages over other states: (1) city-county separation, and (2) an effective method of annexation; and the result is that Virginia has integrated communities such as do not occur in other states.

Historically, annexation in Virginia, as in most other states, was accomplished by means of special acts of the General Assembly. Because this method was not satisfactory, general acts were passed and at the present time "annexation is governed by general statutes which enable the local units to have a judicial determination of their respective rights."[15]

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[13] Wisconsin Statutes (1947), sec. 62.07.

[14] Thomas H. Reed, "Annexation and the Urban Fringe Problem," Virginia Municipal Review, XXVI (Jan., 1949), 5-9. Reprinted from an address given at the 43rd annual convention of the League of Virginia Municipalities, Sept. 28, 1948.

[15] Report of the Virginia Advisory Legislative Council of the Virginia General Assembly, Annexation Laws, House Document No. 6 (Richmond: Div. of Purchase and Printing, 1943).

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And there have been few instances where under this judicial method "the smaller communities have succeeded in defeating entirely a proposed annexation."[16]

Annexation proceedings in Virginia are initiated by municipal ordinance or by petition of fringe residents. Final disposition of the matter is made by a special annexation court. The step-by-step method:

(1) The city adopts an ordinance describing the territory desired by metes and bounds and giving the reasons it is desired; or a petition is signed by 51% of the qualified voters of an adjacent area;

(2) The ordinance or petition is filed with the circuit court of the county from which the land is to be taken;

(3) A special annexation court of three judges is made up;

(4) The court convenes and if it finds the ordinance formally correct, the case is tried on its merits in the manner of a civil trial;

(5) At the conclusion of the trial, the court orders, or refuses to order the annexation. Even in case of concurrence in the general desirability of the annexation, the court may not agree that the ordinance or the petition has properly demarcated the area, and may alter the boundaries to conform more suitably with the court's idea of the appropriate area.[17]

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[16] Ibid., p. 7.

[17] Thomas H. Reed, "Progress in Metropolitan Integration," Public Administration Review, IX (Winter, 1949), 5; also The Virginia Code of 1942, secs. 2956-2958: "The court shall so draw the lines of annexation as to have a reasonably compact body of land, and shall also see that no land shall be taken into said city which is not adapted to city improvements unless necessarily embraced in said compact body of land, or which the city shall not need in the reasonably near future for development. In making its decision as to the character and extent of annexation the court shall take into consideration as well, not only the development of the city, but also the loss of revenue to the county."

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The Virginia statutes recognize annexation in its formalized aspects as a quasi-judicial problem, and as a result, in its accomplishment the judicial method is applied. Whenever there is conflict between or among groups, each of which has close interest in the other, it is far more equitable to put the conflict in the hands of an impartial arbiter than to permit one or the other party to the dispute to decide the matter.

In point of fact, however, the Virginia plan is not in all of its aspects judicial. First, the regular trial courts do not hear the case. The special situation is recognized and an 'ad hoc' tribunal is set up. Secondly, the court is composed, not of a single judge, but of a panel of judges. This panel is undoubtedly used to insure there being several personal points of view brought together to decide the issue. It is especially worthy of note that at least one judge is from outside the community affected. Thus it is not the judicial overtones of the Virginia procedure that are important. What is important is that: (1) annexation is recognized as a matter that properly should be settled by quasi-judicial process; and (2) the adjudication should be carried out by an impartial tribunal that is set up especially for the purpose of determining the facts and acting upon them.

The Virginia experience has best been summarized by Professor Reed in an address before the 43rd annual convention of the League of Virginia Municipalities:

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> I think it is very important that you should continue to fight in the Legislature, as you have, for the preservation of the right of the city to annex when the courts decide it is necessary and expedient to annex. There are very few cases in which annexation has been refused. The reason is that there should be annexation to integrate the problems of urban living with the means of solving them. The courts have to recognize that fact. It is only in some extraordinary circumstances that you will find annexation is not justified. If the cities try to annex too much territory, the courts will decide that question. The only thing that can hold you back, or should hold you back, from annexing the lands about you needed for the city's growth, is the fact, found occasionally, that you have not got the financial resources to swing the deal. If you have not got that you should not try annexation.
>
> Virginia is the only state in the Union where cities are enabled to grow when they ought to grow, the only place where you can prevent people from escaping from the city by moving just outside its boundaries and continuing to use and enjoy its services. I don't think you would want ever to give up voluntarily that admirable and enviable position in which you are placed."[18]

The Virginia system has worked well for Virginia, but it is not above criticism. There are at least two glaring faults in the Virginia procedure: (1) the impartial board does not reflect in its membership any expertness in local government, sociology, or economics, although those are the matters upon which the body adjudicates; and (2) judges of the trial courts are used to decide non-judicial matters--the process is quasi-judicial, but the decision is legislative and political.

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[18] Reed, "Annexation and the Urban Fringe Problem," Virginia Municipal Review, XXVI (Jan., 1949), 9.

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Annexation in the Southwest

In Texas it is possible for cities over 5,000 population to annex territory without consulting in any way the people that inhabit that area. Article 11, Section 5 of the Texas Constitution provides that cities over 5,000 may adopt or amend their own charters, and since 1912, when that section was adopted by the people of Texas, at least ninety-nine cities have taken advantage of that section. "Three fourths of the home rule cities now have charters which were locally drafted and enacted. Twenty cities retain their special legislative charters, as locally amended."[19]

These cities enjoy a peculiar status not only because of their being able to change their basic law, but also because of their ability to alter their boundaries by ordinance or charter amendment. In the words of a city attorney, "home-rule cities, by appropriate legislation, can annex adjacent and contiguous territory without permitting a vote of the people in the area affected."[20]

The Texas Supreme Court recently held that "there is no general public policy in Texas, either by legislative enactment or by judicial decision, to the effect that territory cannot be annexed without the consent of the inhabitants of

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[19] Wilfred D. Webb, Municipal Home Rule Charters in Texas, Municipal Studies No. 32 (Austin: The University of Texas, 1947), p. 7.

[20] R. E. Rouer, "Power of Home Rule City to Annex Adjacent Territory," Texas Municipalities, XXXIV (Apr., 1947), 74.

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such territory."[21] Another court made the far-reaching statement that the home-rule amendment to the Texas Constitution (Art. 11, Sec. 5) took away from the State Legislature the legislative power to alter city boundaries and conferred it upon those cities altering or adopting charters under Article 11, Section 5.[22] And in Allen v. City of Austin the court ruled that Austin had authority to annex adjacent territory by ordinance without a vote of people of the city or of the annexed territory.[23]

Where a home-rule city, however, attempts to annex a satellite municipality, its discretion is not quite so unlimited as when it seeks to annex unincorporated territory. The general rule is that a city cannot annex another of 'equal dignity'.[24] But a municipality which incorporates after annexation proceedings have been started by the parent city cannot get the courts to intercede.[25]

The annexation powers of the home-rule cities of Texas are very great indeed, and it might be questioned whether

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[21] City of Fort Worth v. State, 186 S.W. (2nd) 323 (1945).

[22] City of Houston v. State ex rel. City of West University Place, 171 S.W. (2nd) 203 (1943). This case was later reversed, but on other grounds.

[23] 116 S.W. (2nd) 468 (1938).

[24] Rouer, op. cit., 76.

[25] City of Fort Worth v. State, 186 S.W. (2nd) 323 (1945).

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such powers are defensible. Has not the pendulum swung from one extreme in Michigan to the other in Texas? Texans apparently do not think so, at least if the following ideas are at all representative:[26]

> The organization of small villages and cities on the outskirts of our established cities presents a serious public menace. If they accomplished any public purpose, there would be a basis for their existence, but it is a rare instance when they are in a position to render any services to their inhabitants at a reasonable cost.
>
> It is impossible for anyone to over-estimate the injury that is being suffered by the public, as a result of the practice that has grown up in recent years of small municipalities being created on the fringe of our cities. ... Any reasonable analysis of their structure will convince the most skeptical person that they have no place among the political subdivisions of the state.

On the periphery of the Southwest is another home-rule city which is permitted by state and local law to annex territory when the people of the city itself agree that such a thing is necessary. Under its home-rule charter, Kansas City, Missouri can add land area by charter amendment.[27] The only limitation on this power of annexation is the right of the citizen to question the reasonableness of a particular annexation.

A Suggested Revision of Michigan Statutes

After comparing Michigan statutory provisions on annexation with those of other states, we are able to advance

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[26] Rouer, op. cit., pp. 75-77.

[27] Charter of K. C. (1946), sec. 5; see Appendix I for charter provisions of Kansas City and other cities of the Southwest.

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suggestions for their revision.

The most important flaw in Michigan annexation law for home-rule and special charter cities is that the procedure which it provides does not fit the situation. A popular referendum is not proper when it is used as the final determining factor in the annexation process, unless the vote represents the reaction of the whole community. As we noted above, the dispute which is involved in an annexation movement resembles somewhat a conflict at law between individuals. To use the ballot box to decide the one is as anomalous as using it to decide the other. Not that the wishes of the people involved should be disregarded. On the contrary, the impartial body which is adjudicating the matter--a body such as the special annexation court in Virginia--must consider public opinion alongside of all other pertinent elements.

Another characteristic of the present Michigan statute governing annexation of territory is that it is essentially undemocratic. How can that be when the most peculiar instrument of the democratic method--the popular referendum--is used? The reason is at once apparent. A small minority of voters in any urban community can block annexation. If the principle found in the Michigan statutes were followed consistently throughout the nation, democratic government would become a farce. The smallest and most insignificant geographical area could stand on its rights and flout the will of the whole nation.

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In 1919, for example, Flint, Michigan annexed an area which was popularly known as Civil Park. The voting in the election held to determine the issue was as follows:

Political Division	For	Against
Flint	9,107 ...	1,784
Flint Township ...	174 ...	104
Civic Park Area ..	90 ...	6

It is at once evident that all the majorities in this election were overwhelming, and yet a change of a mere forty-three votes (in Civic Park) would have nullified the attempt to incorporate Civic Park into the city. A total vote of 11,265 was cast in the election, but if only forty-nine votes in the Civic Park area had been cast against annexation, it would have failed. Such a thing as this can hardly be described as majority rule. Indeed, this is the "Wilsonian principle of self-determination" reduced to absurdity.

It is hard to escape the conclusion that the present law, which was enacted in 1909, is regressive when compared with the law of 1873. Not only did the 1873 statute not require a popular vote, but the procedure was also so flexible that an annexation movement could start either within the city or without. The final decision on the matter, moreover, was left to a body which at that time might have been described as impartial (though it certainly could not be so described to-day)--the county board of supervisors.

If the 1909 law were to be repealed by the Michigan legislature, several possibilities would be open for

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utilization. In place of the existing detailed provisions there could be put a brief enactment permitting home-rule cities to determine for themselves the methods for altering their municipal boundaries--essentially the Missouri-Texas practice. Or the Virginia pattern could be followed (without its objectionable features). It is possible that an annexation statute modelled after the general principles of the one in Virginia might never be called into question in the courts. If it were, the measure would stand, in the opinion of one writer, particularly if the legislative standards were clearly and carefully stated in the statute.[28] On the other hand, if a court were to adjudicate, the system could be challenged on the grounds of improper delegation of power to the judiciary. The system would have a much better chance of surviving this hurdle if an administrative body were to adjudicate. The law would then be on a sounder legal footing. Under the police power and necessity rule such delegation of power by the legislative body has usually been upheld as proper.

A reworking of the Michigan annexation statutes should accomplish these things:

(1) An elimination of the popular-referendum in the present statutes;

(2) A provision, in place of the popular referendum, for a hearing of the facts, and a decision based upon

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[28] Robert E. Fryer, "An Analysis of Annexation in Michigan," (Unpublished mss, University of Michigan, Institute of Public Administration, 1949), p. 8.

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them, by an impartial tribunal, possibly one that resembles the special annexation court in Virginia;

(3) A provision that would allow initiation of annexation proceedings either by the city, or by residents of an area outside the city.

The elimination of the popular referendum from the statute is a compelling need. Where it is possible for a small minority of the urban community in every case to deny the wishes of the majority, there is subversion of the democratic process, and the use of the ballot box becomes merely a facade for a system of minority rule. It can be argued, moreover, that detailed stipulations governing local action in a home-rule act violates the spirit of municipal home rule. The Texas and Missouri practice is much more consistent with the home-rule ideal than the Michigan one.

An impartial body to hear the claims of the city and of the fringe communities is consistent with the fundamentals of the annexation process. This impartial body need not be a court of law, as in Virginia; indeed, it would be preferable to fashion it after the many quasi-judicial bodies that are now so common on the state and national level--the workmen's compensation commissions of the various states, for example.

The impartial body could be set up in either one of two ways. It could be a state body appointed by an official of the state government, preferably the governor, or it could be a local body appointed by the city council and the county

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or township board. The state body could be a special annexation commission set up on a permanent basis to hold hearings and decide on the merits of each case. Since there is no department of local government in Michigan, or anything resembling it, the commission might well be given a small secretariate, so that the commissioners would function only when a case reached the final hearing stage.

The British have had considerable experience with such procedure. Before the recent war, each proposal for a change in the boundaries of a city was considered by the Minister of Health more or less on an 'ad hoc' basis. In 1945, however, the Minister of Health presented to Parliament a White Paper on local government in England and Wales. It proposed that all boundary changes, whether of cities or counties, be the province of a local government boundary commission, a small body of not more than five members, with assistant commissioners to hold local inquiries.[29] The Local Government Boundary Commission Act of 1945 embodied the recommendations of the White Paper. A small commission with executive powers was appointed by the Minister of Health "with the duty of reviewing the areas and status of all local authorities in England and Wales outside the County of London."[30]

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[29] A. S. MacNalty, Local Government (London: Methuen & Co., Ltd., 1948), pp. 194-198.

[30] V. O. Lipman, Local Government Areas 1834-1945 (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1949), p. 246.

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The commission, therefore, could itself take the initiative in revamping the boundaries of cities.

If the Michigan annexation tribunal were to be constituted on the local level by the municipality on the one hand, and the county or township on the other, every attempt should be made to obtain a chairman that would be satisfactory to both sides. This could be effected if one member were appointed by the city, and one by the county or township, and the third member and chairman be agreed upon by the city and non-city members. Or the third member might be appointed by the governor.

What are the relative merits of the two types of commissions--the state and the local? The local body might be more conversant with a given annexation controversy, but that very thing could in the long run be a disadvantage. The local board could easily become lost in an immensity of detail, and the local members hopelessly entangled in useless bickering. The relationships between cities and townships in Michigan on the whole are not cordial, and the difficulty of constituting a local board that would have any chance of arriving at a working agreement would be immense.

A state body could avoid most of these difficulties, and could at the same time attain a level of performance that a local board could not expect to reach. Removed from the local scene and divorced from local prejudice, the state body

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could attain a large measure of impartiality. By working continuously and by having a permanent secretariate, a state commission would possess a much to be desired continuity. It could, therefore, soon become expert in a matter that has many technical aspects. Finally, a state body would have an impressiveness and impact of authority that could be rivaled only by such a body as the special annexation court of Virginia.

In conclusion, it should be pointed out that the general act of 1873, when enacted by the Michigan legislature, contained all of the three elements essential to good annexation procedure. Only one substantial change would need to be made to convert it into a modern, equitable statute for governing municipal annexations: a truly impartial body substituted for the county board of supervisors. It should always be kept in mind that annexation is basically a political problem, but that it can be handled best, at least in Michigan, not by the electoral process but by a quasi-judicial method. All of the facts of the case could be weighed and a decision reached that would be fair to all of the affected areas.

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CHAPTER III

THE GROWTH IN AREA OF FLINT, MICHIGAN

The Original City

Flint legally became a city early in 1855. Four days after the legal date of incorporation, February 13, 1855, the Genesee Whig reported that Francis H. Rankin, proprietor of the paper, had learned from the "Hon. D. N. Montague, who passed through Flint on Wednesday, on his way home from Lansing, that the Charter Incorporating the 'City of Flint', passed both branches of the legislature without any opposition, and is now a law." According to this same news item, the editor expressed the certainty that the new charter was in conformity with a draft prepared by the "Committee appointed for that purpose by our citizens."[1]

Previous to its incorporation the new city had had a short history of about two decades as a platted but unincorporated village.[2] According to the statute of incorporation[3] Thread Creek was to be the southern, and a part of the western boundary of the city, and the extreme northwest corner was to be fixed approximately at the junction of the present-day Detroit and Mary streets. The easternmost projection of

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[1] The Genesee Whig, February 17, 1855.

[2] Index to the Local and Special Acts of the State of Michigan, 1803-1927 (1928), p. 280.

[3] Acts of the Legislature (1855), No. 147.

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the city ended at a line roughly corresponding to Warren and Fern streets.[4]

These boundary lines enclosed an area that was largely unplatted and very sparsely inhabited. Most of the population was concentrated along Saginaw street and a few blocks to the east and west of it.[5] About 3,000 people lived in this new City of Flint in an areaof approximately one and one-half square miles.

The original boundaries were unchanged for twelve years. In 1867, there was a slight alternation in the western limits of the city. The amendment to the charter provided specifically that the area annexed should be included in an area described as:

> ... so much of the said township of Flint as is included in the following limits, to wit: Beginning on the right bank of Flint river, opposite the island, at the junction of Flint and Thread rivers, at the spring where C. S. Payne has a hydraulic ram; thence north ... to Detroit Street extended; thence along said street to the north line of subdivision lot five ...; thence east along said line to the Saginaw plank road; thence south along the line of said plank road to Allexander McFarlan's north line; thence down the center of said river to the place of beginning....[6]

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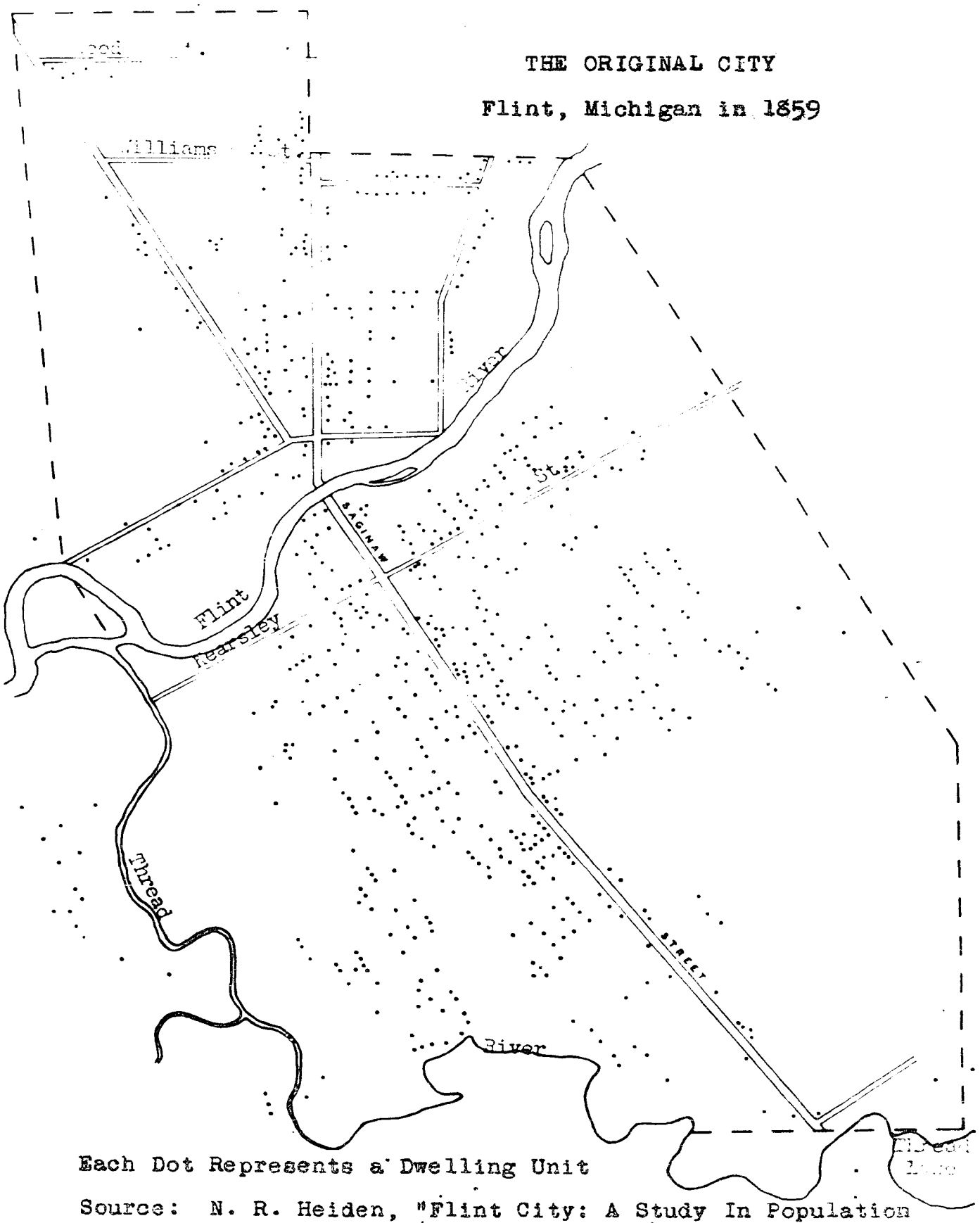
[4] Annexation Map, Flint City Planning Commission.

[5] Noland Rall Heiden, "Flint City: A Study in Population Distribution, Past, Present, and Future" (unpublished mss, Metropolitan Community Seminar, University of Michigan, June, 1947), p. 21.

[6] Acts of the Legislature, II (1867), No. 372.

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MAP II



Each Dot Represents a Dwelling Unit

Source: N. R. Heiden, "Flint City: A Study In Population Distribution" (U. of Mich., 1947); also Map of Flint, Geil and Jones (Philadelphia, 1859).

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The Annexation of 1871

By 1871 the city of Flint had officially been in existence for sixteen years. In that time its population had doubled, but its area had expanded only insignificantly. In 1871, however, the city suddenly expanded virtually in all directions. The greatest expansion was westward, but when the new boundaries were drawn, the only place at which they corresponded with the boundaries of the original city was along a half-mile line on the east--along Warren and Fern streets.

This expansion, like the incorporation of the city itself, did not come from an expression of majority sentiment at the polls, but from action by the state legislature at Lansing. The act passed by the legislature in 1871 amended the Flint Charter Act of 1867.[7]

Although the population had doubled in the preceding sixteen years, the legislature provided for an expansion of the city to three times its former size--to approximately five square miles. Thus there were now about 1200 people per square mile. When we realize that even the thinly populated original city had a ratio of 2000 people per square mile, we can immediately perceive that population could have had very little to do with such vast expansion.

A reason for the annexation of 1871 is suggested by

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[7] Acts of the Legislature, II (1871), No. 228.

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Edmund N. Bacon in his diagnosis of Flint's land problem.[8] In his essay, Bacon noted that by 1873 the new railroad to Saginaw was open and that the population of the city had doubled (over that of the population in 1855). Previous to 1873, he adds, 2312 new lots (fifty feet wide and wider) had been added to ring the city, and the city limits were extended to include them. This would seem to indicate that the stimulus for the expansion of 1871 was sub-dividing (which, considering the sparse settlement of the original city, must have been essentially speculative). Could it have been that the holders of the newly platted lots, which according to Bacon ringed the city, journeyed to Lansing to urge the legislature to enlarge the city?

The annexation of 1871 absorbed much vacant and unplatted land that had until then been a part of the surrounding townships. It created a new city with a core of settlement (largely within the boundaries of the original city) that was ringed by a considerable expanse of undeveloped land. Had the legislature intentionally provided for the future expansion of the city?

After 1871, the population of Flint increased gradually but consistently. By 1880, Flint was a sizable town of 8409. By 1890, it had increased to 9803, and by 1900 to the small-

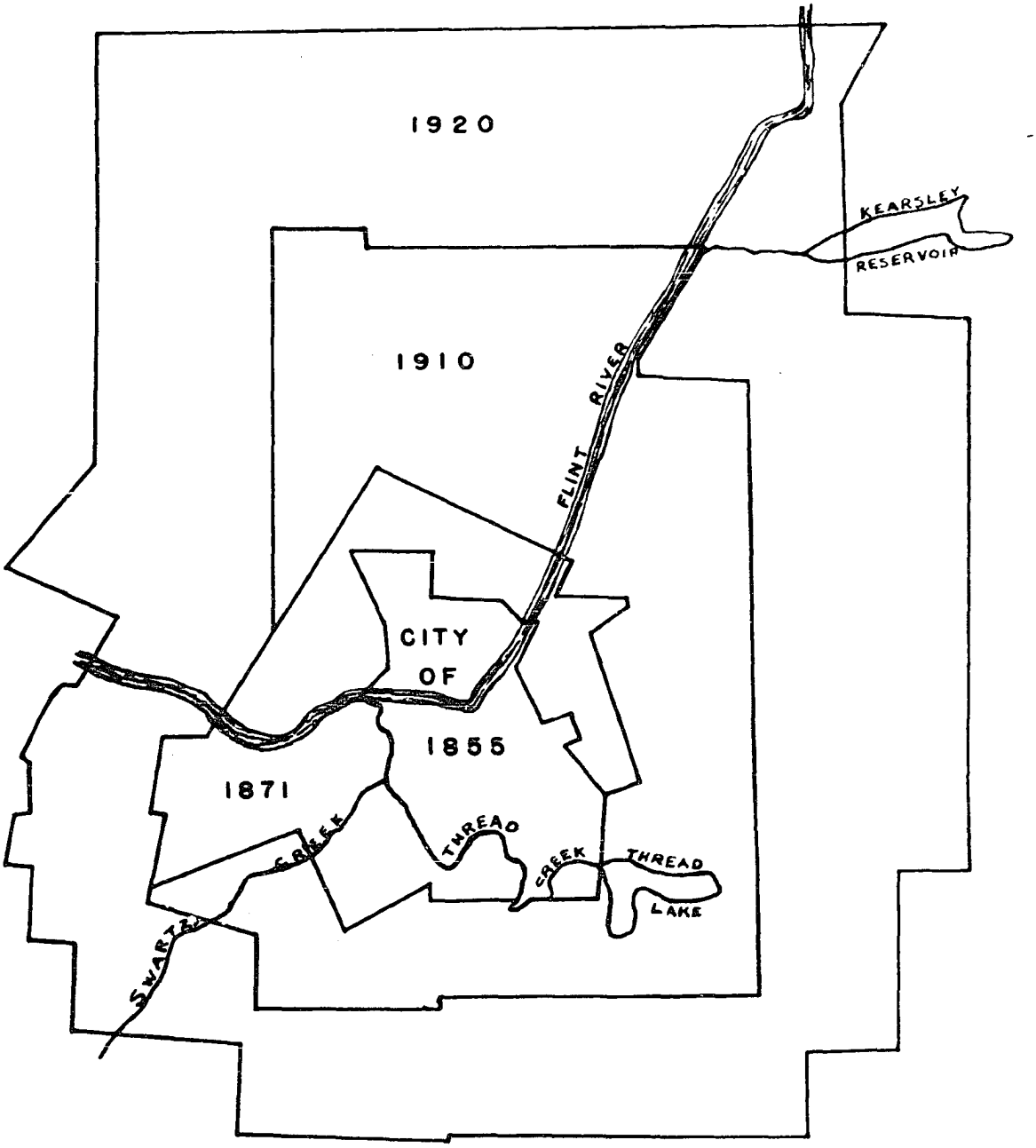
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[8] Edmund N. Bacon, "A Diagnosis and Suggested Treatment of an Urban Community's Land Problem," Journal of Land and Public Utility Economics, XVI (February, 1940), pp. 72-88.

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MAP III

MAJOR ANNEXATIONS SINCE 1855



SOURCE: ANNEXATION MAP, OFFICE OF THE CITY PLANNER, FLINT, MICHIGAN.

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city population of 13,103.[9]

During these thirty years the boundaries of the city remained the same. Although the legislature amended the city's charter in 1897, no change was made in the city's boundaries. Indeed in the first fifty-six years of the city's legal existence, it was increased in area substantially only once--in 1871.

By 1888, according to Bacon, "the city achieved the soundest physical layout of its history."[10] There had been no subdividing for eleven years. Large lots (fifty feet wide and wider) gave privacy and recreation, and houses were well constructed.

In the thirty years after the annexation of 1871 a slight northward trend in population had developed.[11] This trend was undoubtedly the controlling reason for the annexing of two small blocks of land, one on the north and one on the northeast, in 1901. This addition accounted for an increase in the area of the city of about three-fourths of a square mile.

Again in 1907 a small block of land, less than one-fourth of a square mile in area, was annexed. The area was

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[9] United States Bureau of the Census, Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Population (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 502.

[10] Bacon, op. cit., p. 74.

[11] Heiden, op. cit.

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in the southeast, and the new southern boundary of the city ran along the greater part of the north shore of Thread Lake. Both this addition, and that of 1901 would be considered important if accomplished to-day, but coming at the turn of the century, they were dwarfed by previous and subsequent annexations.

The Annexation of 1910

In 1910 Flint abruptly expanded to the north, south, and east, and the reason is not hard to find. By 1910 canny Flint business men had succeeded in establishing for Flint a place in the automobile world. The day of lumber mills and carriage and wagon shops was at an end. For better or for worse the small city was abandoned for the metropolis.

From 1900 to 1910 the population of Flint tripled,[12] and the entire extent of what is now considered the metropolitan area--Flint, the four surrounding townships, and the small communities in near-by areas--the entire region felt the impact. In the years 1902-1905 only one plat was recorded, but from 1906 through 1910 eighty-five plats were entered on the books of the register of deeds of the county from what is now the metropolitan district:[13]

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[12] U. S. Bureau of the Census, op. cit.

[13] Index to Plats Filed (Register of Deeds, Genesee County, Michigan).

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Year	No. of Plats
1906	8
1907	9
1908	4
1909	48
1910	16

During the thirty years preceding this period only 429 new lots were recorded. Now, however, feverish subdividing had begun. The forty-foot lot appeared, and with speculative land utilization came scattered building over the various subdivisions.[14]

The bulk of the area added to the city in 1910 lay to the north and to the east. The northern limits of the city now extended from the banks of the Flint River westward along Wager Avenue to Dupont Street (which now formed the western boundary of much of the city). The city extended as far east as Kearsley Road and Lynch Street, and as far south as Neubert Avenue and Fenton Road. As a result of this extension of its limits, the city doubled in size.

In the decade, 1910-1920, Flint was truly a metropolis in formation. Only once, however, was any land added to the city. This area was not large--only about three-fourths of a square mile--and much of it had been platted in 1917, and had been partially developed. It was popularly known as the Civic Park addition.

The movement to annex the Civic Park area to the city

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[14] Bacon, op. cit., p. 74.

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was formalized when a petition for inclusion within the city was presented to the Board of Supervisors of Genesee County on January 9, 1918.[15] On October 26, 1918 it was formally decided by the board to submit the question to the voters of the city and Flint township, from which the area was to be taken.

The necessary election was held in the early part of April, 1919 and according to the Flint Daily Journal, "annexation of Civic Park to the city of Flint was approved in the three separate voting units where majorities were necessary...."[16] The affirmative votes were overwhelming in Flint and in the Civic Park area, and substantial in Flint Township.

The Annexation of 1920

In 1900, the people of Flint numbered 13,103; twenty years later they numbered 91,599. A movement had begun to expand the city greatly in all directions. The old boundaries were to be eliminated and a great new area befitting a metropolis was to be laid out. Accordingly, on January 28, 1919 the Board of Supervisors of Genesee County at a special meeting unanimously passed the following resolution:

> Whereas, on December 20, 1919, petitions were filed with the county clerk of Genesee County, Michigan; addressed to the Board of Supervisors signed by the number of

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[15] Proceedings of the Genesee County Board of Supervisors, Jan. 9, 1918 (County Clerk's Office, Flint, Mich.).

[16] Flint Daily Journal, April 8, 1919; actually only two separate majorities were required.

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> qualified electors required by the law of the city of Flint, Michigan, townships of Burton, Genesee, Mt. Morris, and Flint, Genesee County, Michigan, praying that the boundary of the city of Flint be extended so as to include: [description of the area to be annexed];
>
> Whereas the board of supervisors has examined said petitions and finds that same are in due form of law and signed by the requisite number of qualified electors,
>
> Therefore, resolved, that the proposition ... be submitted to the qualified electors of the city of Flint, townships of Burton, Mt. Morris, Genesee, and Flint ... at the next general election to be held on Monday, April 5, 1920, pursuant to the statute in such case made and provided.[17]

According to law, majority votes were needed in each section to be annexed, and in the city and the townships taken together.

In the election of April 5th all the districts approved by large majorities, and approximately seventeen square miles of territory were added to the city. When five out of every six voters in the city approved the expansion, the Flint Daily Journal editorialized that "the people of Flint approve the city plan for a greater Flint."[18] Such was the extent of the popular approval of the greatest expansion in area of Flint in its history.

Since 1920 the population of Flint has increased by about 60,000, yet no new annexations have taken place. The explanation, at least in part, is that there has been enough

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[17] Proceedings of the Genesee County Board of Supervisors, Sessions of 1919-1920 (County Clerk's Office, Flint, Mich.), pp. 44-45.

[18] Flint Daily Journal, April 6, 1920.

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land within Flint to take care of such a population increase. But it is questionable whether a sufficiency of land exists for future development.

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CHAPTER IV

THE EFFECT OF PREVIOUS ANNEXATIONS IN FLINT

In 1920 Flint added approximately seventeen square miles to its former twelve square miles of area. In comparison to the previous expansions in territory, this expansion was a very radical development, and it completely dwarfed all the other enlargements of the political boundaries of the city.

When the Flint Daily Journal editorialized that the people were overwhelmingly in favor of the "city plan for a Greater Flint," it is doubtful that planning in the present-day sense was meant. Actually there seems to have been very little real planning in the move. Reliable information regarding the movement is difficult to acquire, and it must only be surmised that certain business and political leaders decided that expansion was needed and forthwith 'planned' the area to be absorbed. That approval of the move was not difficult to obtain is shown by the five-to-one vote in favor of the annexation in the city itself and substantial majorities outside.[1]

Probably the greatest motivation for the action was that population was spilling over the existing boundaries into the townships, and the consequent desire of both city and townships that these newly urbanized areas should be

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[1] Flint Daily Journal, Tuesday, April 6, 1920.

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incorporated into the municipality.

An Explanation of the Annexation of 1920

During the ten-year period immediately preceding the annexation of 1920 the population increased greatly, and that increase was undoubtedly the fundamental reason for enlarging the city in 1919 and 1920. Even the boundaries that were so generously redrawn in 1910 could not contain the thousands that were added yearly.

The increase in population gradually used up the readily available land within the city of 1910. But it did more than that--it stimulated the imagination of the land speculator. With the city growing rapidly, location- or site-value of land tended to grow even more rapidly, and this situation was prime for the speculator. Virtually all of the area suitable for dwellings within the city of 1910 had been platted, so that there was no other recourse than to begin to plat outside the city.

It began first in the north. Between 1910 and 1919 virtually the entire area from Wager Avenue to Carpenter road was platted and recorded. In addition, a small segment was developed, but the plats were not recorded.[2] Thus, when the city limits were extended northward in 1920 to Carpenter

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[2] Index to Plats Filed, Genesee County (Register of Deeds, Genesee County, Michigan); also Map of Platted Land, Flint, Michigan and Environs (Register of Deeds, Genesee County, Michigan).

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Road, they included an area that was so extensively developed that only one small section has been platted since 1920. All of the land remaining was unplatted in 1920 and has remained so until to-day. (It should be noted parenthetically that almost exactly one-half of the area that was annexed on the north in 1920 is still vacant land. Whether this land is suitable for platting, or other types of urban uses, is a question that is not within the scope of this paper.)

It is obvious why the boundary line was moved to the northward, but it is not so obvious why the line was set at Carpenter Road. Virtually any map of the Flint area to-day will show a street pattern extending more than a mile north of the present-day city limits. This pattern is not fictitious. It represents a built-up section adjoining the city and extending more than a mile north of the northern city limits. It is as much a part of the city as any segment that now lies within the political boundaries. Most of this outlying land was platted before the annexation of 1920.

TABLE 6

PLATTING NORTH OF PRESENT CITY, 1919-1920

Plat	Date of Record
Northgate Heights	1919
Lyncroft	1919
Northgate	1919
Lyndale	1919
Grand Boulevard Subdivision	1919
Holtslander	1920 (Feb.)
Crestline	1920 (Apr.)

Source: Index to Plats Filed, Genesee County, Mich.

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Viewing the situation with a perspective of thirty years, one is at a loss to see why the new boundary was placed at Carpenter Road and has remained there to this day. If economic activity in land had any effect on the placing of the new city limits, the area extending a mile to the northward would surely have been annexed.

The land annexed on the east in 1920 had virtually none of it been platted (in complete contrast to the land on the north). Two small areas lying partially within and partially outside the city of 1910 were platted in 1920, and one of the same character in 1919. A very small piece of land, the Reed Subdivision, lying a few hundred yards to the east of the 1910 limits was also platted in 1919. These four comparatively insignificant plats were laid out before annexation, and three of them even straddled the existing city line (that is, the boundary of 1910). Two other plats to the southeast were recorded in 1919, but they are still outside the city of to-day, and are even yet virtually undeveloped.

On the south, two large plats were recorded in 1916, one in 1918, and one in 1919. Only one small parcel was platted south of Hemphill Road (which became the southern limit of the present-day city).

On the west, about three-fourths of the land which is platted to-day and which lies between the 1910 limits and the present-day boundary was platted and recorded before the 1920

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annexation.[3] The western boundary was so drawn, moreover, that very little of the land platted before 1920 was left out of the enlarged city.

It would seem from the foregoing analysis that the considerable economic activity in land before 1920 had a bearing on the annexation of 1920, and can even be considered an important cause of it. This activity in land, however, had not too much effect on the fixing of the exact place at which the new city boundary would be. Otherwise the city limits would have been moved farther to the northward than Carpenter Road, and not so far to the eastward.

A Financial History of Flint, 1913-1929

If it were possible to find a city which identically resembled Flint in the period from 1913 to 1929 except for one factor, growth in area, it would be possible to determine accurately the effect that the addition of the great mass of land in 1920 had on the city, or indeed whether it had any effect at all. Such a 'control' would be difficult to find. Yet an examination of the financial history of Flint from 1913 to 1929 yields a large group of data, some of which are directly pertinent to the subject-matter of this paper, and much of which are indirectly so.

The increase in both the revenue and operating expenses

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[3] Index, op. cit.

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TABLE 7

REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES

Year[a]	Revenue	Expenditure[b]
1913-14	$ 337,398.10	$ 189,078.09
1914-15	299,954.74	194,875.24
1915-16	346,546.61	229,855.59
1916-17	550,307.38	304,194.67
1917-18	767,712.45	469,408.73
1918-19	773,136.75	490,649.31
1919-20	1,301,783.59	670,150.81
1920-21	1,946,924.16	1,243,347.15
1921-22	2,110,129.06	1,217,473.50
1922-23	1,942,421.73	1,131,047.02
1923-24	2,191,739.47	1,371,737.64
1924-25	2,185,765.11	1,781,638.34
1925-26	2,289,744.46	1,451,556.65
1926-27	2,764,461.85	1,585,451.65
1927-28	2,595,792.97	
1928-29	2,883,732.41	
1929-30	3,046,741.70	

[a] Fiscal year beginning March 1 and ending the last day of February.

[b] Debt service not included.

Source: Financial Reports of the various years, Flint city archives, Flint, Mich.

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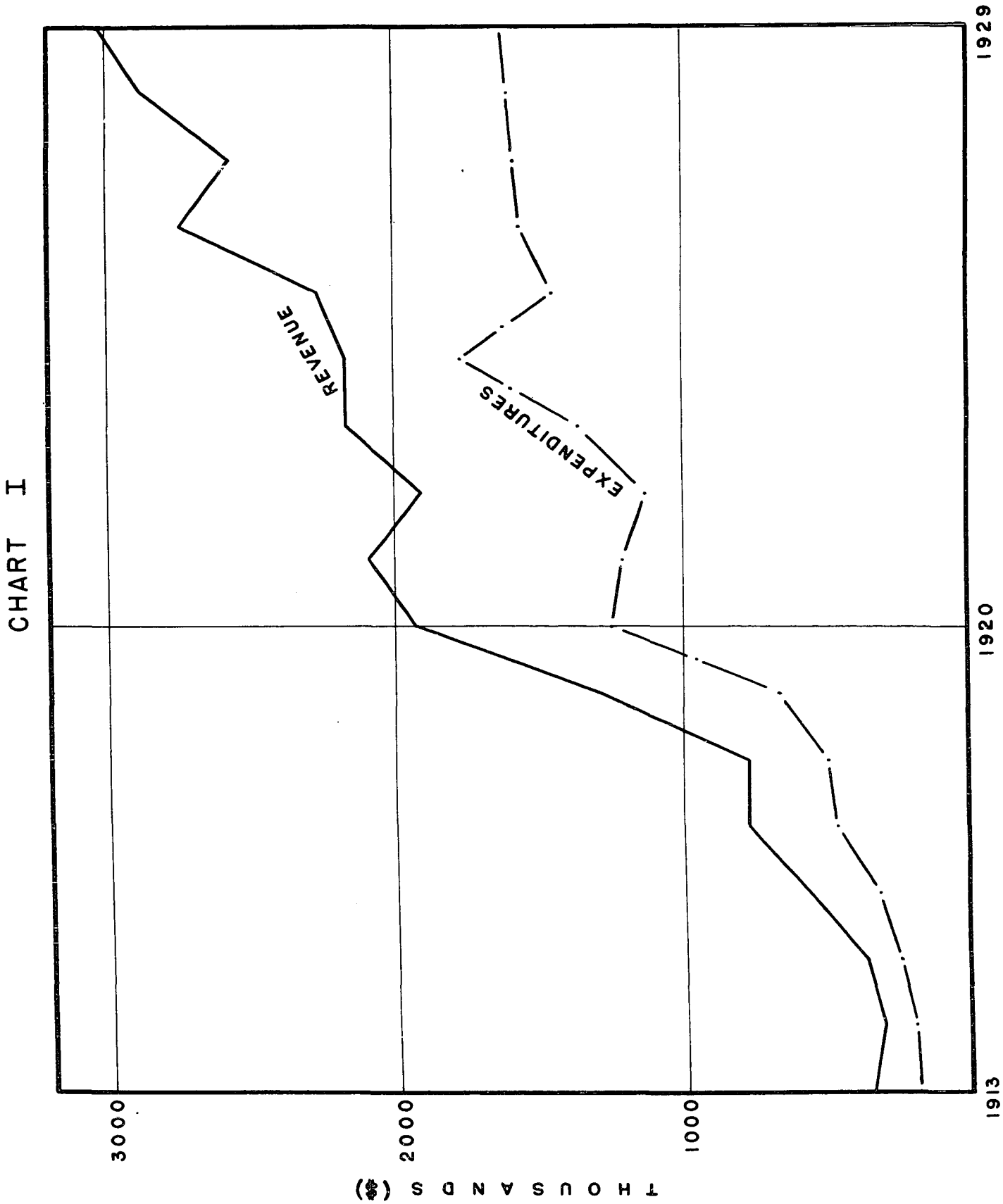
of the city during the period was very great.[4] Since the population increased from about 47,000 to 147,000, a jump of over 300 percent in the interval, such a fact is not surprising. Although both per capita expenditures and per capita revenues increased, and thus it progressively cost more per individual to run the city government, it was nevertheless possible for the city to meet those increased costs. Chart I, indeed, shows a widening margin of error through the years--a greater absolute distance between the revenue and cost curves. This distance, for the most part, represents the increasing cost of debt service which stemmed from the rapidly accumulating bonded debt.

An interesting fact is revealed by Chart II, which is drawn on a semi-logarithmic scale to show rate of change. The rate of increase in both revenue and expenditures is much greater before 1920 than after. Previous to 1920 each budget was larger than its immediate predecessor often by as much as fifty percent--a vast annual increase, and one that undoubtedly gave rise to serious problems in taxation and finance. After 1920, in spite of the fact that the rate of increase in population was nearly the same as before and regardless of the city's more than doubling in area, the curves tended to flatten out. In fact, after 1920, population, municipal revenue, and municipal expenditures increased in

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[4] See Chart I, p. 64; also Appendix II, "Assessed Valuation and Tax Rates."

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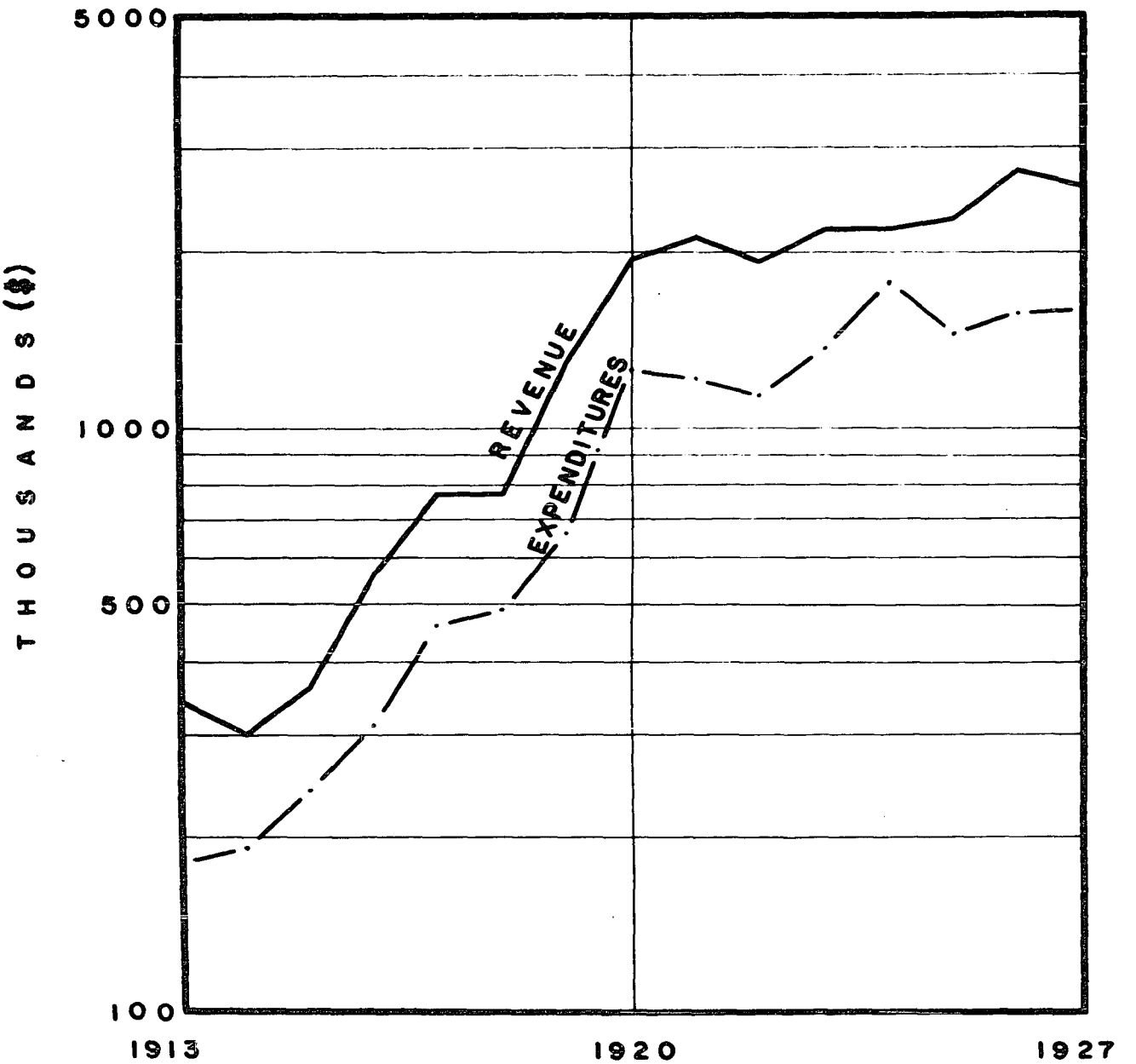
REVENUE AND OPERATING EXPENDITURES

SOURCE: CITY ARCHIVES, FLINT, MICH.

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CHART II

REVENUE AND OPERATING EXPENDITURES



SOURCE: CITY ARCHIVES, FLINT, MICH.

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almost exactly the same ratio.

A breakdown of city expenditures for each function or department that could be traced through the changing financial records covering the years 1913 to 1929 shows that each activity of the city responded in its own peculiar way to the pressures of the era. The ratio of increase of street lighting expense was remarkably similar to the rate of change of population, but the curve of that one activity was the only one which corresponded at all with the population curve.

A very good idea of the effect of the period on varying types of activities can be given by showing the expenditures for each activity at the beginning of the period, March 1, 1913 to February 28, 1914, and at the end: March 1, 1929 to February 28, 1930:

TABLE 8

EXPENDITURES, VARIOUS ACTIVITIES, 1913 AND 1929

Activity	1913	1929
Fire Department	$43,748.89	$387,167.86
Police Department	25,480.94	497,500.65
Garbage Collection	22,916.74 (in 1917)	101,462.21
Street Lighting	16,894.62	101,053.56
City Clerk's Office	6,623.26	11,855.42
Health Department	4,824.49	75,914.40
City Assessor's Office	2,197.57	44,440.59
Building Inspection	252.95	19,363.03

Source: Financial Reports of the Various Years, Flint City archives, Flint, Mich.

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The data in Table 8 sharply illustrate the maturation process that was almost entirely encompassed within the limits of a sixteen-year period.

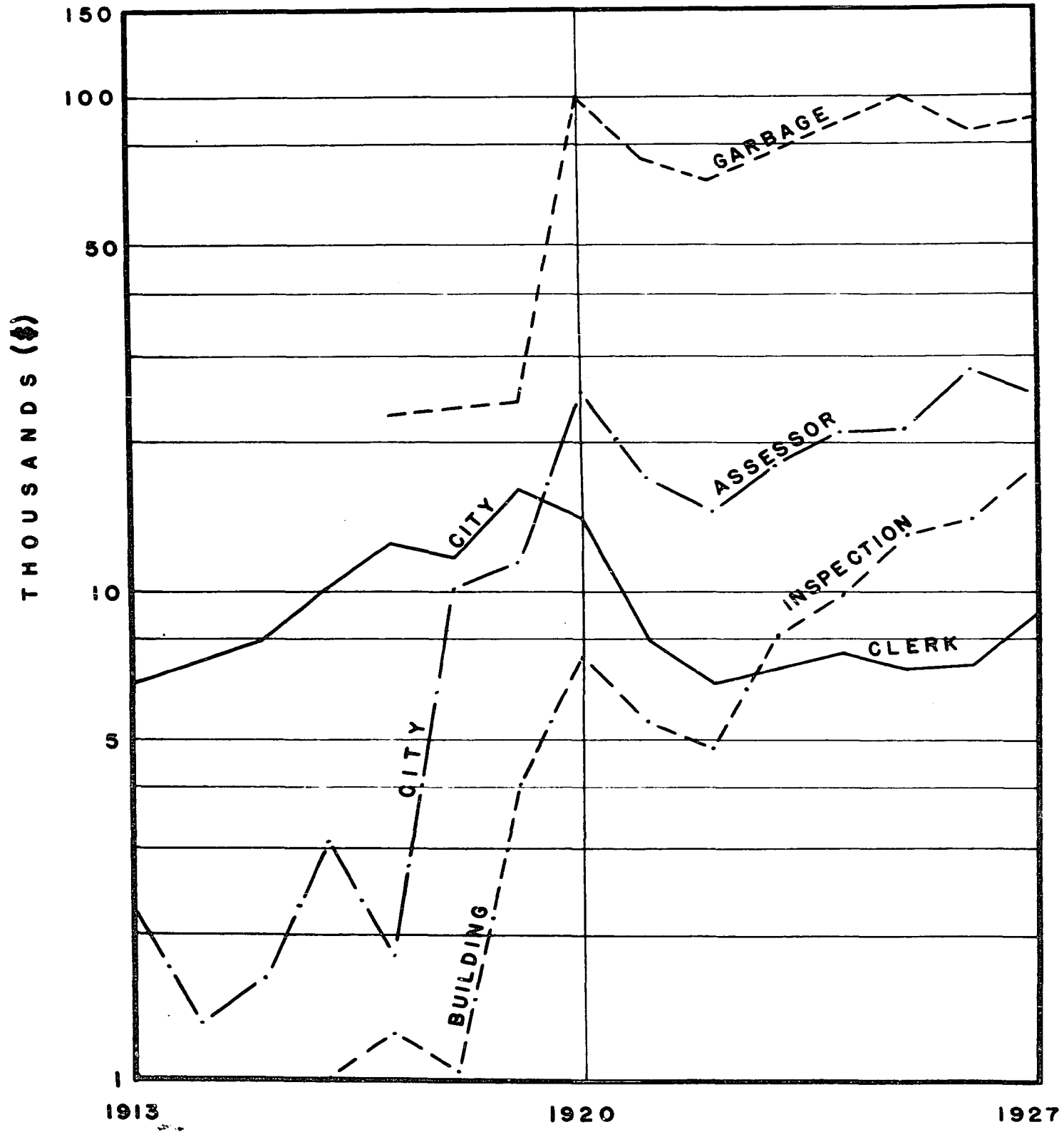
In order to determine rate of change in the expenditures on these activities, Charts III and IV were constructed. It can be noticed from Chart III that the rate of growth curves for the functions of assessing and building inspection closely parallel one another, and their rate of decline from 1920 through 1922 is almost identical. During the years 1918, 1919, 1920 each activity showed abrupt increases. After the peak of 1920, however, there was a sharp falling-off, and this may indicate that the excessive optimism of the period was being deflated. On the other hand, the very definite peaks in 1920 (that is, in the fiscal year, March 1, 1920 to February 28, 1921) would indicate that heavy work loads were thrown on both the assessor and building inspector by the annexation of 1920.

No funds were budgeted for garbage and refuse collection before 1917. The 1919 budget was relatively modest, but in the next year it had quadrupled. What caused this spectacular growth? It could have been the sudden realization by the city council that here was a municipal function that was as essential to the public health, safety and welfare as police and fire protection. Indeed, if we accept the hypothesis that sometime in the 1913-1929 period Flint became a metropolis, instead of a county-seat town, we might use the waste-collection

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CHART III

OPERATING COSTS OF SELECTED ACTIVITIES



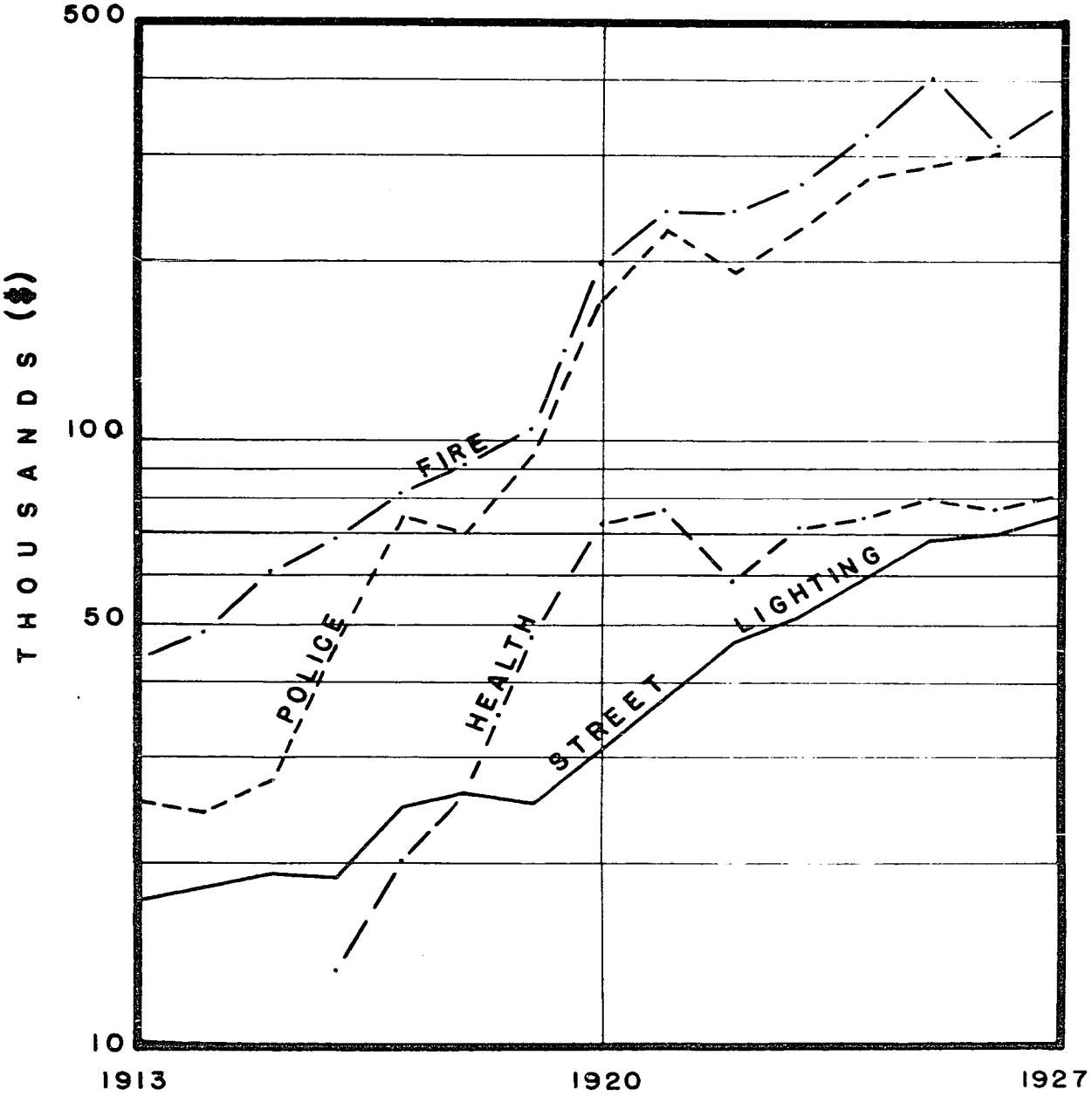
SEMI-LOGARITHMIC SCALE

SOURCE: DATA ON FILE, FLINT CITY ARCHIVES.

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CHART IV

OPERATING COSTS OF SELECTED ACTIVITIES



SEMI-LOGARITHMIC SCALE

SOURCE: DATA ON FILE, FLINT CITY ARCHIVES

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curve as indicative of the time span in which that metamorphosis occurred!

The health curve (Chart IV) also shows a rapidly increasing interest in public sanitation. Public health has traditionally been given its proper emphasis by the city rather than the town. Thus we might ask whether the distinction between city and town cannot be made on the basis of the attitude toward public health and sanitation.

The rate of change curve for the city clerk's office in Chart III is an anomaly. Like the others, this curve tends to rise in the first part of the period, but the rate of growth is relatively smooth, and the curve throughout shows none of the sharp projections characteristic of the other curves (though the decline after 1919 is rather precipitous).

Police and fire expenditures (Chart IV) show a fairly consistent rise through the years, but the greatest rate of change occurred between the 1919 and the 1920 budgets. These figures illustrate what happened to personnel:

Police Department

Classification	1919	1920
Officers	$10,874.07	$27,477.94
Patrolmen	70,544.76	129,748.40

It seems, therefore, that annexation of land did cause proportionately greater expenditures for police and fire protection than might have been anticipated from the annual

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increases of former years. It is unlikely that any other factor, for example, could account for a threefold increase in the amount spent on officers' salaries in the police department, and a doubling of patrolmen's salaries.

Street lighting shows a rather consistent growth over the years, and its rate of change rather closely parallels that of population. Health expenditures rise very sharply through 1920, and then follow approximately the rate of increase in population.

The foregoing analysis seems to indicate that the addition of a large block of land to the city had certain effects on city finances, though apparently annexation does not affect all functions alike. The reaction of some activities was especially pronounced during the year in which annexation took place, and we can safely conclude that annexation causes an extraordinary financial load on the city during the year in which it takes place.

Comparisons With Other Cities

In Flint, annexation did not seem to affect materially the over-all rate of increase or decrease of the costs of the activities studied. It did, however, cause a definite reaction in the fiscal year, March 1, 1920-February 28, 1921 (the 'extraordinary financial load' mentioned above).

But what of other cities? Is there any basis on which comparability can be established between and among Flint and

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other cities?

Six cities grouped in or near the 50-100,000 bracket in 1913 approximately tripled in size in the next sixteen years. Flint was one of them.

TABLE 9

COMPARATIVE GROWTH OF SIX CITIES IN POPULATION

City	1913	1929
Knoxville	37,549	103,100
San Diego	46,685	140,300
Flint	46,933	147,200
Akron	77,624	253,300
Oklahoma City	78,600	174,100
Houston	89,721	283,400

Sources: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Financial Statistics of Cities Having a Population of Over 30,000: 1913 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1915), pp. 18-39.
Ibid.: 1929, pp. 84-85.

Although these six cities were comparable as far as rate of growth is concerned, their expansions geographically were as varied as the reasons that caused the population increases.

TABLE 10

EXPANSION IN AREA OF SIX CITIES

City	Acres	
	1913	1929
Knoxville	2,551.1	17,094.4
Akron	7,347.0	17,327.0

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TABLE 10 (Continued)

City	Acres	
	1913	1929
Flint	8,346.0	18,140.0
Houston	10,171.9	43,739.6
Oklahoma City	11,440.0	13,053.2
San Diego	47,323.1	59,843.4

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Financial Statistics of Cities Having a Population of Over 30,000: 1913 and 1929 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1915 and 1932).

With the rate of population growth reasonably similar for the six cities, it might be thought logical that governmental costs would increase similarly over the sixteen-year period. But no such thing happened. Although gross expenditures did increase, per capita costs for some cities actually declined. This occurred in spite of an increase in both area and population.

TABLE 11

PER CAPITA COSTS OF GOVERNMENT

City	1913	1929
Flint	$16.77	$36.32
Knoxville	20.31	26.92
Oklahoma City	23.30	17.92
Houston	36.04	26.72
Akron	40.03	28.15
San Diego	49.66	35.61

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, Financial Statistics of Cities Having a Population of Over 30,000: 1913 and 1929 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1915 and 1932).

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Of the six cities, only two showed an increase in per capita costs, which indicates that Flint was atypical. Indeed, it would seem from this data that there is very little connection, if any, between the acreage included within the city boundaries and the costs of city government. San Diego, which was scattered 'all over the map' in 1913, had an exceedingly high per capita cost of city government, and yet it added more land in the ensuing sixteen years, and managed to reduce per capita costs of government. It can hardly be said, therefore, that the addition of territory is either advantageous or disadvantageous from the financial point of view. During this sixteen-year period some cities were able to handle large areas of vacant or thinly settled land without getting into too much difficulty financially.

That size per se (that acreage, geographical area, or whatever you wish) is not costly to a city is a proposition that certainly has not been substantiated beyond all doubt by this paper. Yet it has sufficient factual basis to merit its treatment as something more than a mere hypothesis.

The Accumulated Bonded Debt, 1913-1929

On the 28th of February, 1913 Flint government (exclusive of the schools) was less than one million dollars in debt:

General Obligation Bonds	$149,000.00
Water Bonds	667,500.00
Special Assessment Bonds	79,151.59

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By the 30th of June, 1930 the debt was more than thirteen million dollars;[5]

General Obligation Bonds	$7,029,500.00
Water Bonds	2,934,500.00
Special Assessment Bonds	3,380,548.85

In order to show how this debt was accumulated, the year-by-year issues and the reasons for them are given in Table 12. From this table, as well as from Chart V, which follows, it can be seen that from March 1, 1920 to February 28, 1921 the general obligation debt rose sharply. In that one year the general obligation debt rose from $1,854,300 to $4,056,900. The money raised during this year was spent largely on sewers, paving of streets, construction of a dam, and park extensions. Yet all of the amount was issued on March 15, 1920, several weeks before the annexation of 1920 was approved, and thus it would be difficult to establish any connection between this drastic leap in the public debt and the annexation of new territory. It is not at all improbable that had annexation never been thought of, the same projects would have been carried out.

For two years after annexation the debt curve flattened out, and then it began to mount rapidly again. But it was the special assessment debt that best illustrates the psychology of the times. Having stayed around a half-million

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[5] Office of the Director of Finance, Flint, Michigan. Data on file with the Director.

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TABLE 12

BONDS ISSUED ANNUALLY[a]

Year[b]	Amount	Purpose
1911	$ 400,000.00	Water extensions
1912	(none)	
1913	141,768.75	Parks, sewers, paving
1914	224,952.24	Storm sewers, paving, street improvement, voting machine
1915	221,700.33	Paving, sewers, street improvement
1916	617,827.65	Sewer, paving, water
1917	401,590.00	" "
1918	339,096.00	Water, storm & san. sewers, paving
1919	720,100.00	Paving, sewers, water, market building, parks, street improvement, fire station, garbage disposal
1920	2,966,500.00	Paving, san. & storm sewers, Hamilton Dam, garage, parks, water works improvement
1921	202,500.00	Water, fire station
1922	150,000.00	Water improvement
1923	2,376,725.00	Sewers, paving, fire station, bridge, comfort station, armory, intersections
1924	1,619,000.00	Hospital, sewers, sewage disposal, water ext.
1925 & 1926	522,000.00	Sewage disposal
1927 & 1928	955,000.00	Hospital
1929	950,000.00	General Obligation Bonds

[a] Excluding special assessment issues.

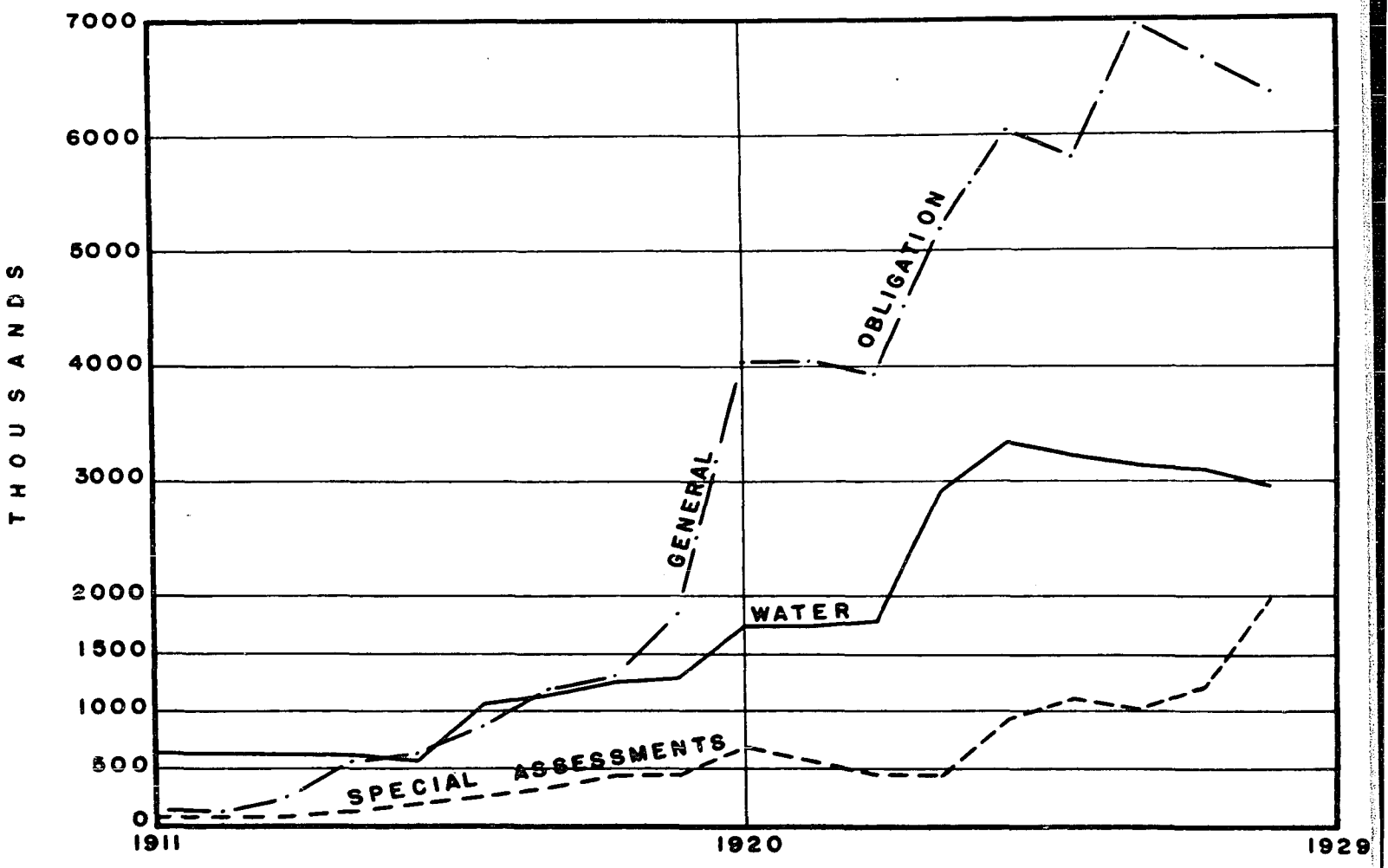
[b] Calendar year.

Source: Office of the Finance Director, Flint, Michigan: data on file.

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CHART V

BONDED DEBT



SOURCE: CITY ARCHIVES, FLINT, MICHIGAN.

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dollars for several years before and after annexation, it almost doubled in the fiscal year ending February 28, 1925. Thereafter it was consistently above the million-dollar mark. By June 30, 1930 more than three million dollars in special assessment obligations were outstanding.

This alarming tendency did not go unobserved. On March 25, 1929, in his annual report, the city auditor, Carl H. Chatters, warned against the rapid increase in special assessment indebtedness:

> Special assessments totaling $2,822,878.08 were levied during the 1928 fiscal year. Due to the fact that most of these were paving taxes payable in ten installments, the amount of deferred assessments to become due in future years increased from $1,240,576.26 to $2,672,278.77. It should be borne in mind that this amount represents a burden on the taxpayers of the city to be paid in future years in addition to their advalorem taxes. Officials of the city have taken the attitude that special assessments should be granted wherever it is possible to make the improvements. There may be some danger in this policy if assessments are made against property having a low value, because if the owners will not pay the taxes, the tax title buyers may not take them, and the tax will remain unpaid, even after the tax sale.* Investigation shows that after the 1925 tax sale, more than $9,000.00 of special assessments were not purchased at the tax sale, mostly because they were large assessments against vacant lots. When a special assessment is petitioned for, it would seem advisable for the council to investigate the ability and desire of the people to be assessed to pay for the improvement. [Emphasis the auditor's.] Such a policy would tend to reduce the amount of uncollected special assessments and might save the city much money in future years.[6]

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* This exact situation was widespread during the 1930's.

[6] City Auditor of Flint, Michigan, Annual Report, 1928-29 (Office of the Director of Finance, Flint, Michigan, 1929), p. 2.

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In April of 1930, Chatters recommended to the city commission of Flint that four assessment rolls approved by a previous commission be cancelled. He stated then that the entire special assessment program must be curtailed, because of the high rate of default in the previous two years. From 1927 to 1930, about two million dollars in special assessments had been levied each year, a total levy of about six million dollars.[7]

TABLE 13

UNPAID SPECIAL ASSESSMENTS IN FLINT, MICHIGAN

Type of Assessment	Percentage Unpaid	
	1929 Levy	All Previous Levies
Pavement	18.3	25.7
Water Mains	35.9	56.4
Sanitary Sewers	39.2	49.7
Gravel Roads	49.4	47.1

Source: The Flint Daily Journal, April 25, 1930.

In 1940 it was estimated that there were 19,791 vacant parcels serviced by both water and sewers, and 3219 more serviced by one or the other. At $2.00 per running foot, a minimum of $1,700,000 was invested in these lots in water and sewer facilities. Sidewalks and streets accounted for almost as much and thus the unused investment in vacant lots ran past three million dollars. Forty-one percent of the

[7] The Flint Daily Journal, April 25, 1930.

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19,791 vacant lots with water and sewer were delinquent on taxes prior to 1935, and in addition, the city had taken $623,000 out of the general fund to pay for defaults on special assessments.[8]

The Effect on the Water Utility

In 1913 the bonds outstanding against the water system represented about two-thirds of the city's bonded indebtedness. Throughout the ensuing sixteen-year period the increase was fairly gradual, much more gradual than for the general obligation debt, except for the fiscal year ending in February, 1924, when more than a million dollars in bonds were authorized for the water system and actually issued during the year. Coming approximately three years after the annexation, this expansion might have been caused by it, or at least partially so. Yet because these were revenue bonds, they did not represent a financial burden[9] to the city, except in so far as expanding the water system might to some extent have been uneconomic and have inhibited the continued financial well-being of the city.

At the end of the fiscal year February 28, 1925, the

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[8] Edmund N. Bacon, op. cit., p. 81.

[9] "Burden" here is used in its true sense. That a public debt is 'ipso facto' a burden is one of the greatest fallacies of popular political thinking. Just as it is rarely possible or even desirable for a private corporation to be debt free, so is it for a municipal corporation to be without bonded obligation.

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debt of the water system reached its apex. At that time it amounted to $3,316,500, and from that high point it has consistently fallen, even to the present day. In the more than twenty years since the apex was reached, the water debt has been reduced by more than three million dollars.

The water department of Flint has been on a paying basis and has shown an operating surplus during its entire history--this in spite of two wars, the relatively short depression of 1921-22; over-optimistic business expansion during the 1920's; and a major depression. It has shown a profit consistently, in spite of the fact that the city more than doubled in area and tripled in population. As a result of recurring surpluses the water department is in sound financial condition. The 1947-1948 annual statement of the Director of Finance shows departmental surplus and reserves amounting to $5,999,969.45.[10] It would be difficult, therefore, to conclude that the water utility--any more than the rest of the city government--was harmed by any of the developments during the 1913-1929 period which might be traced to the annexations of the time. The general environmental context of the period was one of expansiveness. Growth was the characteristic--economic growth on a comparatively vast scale. While annexation did not truly constitute a "city plan for a Greater Flint," it did have profound influence on the areas

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[10] City of Flint, Michigan, Report of the Division of Finance (July 1, 1947 to June 30, 1948), p. 46.

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annexed. The furnishing of municipal services and rudimentary controls caused a more concentrated development than would have occurred had there been no annexation. What is called 'urban sprawl' in Britain would have been much more in evidence in Flint to-day if there had been no annexation, or annexation of a less ambitious nature. In that sense, the annexation of 1920 was planning. It must be viewed, therefore, not in the light of what would be possible to-day in the handling of such an area, but what was possible then with the rudimentary controls and techniques that were available.

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CHAPTER V

AREAS SUITABLE FOR ANNEXATION

The Measure of Suitability

Four basic criteria of suitability should be used to determine whether an area is ready for annexation:[1]

(1) The area must be compact--

If the area is distended, elongated, or haphazardly pieced together, it inevitably presents unusual problems in the servicing of it.

(2) The area must be contiguous with the city--

(3) The area should ordinarily be populated--

This rule should not be taken as neglectful of the necessity, oftentimes, of annexing vacant lands in order to 'round out' the boundaries of the existing municipality, or in order to absorb land for parks, recreation areas, and outright control.

(4) The area should include a minimum of land that is devoted to non-urban uses--

Any extractive use may be defined as non-urban, but it is extensive farming that especially should be kept to a minimum, principally because of problems in taxing it equitably.

While these criteria are basic, it cannot be suggested that they are the only ones that should be used. The problem of determining suitable areas for annexation is not one merely of finding and demarking the area that is compact, contiguous with the city, and relatively densely settled, and that is used largely for urban purposes. The problem is also one of

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[1] See Appendix III for criteria used in Missouri, Virginia, and in England.

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anticipating population growth and suburban development. An area that is vacant to-day may within a decade be well along toward development as a residential or an industrial area. Where such an eventuality seems possible, it is the better part of wisdom to annex.

Even if an area seems about to develop in a certain way, however, it does not follow that the city should passively accept the "inevitable trend." If the area remains outside the city, little can be done about its development. Perhaps this particular area should not develop in the expected way. Perhaps it should be an industrial section rather than a residential one, or an area devoted to multiple-dwelling units rather than to one-family types. Perhaps much of the land should not be developed at all, but should remain as a potential recreation area, or as a buffer between radically different land uses.

At this point it is pertinent to examine into the nature of a city's expansion geographically. Is annexation merely an inconsequential legal technicality that follows along after the actual growth of the city, or is it potentially an effective instrument of control over municipal evolution? If the latter is true, merely to extend the city outward to include the heavily populated adjacent areas is not enough. If for no other reason than the control of land use, some underdeveloped and even undeveloped land should be included in annexation proposals.

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The negative, after-the-fact attitude toward annexation is not enough. Such an attitude, for example, now countenances the present population dispersion in the Flint fringe areas, even though this dispersion is undoubtedly against the best interests of the city, and even of the dwellers in the fringe. It is highly problematical whether extended fingers of population outward from the city along the main arteries of transportation is socially or economically desirable.

Another argument--and a rather telling one--against this negative attitude is found in the nature of the zoning laws. Although deriving from one of the most widely used and basic powers of the state--the police power--zoning is essentially negative in character. In the words of the economist, Conrad Hammer, zoning is "prohibitory rather than developmental," it is a method of control rather than one of development.[2] Thus when a city expands to include an area already in the advanced stages of development, zoning the area cannot eliminate non-conforming land uses.

Zoning can be made positive in nature if it is imposed at the beginning of an area's growth. Then the whole area can grow in conformance with the zoning laws. It is this characteristic of zoning that gives compelling strength to the proposition that annexation must of necessity include

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[2] Conrad Hammer, "Regulation or Development for the Missouri Ozarks," Journal of Land and Public Utility Economics, XVI (May, 1940), p. 163.

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lands that may at times be completely undeveloped. Controlling the development and use of its land is of exceeding importance to a city, and any effective instrument of control should be utilized.

Other Aspects of Suitability

In any annexation, the desires of the people involved in it cannot be ignored. The unfortunate consequences of requiring a popular mandate on annexations have already been discussed, but it does not follow, of course, that public opinion should be entirely ignored. If no one in the urban area wants annexation, there should be none. Moreover, if both the city and the fringe communities want annexation, no problem exists, for under any kind of statute the extension of the boundaries can be effected. The problem arises when one area desires the amalgamation and the other does not, and this situation is typical. Under these circumstances, administrative adjudication is much more to be desired than the electoral process. Before an impartial arbiter the various facts of annexation and the numerous shadings of public opinion can be weighed, and a decision fair to the entire community can be given.

The artificiality of the political boundaries of a city is often too apparent, and annexation should be viewed as a means of making the political and the "natural" city coincide. That a line of demarcation which cuts through (or

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cuts in two) a continually built up area is an administrative inconvenience is usually admitted, and yet it is almost universally tolerated in this country. A sufficient number of people cross the lines dividing any metropolitan city from its fringe areas to obliterate any markings save those traced indelibly in the statute books. The story has been told and retold of the countless thousands who daily work in the city, leave it to go home for their evening meal, and then return to it for their evening's recreation. These people have a sort of dual "nationality," as it were--they are literally political schizophrenics.[3]

The political boundary may often exclude not only people and dwellings that are a part of the natural city, but also factories and workshops, and warehouses and foundries; all the essentials and the paraphernalia of industry. The industry in the fringe area is usually dependent on the city for its market (or some of it), for its working force and its financing. Often it is an integral part of the city economically and socially. Annexation, when used rationally, can be a means of bringing together the various parts of a single mechanism.

One other criterion of suitability must certainly be

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[3] Many of the fringe areas of a city look like the results of a "wild, disorganized outbreak of energy," a phrase used by Dr. Robert W. White in describing a form of schizophrenia. The Abnormal Personality (New York: The Ronald Press Co., 1948), p. 525.

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used: Can an improvement in government be antitipated if the political units are joined?

This question cannot, of course, be answered categorically, but some observations can be made. In the fringe sections surrounding Flint the needs of urban neighborhoods are met--if indeed they are met at all--by volunteer organizations, commercial enterprises, and rural governments. That moribund and most ineffective of all local governments, the township, serves as the primary unit of government for the metropolitan area that lies outside the limits of Flint. In contrast, the city of Flint operates under the council-manager form of government. The township areas have no zoning ordinances, no planning commissions, no adequate fire protection, or sewage system. Not many would disagree that annexation can in such a case as this raise the level of governmental services in the fringe areas.

The Annexation of Underdeveloped Lands

Even the negative attitude toward annexation must allow the inclusion of some vacant lands within newly annexed areas. It would be almost impossible to annex land without including underdeveloped areas. On the grounds of compactness and contiguousness alone the new city boundaries should not follow too closely the lines of existing population development. Otherwise, the boundary would become so irregular as to be ludicrous--the very opposite of the compact and contiguous.

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Thus the real problem is not whether to annex underdeveloped land, but rather how much of such land should be annexed. Since it is patently illogical to follow too closely the lines of population development, or development of any other kind, an element of subjectivity immediately appears.

Just what combination of developed and underdeveloped lands should be included in annexation proposals? Some help in answering this question might be had from the historical study made above of Flint's growth in area since its incorporation as a city. With the possible exception of the minor annexation of 1919 (when the Civic Park area was incorporated into the city), there has never been in Flint too much attention given to drawing new city boundaries to conform closely to newly populated areas in the outskirts. In a preceding chapter it was shown that the correlation between activity in land and the extension of boundaries was not so close as might have been expected. Indeed about the only generalization that can be made about the expansion of Flint during the past ninety-odd years is that the expansion has been in the direction of population growth. Whether by accident or design, however, compactness and contiguousness were followed as inviolable rules. Almost no attention was paid to population density.

The sweeping annexation of 1920 ignored completely such special aspects of population as density and direction of movement. The city was growing by leaps and bounds, the mood

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of the city was expansive, and annexation resulted.

In 1920 the city expanded fairly evenly in all directions. Much unused land was included and the greater part of the vacant lots and raw land of the present-day city is in the territory annexed in 1920. Later in this paper the question whether this unused land is financially or administratively burdensome to the city shall be considered.

At the present time there are approximately 20,000 "vacant" lots and 2,764 acres of raw land in the city.[4] The greater part of this vacant area lies in the wide belt of territory annexed in 1920. Much of it will probably never be used for residential purposes.[5]

The preceding facts indicate that in the past expansions of Flint there was no hesitancy in including underdeveloped lands. Ample historical justification exists, therefore, for including vacant lands in annexations of 1949 or subsequent years.

Cannot the fact that there is a large amount of vacant lots and acreage presently in the city be used as an argument against annexation? It has been estimated that approximately 76,000 individuals could be accommodated on the vacant lots alone. But what constitutes vacancy? If a householder owns

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[4] Noland Rall Heiden, Flint City: A Study in Population Distribution (unpublished ms, Metropolitan Community Seminar, University of Michigan, June, 1947), pp. 41-42.

[5] Ibid., p. 41.

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a parcel of land adjoining his improved lot and he will not sell it at twice the 'going' market price, can that lot be considered vacant? And what of "dead" land--land that might never be utilized for any purpose, private or public? It is highly doubtful whether careful analysis of land availability in Flint would reveal that there is plenty of land for development, at least for residential purposes. Most of the builders in Flint to-day find it exceedingly difficult to accumulate sufficient lots to allow for the most economical building.[6]

Regardless of the amount of vacant land in the city, the one overwhelming fact remains that during the past two decades, the outskirts of the city--the fringe areas--have grown significantly. Not the city itself. Artificial political boundaries separate and divide continuously built-up areas. In the past this situation could not have occurred. The dispersion of population alone would have been ample justification for extending the political boundaries of the city.

Areas Ready for Annexation

The thesis that mere population density must be the single compelling factor in the determination of areas ready for annexation was rather lengthily discounted in the preceding

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[6] Thomas Dinnel, Legislation and Building (unpublished ms, Metropolitan Community Seminar, University of Michigan, June, 1949).

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pages. If Flint would expand its limits one and one-half miles in all directions, it would absorb nearly all of the so-called fringe (see Map IV). A glance should be taken at this latter possibility.

Much of the land lying within one and one-half miles of the present boundary of the city is in a transitional stage. None of it can escape the economic effects of the nearness of a large and economically vigorous community. Even the land which is still farmed cannot be regarded as deriving its value solely from its agricultural productivity, especially if it is connected with the city by a hard-surface road. Much of the land value in the one and one-half mile belt is situation value--value that the land derives from its closeness to the city. Since its value is to such an extent produced not by geological factors, not by individual endeavor, but by the community as a whole, it should be thought of as urban land and treated as such.

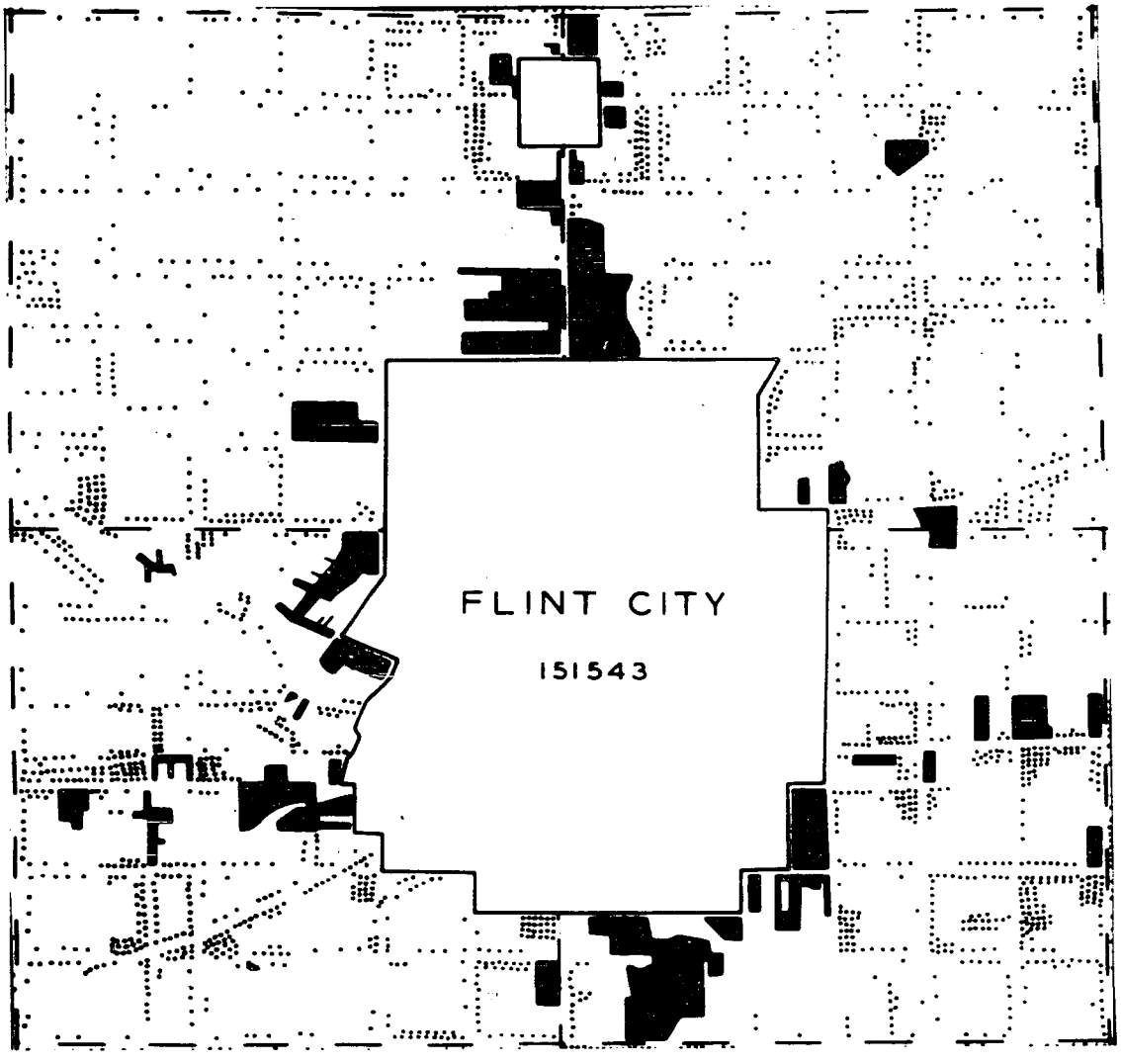
At the present time the city has only limited power over the outlying section, even though in everything but name it is a part of the city. Nominally the city may control the lay-out of streets and alleys for three miles beyond the city limits.[7] This power, if it could be utilized, might have considerable influence on the evolution of the section.

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[7] City Charter of Flint, sec. 4; also see Michigan Statutes Annotated (1936), sec. 5.2081.

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MAP IV



POPULATION DISTRIBUTION IN FLINT FRINGE

Source: N. R. Heiden, "Flint City: A Study In Population Distribution" (U. of Mich., 1947).

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But this power has never been utilized and it is doubtful at least that the city would have any means of enforcement even if it attempted to impose a street plan on the surrounding region.

Proper development of the area means that zoning and health regulations should be applied, that sewage, water, garbage disposal, street and drain facilities constructed in accordance with the master plan of the area. It means that police and fire protection, and building inspection, should be extended and applied more effectively than they are by the rural governments. Indeed, the fringe sections need any one of these services sufficiently to warrant annexation.

This entire area is logically suitable for development into small acreages and business and industrial sites. Further subdividing must be severely restricted if spotty development with all its manifold problems is to be obviated. Whatever new subdividing is allowed should provide for large lots and should lie close to other subdivisions in order to allow the inhabitants eventually to reap some of the advantages of urban living other than mere closeness to the city. Present helter-skelter growth of the belt is not in the best interest of either the city or the fringe area.

For the purposes of this study, and in order to minimize subjective factors as much as possible, the only areas that are expressly recommended for annexation are those which include the major communities in the fringe territory, plus

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a certain amount of contiguous area. Thus the boundaries of the areas singled out for annexation have for their cores the communities in the fringe which are already well along the way to maturity.

The fringe area consists of clusters of population encircling the city. These clusters are in fact a part of the city--a fact that has already been emphasized in this paper--yet legally they are separate and distinct. They constitute the greater part of the population of the four surrounding townships, but in lying close to the city they occupy a relatively small portion of the land area of the townships.

Area I

To the south of the city in both Flint and Burton townships is a thickly populated area. It extends southward in finger-like projections from the city limits to Maple Road (the southern boundary of both townships), and even somewhat beyond. Area I begins on the west at Torrey Road and on the south at Maple Road. The east line runs north from Maple Road along Dort Highway to Bristol Road; east along Bristol to Center Road, and then north along Center Road to the present city limits.

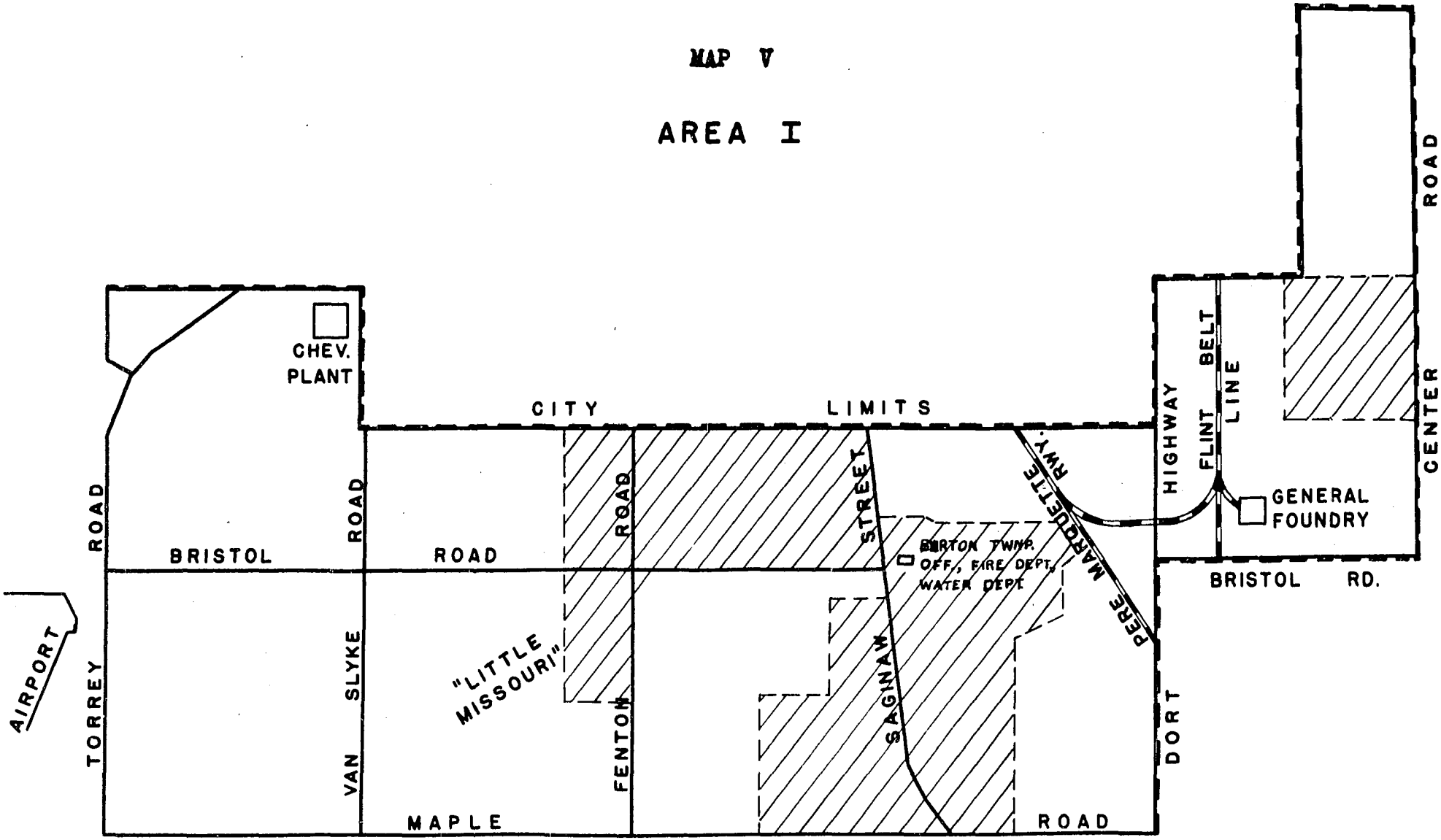
This area has at present no sanitary sewers except for a few Flint sewers which connect with homes just outside the corporate limits (215 such homes receive sewer and water

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MAP V

AREA I



SCALE
1 MILE

SOURCE: BASE MAPS OF FLINT AREA, AND MAP OF PLATTED AREAS, REGISTER OF DEEDS, GENESEE COUNTY, MICHIGAN.

BUILT-UP OR PLATTED

service from the city).[8] In the Burton township section, however, there is a water department which services approximately 1400 homes and other establishments.[9] There is no reason why most of the area, which is sufficiently settled to warrant it, could not be piped for water and sewers.

Area I is approximately seven square miles in area. The population can be fairly accurately determined. The heart of the area was demarcated by the Bureau of the Census in 1940 as census tract G-13. At that time this tract included 5285 people. Interpolations from adjacent census tracts give a rough figure of 1300 for the remainder of the area. We can safely conclude, therefore, that the population of Area I in 1940 was about 6500 people.

The population in 1949 can be determined with some accuracy by using the school census.[10] The number of children in the 0-19 age group equals approximately 4400 (this number cannot be completely accurate, since the school districts do not correspond exactly to Area I). According to the 1940 federal census the ratio of the 0-19 age group to the remainder of the population in the area was that of 1:2.2. Simple multiplication, therefore, gives us a

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[8] I. Harding Hughes, Local Government in the Fringe Area of Flint, Michigan (mimeographed, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, July, 1947), pp. 35 & 37.

[9] Ibid., p. 35.

[10] Office of the Genesee County School Commissioner, Flint, Michigan; census data as of May 31, 1948.

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population figure of 9680 for Area I.

Area I is compact and fairly homogeneous. There are few expensive homes and few that could be called substandard. While it is beyond the scope of this paper to attempt an extensive social and economic description of the area, a description of two sections can be given briefly.

The Fentonlawn and Romayne Heights neighborhoods lie within a mile of the southern limits of Flint along Fenton Road (U.S.-Michigan Highway Number 23) and are commonly known as "Little Missouri." When Walter Firey studied the section in 1946, he found that most of the residents came from Missouri and Arkansas, and from northern Michigan.[11] The neighborhoods are platted into small, inexpensive lots (typically 50 by 100 feet in size) and the dwellings on them are low-priced. There is no running water. The Burton water district is virtually across the highway (Fenton Road), but a township line is in between. There are, of course, no sewers, and where there are septic tanks, the lots are too small for their effective management. Living in these neighborhoods is not unlike it was in a small city at the turn of the century, when a pitcher pump in the kitchen was a modern convenience. Bus transportation to the city is good, but Firey writes that people complain of congestion in the neighborhood.

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[11] Walter Firey, Social Aspects to Land Use Planning in the Country-City Fringe: The Case of Flint, Michigan, Special Bulletin 339 (East Lansing: Michigan State College, 1946), p. 52.

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Any part of Area I could be serviced by the city with all the normal city services, from running water to street lighting, although the major improvements would, of course, have to be made by special assessment taxation. Since the area includes the new Chevrolet plant, it is possible that because of a good tax income and increased state subventions, it would never become a financial burden to the city.

Some raw land must of necessity be included in the area, but since it lies close to the city and since its development into urban uses is already proceeding, there seems to be no logic in excluding it. Moreover, the importance of having the area as compact as possible and as regular in outline would indicate that a certain minimum of raw land is necessary to round it out.

Area II

The population of Flint has had an almost century-old tendency to extend to the northward along each side of Saginaw Road.[12] That the northern trend has been stronger than the southern is indicated by the fact that settlement has extended farther north than south from the pivotal point of the city of 1855--the spot where the Saginaw road crossed the Flint River. Time and again the city boundary has been extended to absorb the projection of settlements--until all expansion was stopped by the change in community psychology

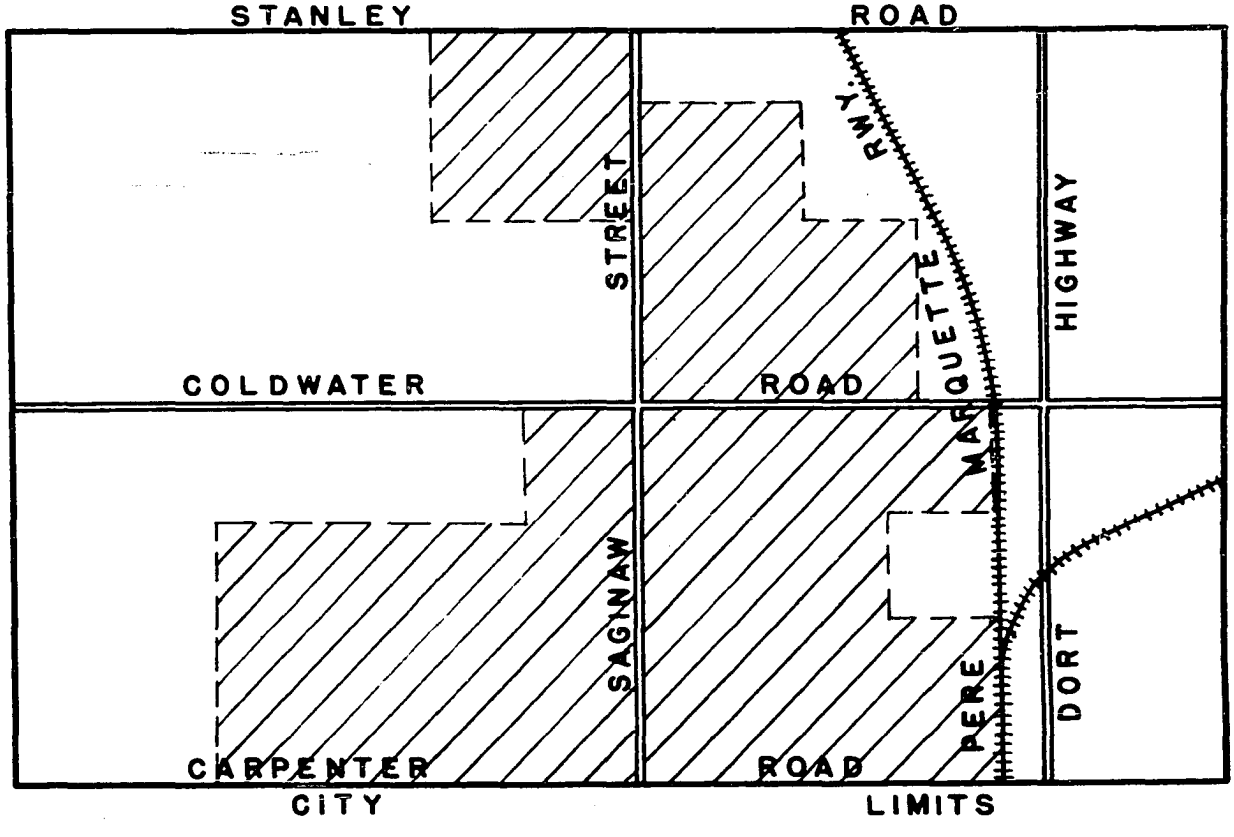
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[12] Heiden, op. cit., p. 32.

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MAP VI

AREA II



SCALE
1 MILE

BUILT-UP AND/OR PLATTED AREAS

SOURCE: BASE MAPS OF FLINT AREA, AND MAP OF PLATTED AREAS, REGISTER OF DEEDS, GENESEE COUNTY, MICHIGAN.

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after 1920.

In a preceding chapter the economic activity in land that went on in the north before the annexation of 1920 was described. A substantial portion of a two-square-mile area immediately north of Carpenter Road (the present city limits) was platted and the plats recorded before the approval of the annexation in April, 1920. From the standpoint of platting activity there was no reason for the exclusion of this area. There is even less reason for its remaining outside the city now.

Area II, as defined by this study, includes this section (that is, the one left out of the city in 1920, and some additional territory). The area stretches one and one-half miles to either side of Saginaw Road and ends on the north at Stanley Road, about two miles north of the present city limits. This addition would put the city of Flint within a half mile of the small city of Mt. Morris.

Area II, therefore, is six square miles in extent. It includes a goodly portion of the population of census tracts G-3 and G-22, and we can safely assume that its population in 1940 was roughly 5500 people. By means of the enumeration of the school children in Beecher Fractional School District No. 2, the number of persons in the 0-19 age group can be determined: 3721. Using the ratio of 1:2.2, we obtain the computed population of Area II: 8186.

Except for the sewer extensions from Flint, explained

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in connection with Area I, there is no sanitary sewer service available to the residents of this area. The area, however, is serviced by the water system operated by the Beecher Metropolitan District.[13] This governmental authority has the power to lay sanitary sewers throughout the area, but in the ten years of its existence no sewers have been laid.

Were Area II to be annexed to Flint, the city would extend to within one-half mile of the corporate limits of Mount Morris, and the Beecher Metropolitan District and parts of Mount Morris and Genesee townships would be absorbed.

The question immediately arises here--What is to happen to the area between the two cities? Is it to continue in its present status, partially serviced by the 'metropolitan' district, and yet for all that, still a sort of No Man's Land between the two cities? There have been numerous examples of an area of this sort developing to the disadvantage of the adjacent cities. Eventual annexation might be a solution, or if it could be controlled by the county or state, the area might never present a problem.

Area II has more than one thousand people per square mile, but they are not distributed evenly over the section. The area is divided evenly between two townships, which makes it more than ever essential that there be a unifying government. On the other hand, the Beecher Metropolitan District

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[13] Hughes, op. cit., p. 23. The Federal government paid for forty-five percent of the cost of installing this system.

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acts as a unifying agent for some of Area II, and is actually empowered under the statutes to act much more decisively than it now does. In addition to water service, it can supply parks, sewage disposal and drainage systems, and transportation.[14]

The Beecher district is called "metropolitan" because it unites sections of two townships under one authority. It is, of course, only a poor approximation of a metropolitan authority. Most of its power is but legal fiction, since it is a cold fact of economics that it cannot possibly do all that it is legally empowered to do. Indeed, it is probable that it could never have developed its present water system if the Federal government had not paid almost half the bill.

The existence of the Beecher Metropolitan District should not be viewed as a deterrent to annexation. Its very inadequacy should, on the contrary, be additional argument that the urban services which Area II needs can only be obtained by joining forces with the city.

Area II is an urban district. Whatever part of it is not heavily settled needs still to be included if for no other reason than compactness. Continued growth of Flint will necessitate utilization of much of the vacant area. The governments that now service the area--the county and township governments, and the Beecher district--supply almost

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[14] Michigan Constitution, VIII, 31; Michigan Statutes Annotated (1949), sec. 5.2131.

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none of the needed urban services. Even if the Beecher district could eventually be depended upon to supply the services it is legally empowered to offer, there would still remain the other essentials, fire and police protection, zoning and health regulations, building inspection, streets, sidewalks, garbage and waste disposal.

Area III

This area is in many respects the most interesting of the three regions being considered in this chapter. It is also in many respects the one logically most ready for annexation.

Area III lies along the western side of the city. The north and south boundaries of the section are Carpenter Road and Lennon Road respectively, and the western boundary lies approximately one and one-half miles from the present city limits and roughly parallels it.

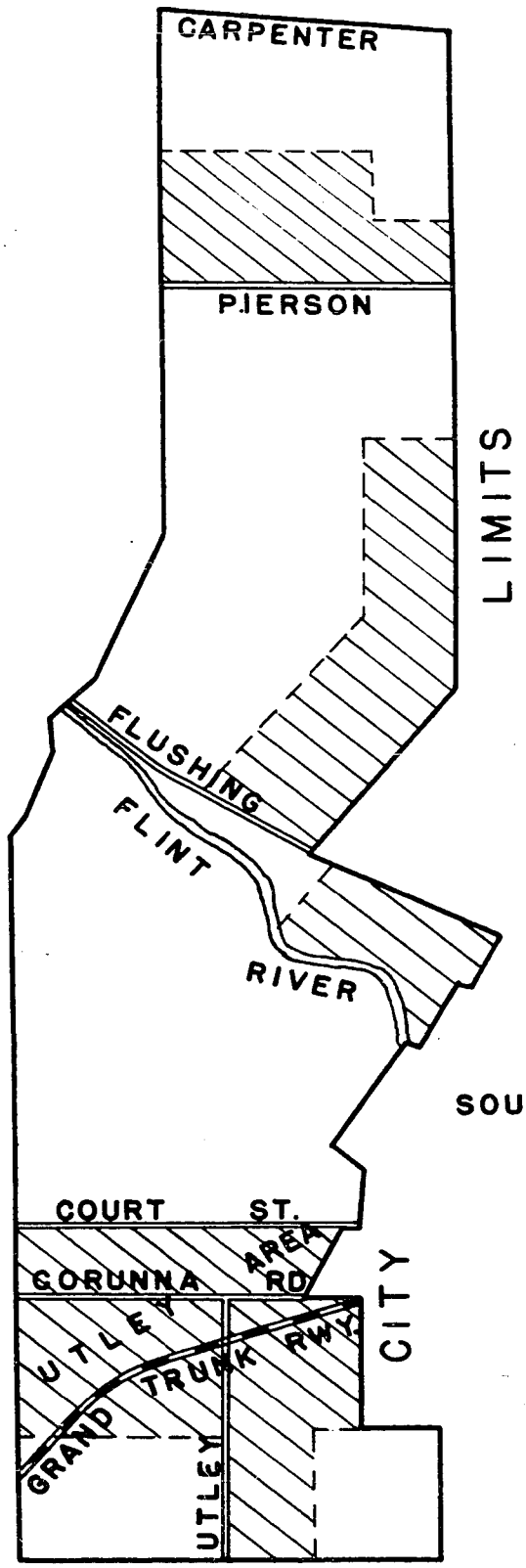
The area is about eight square miles in extent and includes portions of Flint and Mount Morris townships. Interpolations from the census tracts give a population figure for 1940 of 3500. Using the school census, we can obtain the approximate population figure of 4700 for 1949.

There is no sewage system in the entire length and breadth of this territory, and most of the water comes from shallow wells--wells that are either dug with pick and shovel, or that are driven (a pointed intake attached to a length of pipe and driven down to water-bearing sand).

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MAP VII

AREA III



SCALE
1 MILE

BUILT-UP OR PLATTED

SOURCE: BASE MAPS OF FLINT AREA, AND MAP OF PLATTED AREAS, REGISTER OF DEEDS, GENESEE COUNTY, MICHIGAN.

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Area II is the least densely populated of the three areas being considered for annexation in this paper, but there are still about 600 people per square mile. And indicative of its growing feeling of need for municipal services is the fact that the establishment of a water district in the area has been seriously considered.

That water system was to have included most of the Utley region, which covers the southernmost part of Area III, and if ever carried through, it will cost about one-quarter of a million dollars, in terms of present-day costs. Such a project, of course, would have economic consequences of definite advantage to the community. There would be an increase in property values, a stabilizing of the neighborhood, and for the first time in the life of the district, a possibility of adequate fire protection (since it is only from a pressure water system that such protection can ordinarily be obtained).

Yet there immediately arises the question of whether such a project undertaken independently of the city would be advisable. The cost of wells and standpipes would constitute a considerable added burden to the water consumers of the Utley district, or to any other district that sought to put in an independent system. No such largesse as the Federal government bestowed upon the Beecher district can be expected by other communities in the vicinity, at least within the next few years.

One and one-half miles north of the Utley community

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lies the Dayton Heights and Thornton section. In physical characteristics it is not unlike Utley. The homes are moderate- and low-priced structures, and there are no water and sewer facilities. Dayton Heights, which lies one-fourth of a mile from the city, was platted in February, 1920, just about two months before the annexation of that year was approved by the voters.[15] In this subdivision, no dwelling costing less than $3000 may be built.

The Thornton section was platted in 1917, and it joins the city on the west. In fact, a tiny slice of it was included in the 1920 annexation. The minimum cost of construction is $600, a figure that is truly ludicrous when measured against 1949 building costs. This restriction, if it can be called a restriction, does not prevent the basement dwellings and the other substandard abodes that are scattered around the neighborhood.

Any part of the built-up area represented by the Thornton and Dayton Heights subdivisions is within a half-mile of the city limits. According to Firey, much of the soil is ill-suited to intensive gardening, weeds plague the gardener, land is subject to spring floods, wells are costly and often so shallow that they are easily polluted by surface water. "Residents complain of dust from the roads, the lack of gas connections, ... and the lack of convenient

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[15] Office of the Register of Deeds, Index to Plats Filed, Genesee County, Michigan, Flint, Michigan.

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transportation to the city." On the other hand, the residents like "the fresh air, open yards, low taxes,[16] and the possibilities of finding security on their small acreages."[17]

Area III has not achieved the stability of the other two areas considered in the foregoing pages and thus needs badly the "protective custody" of the city. Because it is yet to be developed extensively, there exists here a rare opportunity for the city to achieve a notable success in land-use planning.

The three areas which we have set up as suitable for annexation do not necessarily represent the ideal arrangement, for there is no means of determining what an ideal arrangement would be. The areas do, however, represent the irreducible minimum--the smallest amount of territory that should be considered in any annexation proceeding.[18] It is doubtful if a lesser area (unless it were vacant land) could be taken in any more easily, given the present statutory requirements, than the ones recommended. If any substantial

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[16] According to the study of the fringe government of Flint by I. Harding Hughes, the property owner in this section actually paid in 1947 higher taxes than the comparable Flint property holder (a rate of 24 mills, as opposed to 20 in Flint). Hughes, op. cit., p. 28.

[17] Firey, op. cit., p. 27.

[18] A 1947 statute provides that uninhabited lands in a township may be annexed by the city council upon agreement of the township board if owners of one-half the land in the area petition for annexation. The Compiled Laws of the State of Michigan (1948), sec. 117.9.

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reduction in Areas I, II, and III were made, communities might arbitrarily be cut off from each other, compactness and contiguity could easily be forgotten, and the possibility of the dispersion of population ignored. In short, the new city boundary could easily become as artificial from the standpoint of sociology and economics as it is now.

Annexation of more territory than that included in Areas I, II, and III, on the other hand, could legitimately be considered. If properly handled, a large amount of vacant land in a city need not be a disadvantage, but fully to document this proposition, the distinction between the city as a legal entity and as a service institution must be clearly drawn.

In former annexations the material advantages accruing to both areas--the city and the added territory--were generally recognized. These advantages, and the inevitable disadvantages, will be discussed in a succeeding chapter.

The Concept of the Service Area

It has been cogently argued that a city should not expand into areas that are not thickly settled because it would then make itself responsible for expensive and uneconomic utility services--especially sewer and water services--and the other expensive facilities of modern city government. This position, it seems to me, arises out of the too hasty conclusion that the citizen can walk into the City Hall,

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present his demands, and have those demands promptly complied with. But few cities, and especially those cities in Michigan which operated under a 15-mill tax limitation, were in a position to move an iota outside the established routine of business. Flint had to economize so severely that even relatively insignificant special services to the property owners, such as taking out a curbing to permit the construction of a new driveway, required the charging of fees.[19]

Is not the freeholder who is now building a house on a rather isolated vacant lot within the city limits entitled to all the normal city services--water and sewer, police and fire protection, garbage collection, the repair and lighting of the street in front of his house, sidewalk construction and maintenance by the city--in short, all of the essential and incidental services supplied by his city government? Has he such legal rights that he can institute mandamus proceedings against city officials to compel them by judicial writ to service him? Or can he lay claim to the normal perquisites of the city dweller in some other fashion?

In Flint (and in most other cities--even those that are financially better off than Flint) the answers to these questions is no. The actual situation in the present-day city is that the greater part of the cost of installing new

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[19] Interview with Director Moss, Department of Public Works, Flint, Michigan, and Mr. Walker Johnson of the Public Works Department, March 24, 1948.

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sewers and water mains, paving streets, and laying sidewalks must be paid for from charges levied against the benefiting property owner (i.e., from the special assessment tax). In Flint sidewalks are laid and maintained by special assessment, and streets and sewers are constructed by the same method.

An excellent example of the way in which a rather large-scale public improvement is carried out within the city is to be found in a project which was initiated in January, 1948. The city planned a sanitary sewer development for Burton Park in the Richfield-Western Road area (in the northeastern part of the city). This area had been brought into the city in the annexation of 1920, yet was still without sanitary sewers. The project was to cost $60,000, but according to the Public Works Director of Flint, the undertaking was to be "wholly an assessment project."[20] About 390 property owners were to benefit and the cost to each was set at $154.00.

Even the ambitious expansion of water and sewer facilities in the 1920's--which resulted in the rank growth of special assessment debt mentioned in a preceding chapter--did not result in the complete coverage of the city with water and sewer mains. The service area for water and sewer, therefore, is not coterminous with the city limits.

Street lighting is another service that does not cover all the city alike. The intensity of this service depends to

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[20] Flint Journal, January 12, 1948.

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a large extent upon the density of population, and thus an area near the center of the city which is thickly settled will invariably have more installations than an area of identical size which is not so built-up.

The streets and roadbeds of Flint--their design, construction, alteration, and maintenance--constitute one of the fundamental services of the city. This service varies greatly.

TABLE 14

STREETS AND ROADBEDS IN FLINT, MICHIGAN

Type	Miles
Paved	241.09
Semi-paved	6.50
Gravel	77.39
Cinders	58.29
Earth:	
Maintained	36.21
Not maintained	54.20

Source: Data on file, Office, Director of Public Works, Flint, Mich., for 1949.

All the streets of the city are not of the same quality; nor is maintenance the same. The 1949 dust-laying program of the Public Works Department extends to only a portion of the streets which become dusty as the result of dry weather and the movement of traffic. The householder who lives on a street to which this program does not extend can have the surface treated to lay the dust, but the city will charge him

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for the service.[21]

The removal of snow is managed similarly to the dust-laying program. One hundred twenty-two miles of street are plowed after the ordinary snow storm. Only after an extraordinary amount of snowfall will all the streets of the city be plowed.[22]

In 1931 only 74 corners and hills were treated with sand and salt; at the present day, over five hundred are treated. The Superintendent of Street Cleaning has a permanent list of such places, and this list is not enlarged without approval of the City Commission.

Collection of wastes presents a somewhat different aspect than any service which has been described. Garbage, cans and glass, ashes, and dead animals are collected by this agency of the city. The service is free, and the entire city is covered. Although the city is divided into sixty districts and although each district is covered at least once a week, it sometimes happens that small sections are missed intentionally. The reason is that the householders especially of sparsely settled areas often dispose of their wastes privately. Garbage is often fed to livestock or chickens, for example. When, after successive calls in the section, the collectors

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[21] Data on file, Office of the Director of Public Works: 1949.

[22] Data on file, office of Mr. I. R. Weedon, Superintendent of Street Cleaning, Department of Public Works, 1949.

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observe that it does not need service, that part of their route is made inactive until the householder calls the Waste Collection office to request a renewal of service. For this reason the expense of waste collection in sparsely settled areas tends to be lower than it might be otherwise.[23]

Conclusion

The criteria of suitability advanced in this chapter are not hard and fast rules, but merely guides. Any one of them--or two, or three--might be ignored for compelling reasons. Compactness might have to be abandoned for topographical reasons. Population density should be thought of as a definite factor and guide, but simply because an area is sparsely settled at a given time furnishes no basis at all for postponing annexation. Annexation, in fact, should as often as possible be carried out similarly to the Flint annexation of 1920: the area absorbed at the beginning of its development. The expansion of Kansas City, Missouri northward, described in Chapter VIII, furnishes an excellent model for Flint and other cities.

The annexation to Flint of the three areas described in the preceding pages is essential to the healthy development of the city and the areas themselves. These areas meet all of the basic criteria of suitability, and they are badly

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[23] Conference with Mr. Herman Clapp, Supervisor of Waste Collection, Department of Public Works, Flint, Mich., June 22, 1949.

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in need of control (especially building and land-use control). The areas are as urban as Flint itself, they are utterly dependent upon the city economically, and in the city rests their only hope for satisfactory municipal services. Flint, in turn, needs the areas for its own protection. Surrounding the city with blighted neighborhoods is not to its advantage--nor is the location of great manufacturing plants just outside its borders. Only if the cost to the city were to be prohibitive could the city hesitate at annexation. This aspect of the problem will be considered in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER VI

THE FINANCIAL PROBLEMS OF ANNEXATION IN FLINT

The Cost to the City

Before any lands are added to the city of Flint through annexation, some attempt should be made to determine the costs of servicing those areas. In a preceding chapter, under the section entitled, "The Concept of the Service Area," it was shown how all of the city is not serviced with the same intensity by the various departments and agencies of the city government. Vacant lands are hardly serviced at all. It is possible, therefore, to state that only the built-up sections of the areas proposed for annexation in this paper will be serviced.

Three characteristics of the sections to be annexed have possible relation to the cost of servicing them: Area, Valuation, and Population. Area per se has sufficiently been discounted as a costly factor that we can ignore it. Valuation we shall consider, but only small reliance can be put upon it, since it is probable that the annexed areas would be receiving more service than they would be paying for.

Projecting costs on the basis of population is undoubtedly the soundest method of anticipating the cost of annexation.

The estimated valuation of Areas I, II, and III is $11,144,170.[1] The equalized value of the city of Flint for

[1] See the section of this chapter on revenues to determine the method of obtaining this figure.

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1947-1948 was $280,846,620.[2] The former figure is about four percent of the latter, and thus if valuation were used as the basis for projecting costs, the city could estimate that annexing Areas I, II, and III would cost it about four percent of the current expenses of government and this four percent would have to pay both for operations and capital expenditures. During the fiscal year, 1947-48, the total expenditures of the city government (excluding the schools) amounted to $3,216,705.17. Four percent of this figure is $129,068.21. We can be fairly sure that this amount would not be adequate to service the areas annexed. The city, moreover, might find it politically necessary to spend more than this amount because it is considerably less than the income which the city would receive from the areas.

In order to determine the population of Areas I, II, and III, the number of persons in the 0-19 age group was ascertained for each rural school district which is included within any one of the areas. In case a school district was not entirely included within an area, the school population for the section was estimated. Thereupon, the ratio of the computed population of the three areas in the 0-19 age group to that in the adult group was calculated at one to 2.22. (This relationship was established from census tract data of 1940 for the four fringe townships.) And thus the population

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[2] City of Flint, Michigan, Report of the Division of Finance (1947-48), p. 27.

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of the areas was determined.[3]

TABLE 15

ESTIMATED 1949 POPULATION OF AREAS I, II, AND III

Area	Population		
	0-19 Group	Ratio	Total
Area I	4,431	1:2.2	9,748
Area II	3,721	1:2.2	8,186
Area III	2,104	1:2.2	4,629
			22,563

Source: School census data on file in the office of the Genesee County School Commissioner, Flint, Michigan (1949).

In 1940 the population of Flint was 151,543, and we can thus determine that the population of Areas I, II, and III is approximately fifteen percent of that of Flint.[4] On this basis it is possible to estimate probable costs of annexation.

In projecting the 1947-48 expenditures for each item, we must be aware of the many pitfalls that lie around about. The financial history of expenditures during the 1913-1929 period which was given in a previous chapter indicated that all activities of the city did not expand alike to an expanding environment. We can assume, therefore, that the

[3] School census data on file in the office of the Genesee County School Commissioner, Flint, Michigan (1949).

[4] Since the population for the three areas is an estimate, no attempt was made to compute the Flint population for 1949.

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expense of maintaining the manager's office, the clerk's office, the city hall, the city market, and the airport should not be greater after annexation than before.

Many items of expenditure vary widely. Election expense is a good example. In 1946-47 the city spent $23,527.63 on elections but in 1947-48 it spent only $9,806.15.[5] Again, in 1946-47 the item denoted "Unclassified Expense" was $29,864.86, but in 1947-48 it was $58,106.08. The expenditures on Hurley Hospital more than doubled in a year--from $75,000 in 1946-47 to $176,000 in 1947-48. Nominally, the hospital is a city institution, and yet it is virtually self-supporting. James E. Larson has found that "the private patient is supporting the hospital and the hospital is not functioning as a city hospital, i.e., taking care of the medically indigent."[6] Here is a very sizable item of expenditure, therefore, the recurrence of which is most erratic.

A final word is necessary regarding the costs of government. In one sense no city--at least no American city--has enough money to give all the service and perform all the tasks that it is designed for. Though there is in theory a minimum of expenditure which cannot be breached, a figure below which a given city cannot function, in fact this minimum is very hard to determine. From a logical standpoint a

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[5] City of Flint, Michigan, Report of the Division of Finance (1947-48), p. 13.

[6] James E. Larson, The City of Flint Tax Limitation Experiment (mimeographed, Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1948), p. 56.

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TABLE 16

ITEMIZED INCREASES IN EXPENDITURES RESULTING FROM ANNEXATION (ESTIMATED)

Activity	Actual Expenditure 1947-48	Estimated Expenditure After Annexation of Areas I, II, III
Manager's Office	$19,429.12	$19,429.12
City Commission	8,150.00	8,283.17
City Clerk	8,257.89	8,257.89
Director of Finance	31,769.62	36,535.06
Assessor	62,871.03	72,301.68
Treasurer	68,187.28	78,514.37
City Attorney	19,512.99	19,512.99
Civil Service	17,646.18	20,293.11
Purchasing and Supplies	11,728.22	13,487.45
Planning Board	9,406.83	10,817.85
Elections	9,806.15	9,806.15
Damage Claims	1,961.45	2,255.67
Unclassified Expense	58,106.08	66,821.99
Hurley Hospital	176,000.00	202,400.00
Recreation & Park Board	200,571.80	230,657.57
Pensions (fire & police)	169,706.86	195,162.89
City Hall Maintenance	18,594.77	18,594.77
Street Lighting	106,108.60	121,999.59
Garbage Collection	114,875.92	132,107.31
Hog Farm	31,935.51	36,725.84
Tin Can Collection	54,656.11	62,854.53
Dead Animal Collection	3,826.37	4,400.33
City Market	9,999.81	9,999.81
City Scales	2,057.57	2,057.57
City Engineering Adm.	28,503.55	32,779.08
Sidewalk Repair	10,663.53	12,263.06
Special Work ordered by the City Commission	25,456.45	29,274.92
Ash Collection	33,674.51	38,725.69

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TABLE 16 (Continued)

Activity	Actual Expenditure 1947-48	Estimated Expenditures After Annexation of Areas I, II, III
Sewer repair and cleaning	$20,006.00	$20,006.00
Parking Meter Operation and enforcement	102,239.30	102,239.30
Police Administration	778,040.40	894,746.46
Police Call System	1,919.23	1,919.23
Municipal Courts	37,659.87	43,308.85
Fire Department	638,500.71	734,275.82
Fire Alarm System	21,948.51	25,240.79
Safety Inspection Office	6,444.11	7,410.73
Electrical Inspection	17,999.28	20,699.17
Building Inspection	14,996.36	17,245.81
Weights and Measures	8,327.03	9,576.08
Board of Health	20,287.91	23,331.10
General Clinic	9,309.39	10,705.80
Laboratory	13,305.98	15,301.88
Plumbing Inspector	8,651.86	9,949.64
Dairy and Food Inspection	40,913.52	40,913.52
Communicable Disease	7,702.87	7,702.87
Field Nursing	74,895.21	74,895.21
Sanitation	8,160.98	8,160.98
Meat Inspection	7,991.94	9,190.73
Bishop Airport	52,695.41	52,695.41

Source: Report of the Division of Finance, City of Flint, Michigan (1947-48), pp. 13-15.

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city should determine its financial needs by the co-action of its executive budget officials and its legislative body. Thereupon the council should levy a tax rate sufficient to bring in the necessary funds--but this is not what happens. The usual situation is for the city to estimate the revenue to be expected under the existing tax structure and then back and fill in order to meet the most pressing needs.

Revenue Estimates

Upon annexing Areas I, II, and III the city could expect an increase in revenue from three principal sources: the general property tax, state subventions, and fees, fines, and forfeitures.

The assessed valuation for the three areas, as equalized by the state, is approximately $11,144,170. This figure was obtained by calculating the equalized value of the school districts, or parts of them, included within the areas.[7]

Area	Estimated Equalized Value
Area I	$5,525,149
Area II	2,869,825
Area III	2,749,196

With this valuation, a levy of six mills would give an income of $66,864.99.[8] It is not improbable, however, that

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[7] Genesee County Tax Allocation Board, "Final Order of Determination," 9 Sept., 1948, County Clerk's Office, Flint, Michigan.

[8] The 1947-48 levy for all general city purposes was 6.1 mills.

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the greater part of the property in all three areas will be re-assessed in case of annexation. Assessment practices in the fringe townships are notoriously bad. The following data well illustrate this point.

TABLE 17

1948 ASSESSED VALUATIONS IN FRINGE TOWNSHIPS

Township or City	As Assessed	As Equalized
Flint Township	$ 8,536,375	$ 13,294,915
Genesee Township	4,179,790	5,279,676
Mt. Morris Township	4,038,815	4,641,020
Burton Township	4,356,700	9,310,396
City of Flint	293,366,300	293,366,300

Source: Genesee County Board of Supervisors, Minutes, November 12, 1948.

In spite of the equalization by the state, the fringe areas are still under-assessed, and they could expect, upon annexation, an increase of possibly twenty-five percent in the over-all assessed valuation. Increase in either valuation or rate, or both, would cause substantial growth in tax revenues.

TABLE 18

ESTIMATED REVENUE ACCORDING TO TAX RATE AND ASSESSED VALUATION

Area	Six-mill Rate		Ten-mill Rate	
	Present Value	25% Increase in Value	Present Value	25% Increase in Value
Area I	$33,150.89	$41,438.62	$55,251.49	$69,064.36
Area II	17,218.95	21,523.75	28,698.25	35,872.91
Area III	16,495.15	20,608.97	27,491.97	34,364.95
Totals	$66,864.99	$83,571.37	$111,441.71	$139,302.22

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TABLE 19

STATE SUBVENTIONS TO THE CITY OF FLINT

Subvention	1945-46	1946-47	1947-48
Sales Tax	(none)	$242,468.80	$853,187.09
Gasoline Tax Trunk Line Maintenance Motor Vehicle Weight tax	$309,673.77	396,244.71	468,623.95
Liquor Tax[a]	279,340.07	362,201.31	32,909.17
Intangibles Tax	60,617.20	184,882.46	200,036.76
Venereal Disease Control	8,800.00	6,600.00	8,066.66
Public Health Nursing	1,850.00	1,850.01	1,849.99
T. B. Control	(none)	2,861.28	1,174.44

[a] The cities of Michigan no longer benefit from this source.

Source: City of Flint, Michigan, Report of the Division of Finance (1945-46), pp. 17 and 20; (1946-47), pp. 17 and 20; (1947-48), pp. 17 and 20.

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It may be observed that with an increase in assessed value of twenty-five percent and an increase in the rate to the present legal maximum of ten mills would result in a doubling of the revenue.

State subventions are an important source of revenue for Michigan cities, and were Flint to expand, this source would expand too. The income received by the city from the various sources is given in detail in Table 19. These data are projected on the basis of population, in Table 20, to get the approximate amount above the present sum that could be expected by Flint if it were to annex Areas I, II, and III.

TABLE 20

ESTIMATED REVENUE FROM STATE SUBVENTIONS

Subvention	Percentage		Income
Sales Tax Diversion	15% of	$853,107.09[a]	$127,978.06
Gas and Weight Tax	"	391,507.50[b]	58,726.13
Intangibles Tax	"	200,036.76[a]	30,005.51
Other	"	11,091.09[a]	1,663.66
		TOTAL	218,373.36

a/ 1947-48 subvention.
b/ Three-year average.

These state-collected, locally-shared taxes, and other subventions, can be expected to produce more revenue as a result of annexation than the general property tax. Considering the small amount of industry in the areas, however, we can hardly be surprised at this information.

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A third important source of revenue would be fines, fees, and forfeitures. The city of Flint has realized considerable sums from that source (see Table 21).

TABLE 21

CITY REVENUE FROM FINES, FEES, AND FORFEITURES

	1946	1947	1948
Licenses and Permits	$107,275.49	$117,812.14	$119,247.07
Inspections & Miscellaneous Services	45,314.35	40,739.72	50,414.31
Fines, Forfeitures, and Penalties	162,941.49	204,755.06	221,238.18

Source: City of Flint, Michigan, Report of the Division of Finance (1945-46), pp. 18-20; (1946-47), pp. 18-20; (1947-48), pp. 18-20.

By taking a three-year average for each category, obtaining the sum of the averages, and fifteen percent of that sum, we arrive at the approximate amount that can be expected from fines, fees, and forfeitures: $53,486.89.

It is now possible to compute the approximate revenue that would result from annexation. By combining the income from the general property tax (six-mill rate, present valuation), state subventions, and fines, fees and forfeitures, we obtain the total revenue figure:

TABLE 22

ESTIMATED REVENUE FROM ANNEXED AREAS

Real Property Tax	$ 66,864.99
State Subventions	218,373.36
Fines, Fees, Forfeitures	53,486.89
	$338,725.24

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A Financial Analysis

The factor of cost is important only if it can be determined that the burden on the city would be absolutely prohibitive. Otherwise, there are so many other compelling reasons that usually take precedence over costs that basically there need be only one question regarding cost answered before the annexation of territory: Are the costs certain to be so prohibitive that the city cannot safely take in the area? In other words, does it seem to qualified observers that added revenues are so out of balance with costs that all the other important considerations must be ignored because of this one factor?

The income from the areas recommended for annexation in Chapter V would probably be less than the expenditures in those areas for municipal services. On the basis of post-war income and revenue, the city could expect a deficit not in excess of $100,000 annually:

Anticipated Expense	$420,297.97
Anticipated Revenue	338,725.24
Anticipated Annual Deficit	$ 81,572.73

This anticipated deficit could be wiped out, however, by an increase in the tax rate and in over-all assessed valuation. Though such increases could be expected by the annexed areas, it is not all certain that the city would choose to add enough to the tax rate and the over-all assessed valuation to eliminate the deficit entirely.

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It is evident that the expense that Flint can expect from the areas are not so out of balance with revenues that the cost of annexation becomes the overriding consideration. While short-term expenditures above revenues seem to be likely, those expenditures the city of Flint can well afford in order to achieve the lasting benefit that will stem from annexation.

It is possible, even without a change in tax rates or assessed valuations, for the city to avoid a deficit after annexation. The city can do so and still supply services that approximate the extent and quality of services within the present city. A fact to remember always is that there is no absolute level of service which the city must maintain. Theoretically there is within existing laws and political attitudes a minimum of service and a maximum, and the service level fluctuates between those theoretical limits in accordance with the policy of the governing body. Moreover, the service level is constantly subject to a changing emphasis. Even a general period of decline may see an actual raising of the extent and quality of a particular service (note the way in which sanding and snow removal expanded as a service during the depression and war years).

The annexing city should investigate three economic and administrative questions previous to annexation: (1) What is the fiscal capacity of the region or regions to be annexed? (2) What will be the cost of the current operations of government in the area? (3) Will any major capital improvements be

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required as a result of annexation which must be paid for out of the general fund? For Flint, the answers to these questions are favorable to annexation.

Because of two large industrial plants and some commercial establishments, and because extension of municipal services could be expected to promote economic activity, the fiscal capacity of Areas I, II, and III is sufficient that within a few years they should be a definite financial asset to the city. Moreover, it can safely be concluded that if Flint does not annex the areas, it is going to continue to lose industrial and commercial businesses to them.

Current operating costs can be anticipated by projection of present costs on the basis of population. Operating levels, as has already been emphasized, are not rigidly fixed. Rather, they are to a considerable degree established and altered by the governing body of the city. This latter is more than ever true of the building of capital improvements, which are entirely discretionary with the city council and the people at large. Since 1934, Flint has paid for no significant capital improvements from the general fund. Capital expenditures that would be necessitated by the annexation of Areas I, II, and III would to a large extent be paid for with revenue and special assessment bonds, and thus would present no economic burden to the city at large. Only minor expenditures in this regard could be expected from the general fund.

It cannot be repeated too often that the costs of

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annexation are of first importance only when they are greatly in excess of anticipated revenues. Even then they should not override other considerations. If an area is on the verge of development, control should be of first importance. If an area is already developed, more careful attention should be given to costs. In some cases, the problem of costs should be a state problem. The state might even subsidize annexation in case of working class neighborhoods, depressed sections, and other types of areas that would clearly be economic liabilities to the cities.

The three areas under consideration by this paper are not without sufficient fiscal capacity to support themselves eventually, or at least to support themselves as adequately as do the other residential neighborhoods in the Flint region. Costs subsequent to annexation should not be unreasonable. Capital investment by Flint in the areas would largely be derived from revenue and special assessment bonds. From the purely financial standpoint, therefore, Areas I, II, and III are suitable for annexation.

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CHAPTER VII

THE PRO AND CON OF ANNEXATION

The Advantages to Flint

Flint and the urbanized areas surrounding it have tended to develop as a unit, economically and socially, and as disjoined and utterly dissimilar parts politically. As already noted, this peculiar political situation has not always obtained, and indeed is of quite recent origin. The village of 1855 developed slowly through the years, first as a settlement in the wilderness, then as the county seat and principal trading center of an agricultural and lumbering region; then as a small city engrossed in the business of making carriages; and finally as a new-born metropolis with a rich and growing manufacturing establishment. Until after 1920 there was no such thing as a fringe area, because as soon as an area outside the city changed in its general characteristics from a rural to an urban place, it was joined to the city.

A natural and long-lived dichotomy existed between the city and the country. There was the light and there was the shadow--there was no twilight zone, no penumbra, no never-never land. After 1920 the natural division into the two parts was slowly destroyed, and the city found itself with a child which it nourished and could not control.

One of the most compelling reasons for annexation is

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the necessity for reestablishing the former unity of the Flint community, and by resurrecting the natural dichotomy, separate the city from the country, and give the parent some control over the development of the child.

Integrated control over land use in the Flint metropolitan area should be achieved as soon as it possibly can be. The planned development of the area can only be achieved by the performance of the planning function (both the conception and the administration of the plan) by a single agency. While it is now legally possible for the townships that make up the metropolitan fringe to zone and plan their respective areas, one can predict with confidence that no planning of a comprehensive nature will ever be undertaken by the rural-type township governments. Yet even if the improbable did happen and the townships did decide to attempt to control land use in their respective jurisdictions, the benefits could only be small. Planning by the separate governmental units in the metropolitan area would not eliminate competition by those units.

Annexation as proposed by this paper would provide a protective or expansion belt around the city and allow the city to impose the social, political and economic controls that are so necessary to the continued health of the municipal body-politic. That such control is essential can be illustrated by many examples, though only one can be given in this paper.

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Not long ago a new Chevrolet plant was erected in the Flint area. It was not erected in the eastern part of Flint where there are large areas of vacant land ideally suited for industry, and where it is zoned for that purpose. The plant was not built in the city at all, but immediately across the city limits in Flint Township, which lies on the southwest of Flint. It is not possible to go into all the pro's and con's of placing the plant at this spot. We merely wish to emphasize that there is plenty of land in Flint suitable even for such a huge plant as this, and that there is at least questionable merit in having the plant at this spot.

The Flint water department services the plant, and since there is only one principal street from the plant into the city, it will undoubtedly be expensively improved within a few years. But of greatest importance is the future of the land surrounding the plant. Even the layman utterly without claim to any technical knowledge of city planning can, by observing the area, perceive that a residential area capable of housing many hundreds of the workers in the Chevrolet plant could develop close by. The plant is physically attractive, and it is not the source of noise, dirt, or many other things that would inhibit residential growth near by. Much of the area lying close by, however, is uncontrolled. Only a small portion is within the city, not enough to influence materially the development of an area in which the city has vital concern. The situation of

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this district alone is evidence that only by reestablishing a lost unity and by providing integrated control of the urban area can the Flint metropolitan area develop normally. Such normal development would be exceedingly beneficial to the people and the institutions that are at present included within the city.

Flint can benefit from annexation by having a broadened tax base. Since the tax revenues of the city derive principally from the general property tax, and since that tax, as its name implies, is directed against the property rather than against the individual, it is necessary that the city include as much property as possible on its tax rolls. Many people who daily use the municipal services of Flint escape contribution to the city treasury by living outside the corporate limits. Already some industry, which is tributary to the city, has established itself outside the city's jurisdiction. Extending the area of the city, therefore, is basic to the continued reliability of the general property tax as an important source of revenue.

This proposition is buttressed by the recent legislative removal of Flint from under the tax limitation which has been seriously hampering the city government for some fifteen years. An act passed by the 64th Legislature provides that until the city charter sets up a tax limit, "the governing body of every city is hereby authorized to levy and collect taxes for municipal purposes in a sum up to and including

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1 per centum of the assessed value of all real and personal property."[1] Since Flint has lately been forced to operate on a levy that has rarely exceeded six mills (exclusive of a small levy for debt service), this act allows the city to increase its tax rate by about four mills.[2]

Annexation would forestall the installation of uneconomic utilities in the surrounding areas. Many sections around Flint badly need water and sewer service. Water districts already exist in two fringe communities, but the attack on the sewage problem has not even begun. The water department of the city of Flint is in fact, though it is not legally, a giant corporation, and it is only this agency that can give to the fringe areas reliable, efficient, and relatively inexpensive water installations and sewer facilities. If small and inefficient water and sewer installations are set up in the fringe, they might well inhibit the future growth and development of the community.[3]

Annexation would help to eliminate inefficient and generally ineffective governments, and would forestall ill-advised plans for 'streamlining' those governments. Flint's

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[1] 64th Legislature of Michigan, Extra session of 1948, Senate Bill No. 23. This act was inadvertently repealed in 1949, and then promptly re-enacted.

[2] For the effect of the 15-mill limit on Flint city government, see James E. Larson, op. cit.

[3] Dayton City Plan Board, Annexation Study Dayton Metropolitan Area (Dayton, Ohio, 1946), p. 24.

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urban fringe is mainly governed by four rural-type governments--the townships. This type of government is inherently unable to function efficiently in an urban environment. Even making it more adaptable to urban conditions is not apt to be too satisfactory. The townships can be remodelled, and in fact the Michigan legislature has attempted to do so, but the result is not apt to be all that could be desired.[4]

Annexation as envisaged by this paper would result in the absorption of the Beecher Metropolitan District and the Burton water district. The elimination of these governmental units would, to my mind, definitely be salutary. The Burton water district will probably never be able to lay sewers within its jurisdiction. It is only logical, therefore, for the city water department to take over the servicing of these areas.

There are substantial benefits that would accrue to Flint if most of the urban fringe were annexed. A political unity could be reestablished, vitally needed control exercised over a presently uncontrolled region, the tax base widened, the level of government raised--all of these by expansion of the city limits. Such advantages cannot be passed off lightly.

The Disadvantages to Flint

From the long-term viewpoint annexation would materially benefit the city. From the short term, however, certain

[4] See Chapter IX for a critique of the charter township plan.

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disadvantages must be conceded. Annexation would initially cost the city money. This cost, however, is not so great as might at first have been assumed, since the most expensive public improvements in the newly annexed areas would be extended on a special-assessment basis. Parts of the areas suggested for annexation would contribute enough through the general property tax to pay for the services the city would render (services such as fire and police protection that would come out of the general fund).

As a result of annexation there would be an increase in under-developed acreage. Although as we have seen in preceding chapters, vacant or under-developed lands do not potentially or even theoretically burden the city to any great extent, the city usually merely improvises in regard to its policy toward vacant lots and acreage. The danger, therefore, is that bringing in the lands recommended in this study would be done without plan or careful policy formation. Even if policy were carefully set up, the lands would present administrative burdens to the assessor and city planner. In the case of low-value land the added revenue would not take care of the increased burden.

As soon as the city took unto itself the fringe area, many of the residents, perhaps a majority of them, would expect and demand extension of all-important municipal services to them. This natural reaction by the fringe residents would put severe political strain on the city officials, and some

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ill-advised action would almost certainly result from sheer political expediency. Some localized (and probably unplanned) physical improvements would possibly result.

Another disadvantage to immediate annexation is the present bad state of the physical plant of the city, which has resulted from the gradual throttling of the city government by the 15-mill tax limitation. A fact-finding committee investigating needed civic improvements has recently recommended that $5,884,350 be spent on 'top priority' projects such as streets and sewers, hospital and park extensions, airport betterment, and acquisition of a site for a civic center.[5] It might be suggested that annexation, which should cost no more than $100,000 annually for the next five years, be considered as a top priority item in the public improvement program.

The Advantages to Annexed Areas

In the first two or three years after annexation, assuming no immediate large increase in the assessments, some parts of the new areas would receive more in service value than they would pay back to the city in taxes. Police, and some fire protection could be expected immediately. Also immediately available would be street lighting; collection of garbage, wastes, and dead animals without charge; zoning;

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[5] Final Report of Mayor's Fact Finding Committee for Flint Civic Improvement Program (Flint, Michigan: Oct. 27, 1948).

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and protection of the buyer of new construction by means of the municipal building codes and inspection.

Because of the importance of state subventions, much of the service received by the new areas would not be paid for directly by the property tax. The fringe population, therefore, would be getting service very cheaply, if only the tax which would be paid directly to the city is counted.

Some other advantages should be enumerated:

(a) the area would be releasing itself from an inefficient, essentially rural government;

(b) the time for coming into the city is propitious, for the city is virtually debt-free. According to the last report of the Division of Finance, the total city debt (exclusive of the school system) amounted to only $1,364,492.86 as of June 30, 1948.[6]

Type of Debt	Net Debt
General Purpose	$1,313,096.46
Water System	51,396.40
Special Assessment	(none)

Considering the size and wealth of the city, the debt for Flint is insignificant. The property holders in newly annexed areas would not have to assume partial responsibility for a large debt.

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[6] City of Flint, Michigan, Report of the Division of Finance (1947-1948), p. 21.

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Disadvantages to Annexed Areas

According to a report by the city planning board of Dayton, Ohio, the "absorption of any cohesive population group by a larger unit causes a dissipation of the sovereignty or independent right of action of such a group."[7] While this disadvantage is rather nebulous, actually there is considerable reality to it. The very small governmental unit is closer to the people, in a sense, than the larger one. But if the small unit has few functions and performs them inadequately, is this a virtue?

Most property owners will, after annexation, find their property taxes increased. This increase, however, should not be very great, and should be weighed against the increase in governmental services. If the individual eats more, his grocery bill will normally increase. If he receives more governmental services, his tax bill will normally increase. It is a truism of local government, and especially of municipal government, that the taxpayer can see more visible and immediate evidence of his tax dollar at work than anywhere else in government. In addition to the greater amount of services the citizen can expect, moreover, there will come certain incidental savings stemming directly from those services. Fire insurance on his house, for example, should be less costly, and he will no longer have to pay for garbage and refuse collection.

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[7] Dayton City Plan Board, op. cit., p. 20.

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CHAPTER VIII

THE PRACTICABILITY OF ANNEXATION

The urban fringe exists not only in Flint but also in the majority of American cities, whether or not they are of a metropolitan character. In Chapter I the general post-war reaction of cities to their fringe areas was discussed, but in order to assay the merit of annexation in Flint, specific action of other cities must be examined.

The decline in the use of annexation for approximately two decades led to the fairly general opinion among students of government that it "must thus be considered a possible rather than a practicable method of meeting the problem of governmental integration in metropolitan communities."[1] There were ample grounds for this judgment. The method was forgotten, or if not forgotten so opposed by the suburbs that its political feasibility vanished. Kneier cites the belief by the fringe dwellers in the superior efficiency of their own governments, especially where those governments were municipal corporations. They feared the lowering of service standards, though more often than not their areas were void of municipal services; higher taxes, though their taxes were often excessive; and losing control over their communities, though community control in the unincorporated

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[1] Charles M. Kneier, City Government in the United States (rev. ed., New York: Harper & Bros., 1947), p. 357.

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fringe areas was virtually non-existent. They were especially unable to see the "disadvantages to the region as a whole from the existence of many separate and independent governments."[2]

In the post-war years the one-time reliance of communities on annexation has been revived. Use of this policy as a means of extending the municipal limits to include areas that are parts of the cities and towns economically and physically has yearly been on the increase. Once annexation was a continuing, dynamic method for keeping the entire extent of the natural city within the jurisdiction of a single, multi-functional government. It can to-day rise above its former usefulness, because of the superior techniques in planning and control which the modern city possesses. Effectively used, it can be a primary means of solving the fringe problem in all save the giant metropolitan regions. In most of the present-day metropolitan districts, the core city could easily be made the metropolitan authority. And even in the giant metropolis, such as New York, Philadelphia, Detroit, Chicago, or Los Angeles, annexation can be used in conjunction with other techniques for gathering up the fragments of the city.

Any discussion of the practicability of annexation, however, should be devoted largely to cases in which it is being used to alleviate the distress of the fringe areas.

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[2] Kneier, op. cit., p. 356.

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The Milwaukee Department of Annexation

After the First World War, Milwaukee found it necessary to increase its area. At that time Milwaukee "was the most excessively populated municipality in the United States with the single exception of New York."[3] At that time, it was decided to build up a staff to promote annexation proceedings. The staff was formed and grew into a department of the city government. After one decade of operation this department had effected the annexation of approximately twenty square miles to the city. Because of this success, and also because of the economic pressures engendered by the depression, the department was discontinued in 1932.

The expansion during the 1920's has been of material advantage to Milwaukee. According to an official publication of the city, the homes, factories, and business establishments in the areas then annexed represent to-day "an investment of approximately $400,000,000."[4] Approximately 300,000 persons now live on the territory annexed during that period.

Milwaukee re-created the annexation department in June, 1946. The city "is gradually extending the ... boundaries and at least partially solving the current post-war housing problem, which, although more far-reaching and perplexing, is similar in many respects to the house shortage experienced

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[3] Milwaukee Department of Annexation, "Annexation Key to Prosperous Community," Milwaukee, Wisconsin (no date).

[4] Ibid.

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after World War I."[5] The city has attempted once again to achieve at the administrative level an effective and practical annexation policy.

While Wisconsin law does not provide for a popular referendum in order to effect an annexation, and in that regard is superior to the laws of other states that require a vote, it does give the fringe dweller rather effective control of the procedure.[6] Milwaukee may annex land if 50 percent of the electors and the owners of 50 percent of the property in the territory that is to be brought into the city present a petition to the governing body of the city praying for annexation.[7] The persons who circulate the petition, however, do not need to reside in the area affected.

Initiative does not lie exclusively with the residents of the fringe areas, and this gives the city its opportunity. After the First World War "efforts to encourage circulation of annexation petitions by private individuals failed, primarily because of opposition and obstruction tactics promoted by officials of surrounding towns, especially their high-priced attorneys. These lawyers were uniformly successful in knocking out these annexation petitions by resorting to

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[5] Ibid.

[6] Wisconsin Statutes (1947), sec. 62.07. See also Chapter II for a fuller explanation of these statutes. The Milwaukee procedure varies slightly from that of the rest of the state.

[7] Milwaukee City Charter (1943), sec. 1.03.

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the circuit court."[8] The city organized its annexation staff, therefore, to circulate the petitions that could stand up in court. Thereupon only once did the city fail successfully to carry its annexation proposals through the courts, even though many attempts were made to block them through judicial action.

The re-establishment of the department of annexation enabled Milwaukee once more to embark on a well-thought-out annexation program. In the first year of operation of the re-created department, approximately one and one-half square miles of territory were added to the city. Most of this land was vacant, and was largely owned by builders.

Each year, since the re-establishment of the department, Milwaukee has annexed some territory. In June, 1946, the area of the city was 44.14 square miles, and as of January, 1949, the area was 48.3 square miles. Something over four square miles of land were annexed in about two and one-half years, or an increase in area of roughly ten percent. The greater part of this area was added in 1948. In twenty-four annexation proceedings, Milwaukee annexed 3.15 square miles of land area.[9]

The department uses trained solicitors to circulate annexation petitions whenever it is necessary. These people

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[8] Milwaukee Department of Annexation, op. cit.

[9] The Municipal Year Book 1949, p. 100.

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"point out to potential city residents that more uniform and expert appraisal of property will be available in the city. They preach the benefits of quick response in emergencies by police and fire departments; of better schools; and of sidewalks and paved streets."[10] Most of the areas outside the city have only rudimentary municipal services. Only one town in Milwaukee County operates its own water-supply system, and there the rate is approximately three times that of Milwaukee City.[11] Where satellite towns lay sanitary sewers, the entire cost of the project is assessed against the property owner; where the city lays such sewers, it assumes some of the cost. Snow, ash, rubbish and garbage removal is made by the city without charge; in the fringe areas, even the incorporated ones, these services are scant. Where such services exist, they must usually be paid for on a fee basis.

The attitude of the city toward annexation has been summed up in an official publication:

> More and more people are arriving at the opinion that the only remaining, effective, sensible procedure is to substitute a single consolidated government for the multiplicity of duplicating governmental units. Creation of One Milwaukee Government is a goal that will not be reached, however, until the people living in Milwaukee County possess a vision and desire for centralized, efficient government unification.... Annexation as it is being currently accomplished by the City of Milwaukee

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[10] "Salesmanship Promotes Annexation," Southern City, XII (Oct., 1948), p. 15.

[11] Milwaukee Department of Annexation, op. cit.

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> is more than a hope and a promise; it is the principal agency actively functioning and preparing the way for unification of government in Milwaukee County.[12]

The Experience of Ann Arbor, Michigan

On June 18, 1947, the citizens of Ann Arbor and five adjoining areas voted on the question of annexation to the city, and although the vote was small, the proposal was decisively voted down by the city and the areas concerned.[13] The victory for the status quo, of course, solved nothing, and the problem of the Ann Arbor fringe remains.

A popular referendum on annexation proposals is necessary in Michigan unless land is vacant. In such a case, the owners of more than one-half of the land in the area may file petitions for annexation with the city council and with the township board. Annexation may then be accomplished by majority votes of the city council and the township board.[14] Under this legislation of 1947, Ann Arbor has been able to effectuate certain minor annexations.

A sensible annexation program, though certainly not an ambitious one, has been developed by the city and the townships, with the latter led to "reasonableness" by the county planning commission. The city and the townships have

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[12] Milwaukee Department of Annexation, op. cit.

[13] Ann Arbor News, June 18, 1947.

[14] The Compiled Laws of the State of Michigan (1948), sec. 117.9.

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sought agreement both on immediate and long-term annexations. They have mapped out sections adjacent to the city, and have established priorities: (1) sections to be annexed within five to ten years, and (2) those to be annexed after ten years. These areas will not only make possible residential and business growth within the city, but they will also smooth out the present-day irregular city boundary (see Map VIII). Particularly in the west, and north- and southwest, where the bulk of the annexation is contemplated, does the city take on an irregular shape. Fingers of the municipality jut out into the townships in several directions, and one section is connected with the city by a short but narrow corridor. Since these "outcroppings" of the municipality are surrounded by land that is most of it economically sewerable, the newly annexed areas could readily be given essential municipal services.

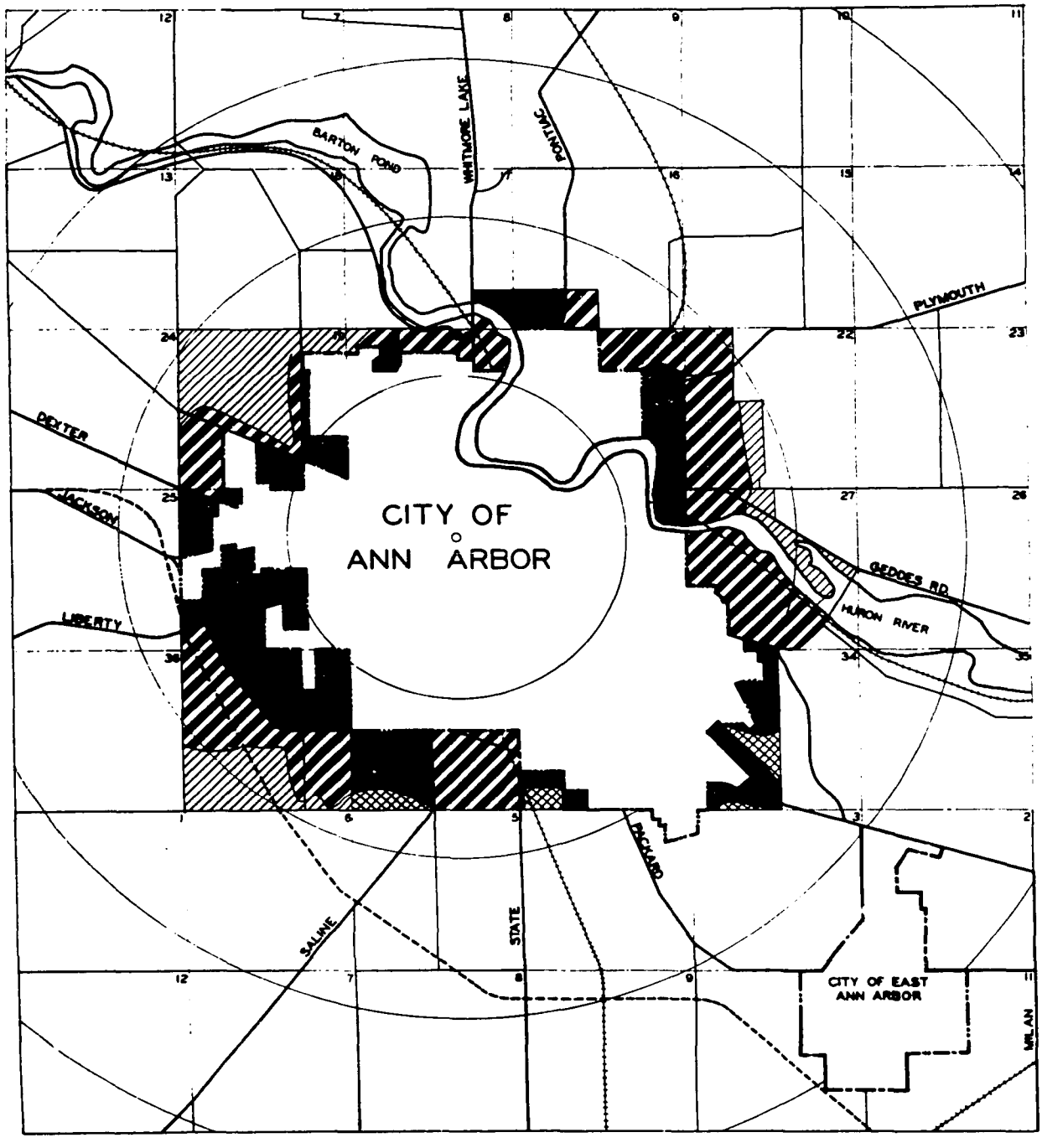
Although large-scale annexation by Ann Arbor was rejected, both by the people of the city and the adjoining areas, the city through its planning commission and professional planner has been able to evolve a program of annexation that will rationalize the city boundaries and give the city room for growth.

The Experience of Kansas City, Missouri

Although Kansas City is more than twice the size of Flint, it is faced with a similar area problem. During the

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MAP VIII



THE ANNEXATION PLAN

PROPOSED TOWNSHIP ANNEXATION PROGRAM

ANN ARBOR CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

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depression Kansas City, like Flint, lost population, and since the 1940 census both cities have gained population, but probably not at so great a rate as their fringe areas. It is certain that no major increases of population will take place either within Flint or Kansas City so long as they maintain their 1949 boundaries. Both cities, therefore, are faced with the necessity of extending their limits if they do not wish to be surrounded by rapidly growing communities on their outskirts.

No legal or physical obstacles prevent Flint from expanding in any direction it pleases, but such is not true of Kansas City. Since its beginning as a river port known as Westport Landing, it has been confined by the Missouri River on the north and the Kansas state line on the west. It has, therefore, developed within a quarter segment of a circle. From the original landing and surrounding settlement on the banks of the Missouri, it has expanded about five miles to the eastward and nine miles to the south in annexations that took place in 1859, 1873, 1885, 1897, 1909, and 1947. The largest annexation, in 1909, added approximately 32 1/2 square miles of land to the city.[15] On January 1, 1947, about three square miles of additional land was annexed on the south.

Further expansion to the south and east would be of

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[15] Statement by the City Manager to the Kansas City Star, August 31, 1946.

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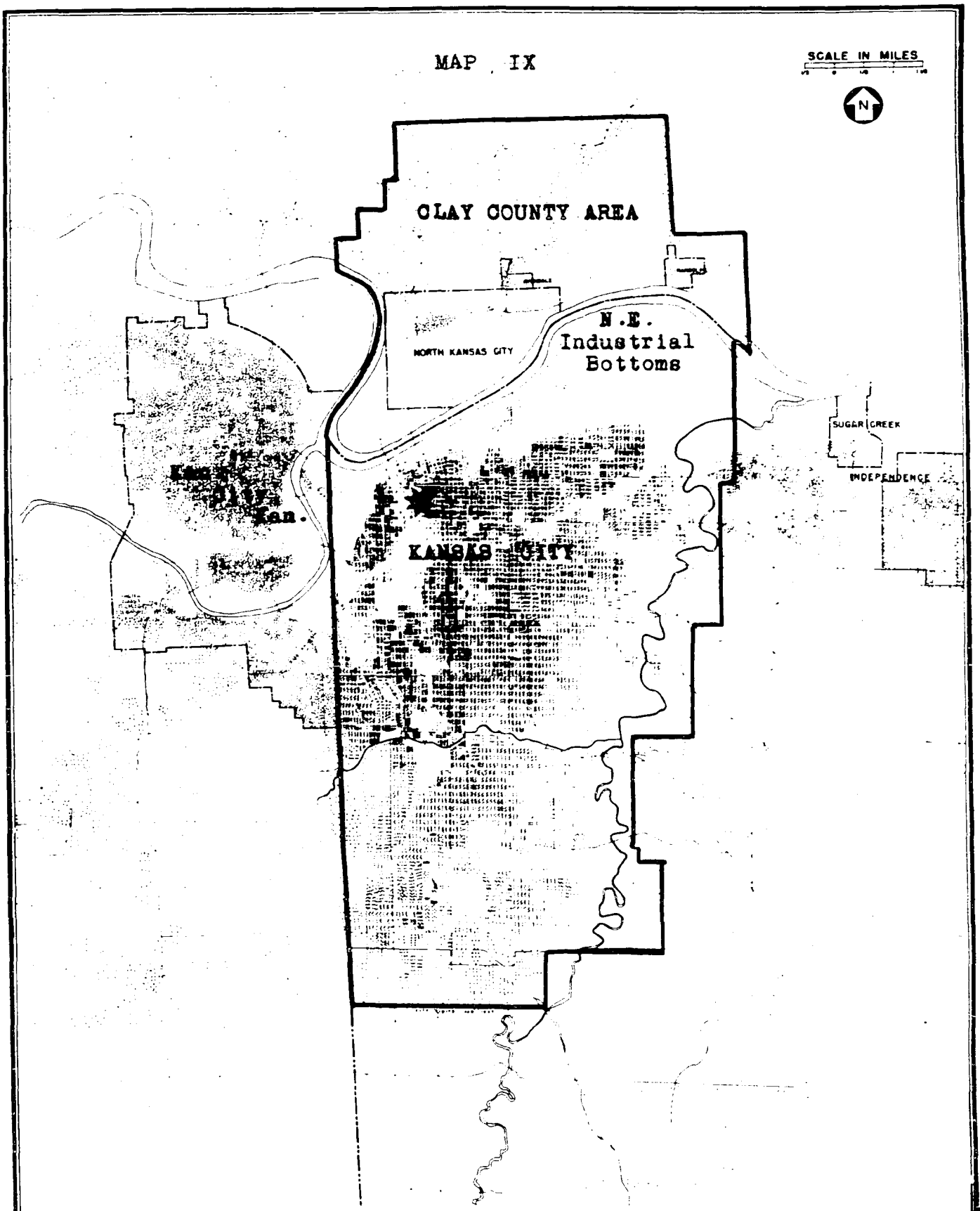
questionable merit, at least at this time. The residents of the area annexed in 1947 must travel from eight to ten miles over traffic-congested streets to get to the downtown area. The city manager, in 1946, stated that "because the city to date has expanded so far south and east, the downtown shopping center is meeting stiff competition from subsidiary shopping centers with a consequent loss of values. These values must be maintained if a stable community is to be preserved."[16]

Since expansion to the west is impossible because of the state line, there is only one other way for the city to go--northward. Fortunately there is a large area north of the Missouri River in Clay County that is excellent for urban development, and it is here that the city will expand. That the area has not developed extensively in the past is in itself surprising. During this century the river has presented no physical barrier, being amply bridged, and because of an extensive levee system, the entire flood plain is rarely in danger of inundation. A small municipality, North Kansas City, lies in the flood plain and is surrounded on three sides by the levees. The valley and the slowly ascending bluffs leading out of the valley, and especially the latter, comprise a region that is highly accessible from the downtown area of Kansas City.

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[16] L. P. Cookingham, "Building for Tomorrow," Bulletin of the Community Councils of Kansas City, Missouri (Sept.-Oct., 1946), p. 1.

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In 1946 the people of Kansas City were convinced that inclusion within the city of twenty square miles of land in Clay County was necessary. At the polls they ratified by charter amendment the proposal of the city administration that the step be taken. Unless the Supreme Court of Missouri decides that the annexation is unreasonable, the extension of boundaries will become effective January 1, 1950.

Perhaps the basic reason for inclusion within Kansas City of the Clay County district is its accessibility. The area is the only one of any extent within the metropolitan region that is still undeveloped and that is also suitable for residential use. Although the land is now only twenty percent developed, a large proportion of it is no longer agricultural in the economic sense. Its ownership rests with people who contemplate its quick conversion to urban uses.[17] There are many subdivisions that are just now being exploited.

Kansas City has a very practical economic interest in the area: property worth millions (the municipal airport, the water plant and an adjacent park), and an expanding market for water.[18] The investment of the city in these enterprises and expanded facilities will be made more secure by annexation.

To people familiar with Kansas City the idea keeps recurring that the Clay County acreage is close to the Northeast

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid., p. 2.

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Bottoms, an extensive area, which it is hoped will one day be the industrial heart of Kansas City. In the past the Northeast Bottoms has not been developed extensively because of the danger of high water, but a new levee system will protect the district from all but the most catastrophic of floods. If, as envisaged, industry will soon begin to move into the Bottoms, where to house the working force will become a problem. The solution lies to the north of the river. In the words of the city manager, "the proposed Missouri River bridge which is under study by the Highway Department and our own Planning Staff will permit workers in this area to reside in Clay County within easy commuting distance."[19] Proper development of the Northeast Bottoms industrial district would be severely inhibited without such an accessible residential area.

The Clay County region would soon grow into an urban community, or a series of urban communities, even if the city did not annex it, but the extension of city services will add immensely to its attractiveness. More than that, the city will be able to control its growth. At the present time, the entire district is attractive. The maps of the Kansas City Plan Commission show that only a small portion of the area is devoted to substandard dwelling. Much of it is hilly and wooded and offers countless building sites for all types of

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[19] Ibid., p. 1.

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dwellings. It is the opinion of the city planners that the only way the Clay County section will be utilized to its fullest advantage is by the imposition of municipal controls. If such controls are not set up, "not only the broad spaces and present environment of today will disappear, but blight and decay will appear."[20]

The Clay County section includes three small incorporated places, North Kansas City, Avondale, and Randolph (also called East Kansas City), and these places will form enclaves within enlarged Kansas City. Avondale and Randolph are actually merely small villages--tiny in both area and population. North Kansas City, on the other hand, had a 1940 population of 2,688, and a 1949 population of at least double the 1940 figure. But its expansion in population cannot continue long with its present land area of four square miles. More than three-fourths of the city is zoned for commercial and industrial uses.[21]

The city officials of North Kansas City began toward the end of the war to consider expanding into the same area contemplated for annexation by the central city. When the people south of the river heard of this, they moved rapidly. Annexation possibilities had already been carefully studied, but official action had to be taken to forestall that contemplated

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[20] Ibid., p. 2.

[21] City Plan Commission, Metropolitan Area (Kansas City, Oct., 1947), p. 43.

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by North Kansas City. Thus "it was necessary for the City Council to introduce an ordinance on the proposed annexation without any prior public discussion of the matter."[22] In Missouri, as in Texas, the city which takes the initial action has prior rights on the territory. Since Kansas City, after January 1, 1950, will completely surround North Kansas City, further expansion of the smaller city's limits will not be possible.

An all-important question remains: Is the area suitable for annexation? The Supreme Court of the state has set up definite criteria of suitability. These five criteria, in brief, are that an area must be developed or adaptable for "prospective town uses," and essential to the expanding city.[23] It is the belief of the planners and other officials of the city administration that the court's definition of reasonableness can be met by the annexation.[24]

The Clay County area in 1949 had an estimated population of 10,733.[25] So rapid is the population increase that by the date of annexation (January 1, 1950) the city expects a population in the area of more than twelve thousand. From

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[22] Statements of the City Manager, Clay County Annexation Meeting, August 27, 1946.

[23] 134 S.W. 1022; see Appendix III for the Court's statement of criteria.

[24] Statement of the Manager, General Committee of City Council on Proposed Annexation, August 23, 1946.

[25] Data on file, City Plan Commission, Kansas City, Missouri.

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1947 to 1949, the City Plan Commission estimates, there was an increase in completed dwelling units of 721, or twenty-nine percent. This would represent an additional population of at least three thousand. As of July 1, 1949, there were 3,204 occupied dwelling units in the area to be annexed. Table 23 gives a breakdown of existing land uses in the area (exclusive, of course, of the three incorporated places).

The Clay County area meets all of the criteria of suitability which were advanced in previous chapters. It is compact and contiguous with the city, and from its farthest corners closer to the heart of the city than much of the southern part. Although now it is sparsely populated, it has been growing rapidly since the war, and with city services available and land and building controls available, the settlement of people throughout the area should be increasingly rapid. Finally, the land is now only twenty percent developed, but it is the belief of city officials, as already noted, that the vacant or agricultural sections are on the verge of transformation to urban uses.

The present governmental structure is wholly inadequate to meet the needs of an urban community. More than half the Clay County area now has city water available--water which is purchased from the Kansas City Water Department. Only about one-half of a square mile, however, is sewered.[26] All other

[26] City Plan Commission, Metropolitan Area (Kansas City, Oct., 1947), pp. 38-40.

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TABLE 23

1949 LAND USE - CLAY COUNTY AREA

	Existing Land Use	
	Net Acreage	Percent of Developed Land
Single Family Residence	1,289.4	55.9
Duplex	1.0	0.0
Agriculture*		
Local Business) General Business)	28.0	1.2
Light Industry	12.4	0.5
Heavy Industry	92.7	4.0
Parks, Lakes, Recreation	90.0	3.9
Public and Semi-Public	188.0	8.1
Streets	608.6	26.4
Total Developed	2,310.1	100.0
Vacant (80.2%)	9,379.9	
	11,690.0	
Under Missouri River	639.3	
	12,329.3 = 19.26 sq. mi.	

* Included in "Vacant Land" category

Source: Kansas City Plan Commission, Kansas City, Missouri.

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normal governmental services are either non-existent or are furnished by the county. These services are only the ones ordinarily furnished by county government in rural Missouri--policing, assessment and collection of taxes, maintenance of roads, recording of titles to lands and chattels, taking care of the poor, and a few others. It is not government adequate to the needs of an urban region.

Under the Missouri constitution of 1945 counties of over 85,000 population may frame and adopt their own charters.[27] A home-rule charter may provide for county legislation on public health, police and traffic, building construction, and planning and zoning. Even though Clay County might in another decade reach the population minimum necessary to take advantage of the provisions of Article VI, it is highly questionable whether the action would ever be taken. Except for the area which Kansas City wishes to annex, the county is rural and is likely to continue to be for generations.

The Constitution of 1945 provides that counties under 85,000 may be classified by the legislature. The legislature may upon such classification provide for alternative forms of county government. Under its present classification Clay County is able to enact zoning ordinances and "work in that direction has been started."[28] But the county could not zone

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[27] Art. VI, sec. 18 (a).

[28] City Plan Commission, op. cit., p. 42.

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so accurately or scientifically as the city, and the administration of the zoning could never be so effective as that of the planning department of the city.

Township government was permissible under the Missouri constitution of 1875, but only twenty-four of the 114 counties of the state had township organization for any length of time.[29] Having been a slave state, populated largely by Southerners, Missouri clung to the county as the principal form of rural government. In the Constitution of 1945, the twenty-four counties with townships were permitted to retain them, but no provisions for adoption of township organization were written in. Clay County, therefore, could not adopt township government.

The city manager of Kansas City has ably summarized the case for annexing the Clay County area:[30]

> All growing cities must expand their boundaries or become encircled by satellite areas either incorporated or unincorporated. Kansas City is no exception. A city which does not expand physically as its population grows will be faced with dwindling resources and increasing demands to care for greater population in its general area. The northward movement of Kansas City will protect the downtown district from greater decentralization, will equalize the future flow of traffic within the city, will save the extension of sewers, water mains, pavement and other facilities further to the east and south and will provide a geographic balance which has long been needed for the city.

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[29] William L. Bradshaw and Milton Garrison, "Township Government in Missouri," The University of Missouri Studies, XI (Columbia, Oct. 1, 1936), p. 7.

[30] Statement by the City Manager to the Kansas City Star, August 31, 1946.

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CHAPTER IX

ALTERNATIVES TO ANNEXATION

City-Township Consolidation

While annexation has been treated in this paper as meaning the addition of unincorporated areas to the city of Flint, passing mention at least should be made of it in another sense--annexation of the four townships surrounding Flint. Because the Census Bureau has defined the city of Flint and the four townships as a metropolitan district, the idea at once occurs: Why not join the city and the townships and make a metropolitan government in one step? According to one authority, the preferable method here would be consolidation rather than annexation.[1] Since there is no way under existing Michigan statutes, however, for a city and a township to consolidate, annexation would be the only way that such "consolidation" could be effected.

Taking such a radical step might be the courageous thing to do. There is little doubt that metropolitan government for a long time could be thus achieved. This possibility certainly should not be overlooked, especially if Flint does not annex territory within the immediate future and the suburban area continues to grow. However, such a step would pose great problems. Very little of the land outside the areas

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[1] William S. Carpenter, Problems in Service Levels (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1940), p. 70.

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proposed for annexation (see Chapter V) is platted. Flint does not need the land for population or industrial expansion. The greatest advantage Flint would gain from acquisition of the territory would be in having a wide protective belt surrounding it. While this would be an important advantage, the political and administrative difficulties would tend to offset it.

The benefit to the township areas would be in increased services, though it can be asked whether the rural sections need municipal services, even of a limited type. An asset to the district as a whole would be the elimination of the township in the metropolitan area. Such elimination would reduce rural representation on the County Board of Supervisors and would strengthen Flint's position on the board.

A Continuance of the Present Situation

The maintenance of the status quo in regard to the governmental arrangement in the Flint area does not automatically rule out the possibility of a metropolitan-area-wide treatment. Intergovernmental cooperation is possible without any more statutes or change in status of any governmental unit. City, county, state, township, and (Beecher) metropolitan district officials can talk things over at any time, and such conferences could lead to working agreements on water supply and distribution, sewage disposal, drainage, roads, health matters, and planning. The difficulty is that such cooperation is unlikely.

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Laws that are already in existence could be utilized. Flint might seek to implement the provision of Section Four of the city charter, which provides that the city may set up a street and alley plan extending three miles beyond the city limits and may require conformance with it.[2] By ordinance the city council may empower the planning commission to plan the lay-out of streets and alleys in an area that would include crucial areas of the metropolitan district. The full extent of this power could not be ascertained without judicial interpretation, but it might very well be that the courts would interpret the statutory and charter provisions broadly enough to give the city substantial powers over the three-mile belt. The use of land in the fringe could be controlled to an extent by the exercise of the power to plan the location and character of streets and alleys.

There is provision in one of the city zoning ordinances entitled a "master plan for physical development of municipality."[3] This section provides that "the planning commission shall make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the city, including any areas outside the city limits which in the planning commission's judgment bear relation to city planning." As in the charter provision above, a key problem is how the city can impose its discretionary

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[2] City Charter of Flint, sec. 4; Michigan Statutes Annotated (1949), sec. 5.2081.

[3] City Charter of Flint, sec. 74 A.5.

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authority over outlying areas. This problem, however, could be met. As a last resort judicial writ could be used, and the city could go into court to ask for an injunction against the development of practices contrary to an established plan.

The city planning commission has sought to give some immediate and practical effect to the three-mile-limit authority. In its subdivision regulations issued in 1944, the commission ruled:

> Application for approval of a plan of subdivision of any land lying in, or within three miles of the corporate limits, of the City of Flint shall be made in writing by the owner ... to the City Planning Commission....
>
> The subdivision shall be in harmony with the Master Plan and the Official Map of the City.[4]

Acting under this rule, the commission might be able to get an injunction against non-conforming subdivision practices. Yet this rule, and others of the same nature that may be issued in the future, would have much surer legal standing if a Michigan statute were enacted to provide, as a Texas law provides, that if the Clerk of any county records a non-conforming plat, he shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to fine.[5]

That the city should be allowed to exercise some power bey

[4] City Planning Commission, Subdivision Regulations for the Platting of Land (City of Flint, Michigan, 1944).

[4] City Planning Commission, Subdivision Regulations for the Platting of Land (City of Flint, Michigan, 1944).

[5] Vernon's Annotated Revised Civil Statutes of the State of Texas (1942), art. 974a.

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Most cities throughout the nation are permitted by statute or constitutional stipulation to own land beyond corporate limits. Early in Michigan statehood the legislature gave cities power that extended in effect beyond the limits. Early in 1837 the legislature gave the common council of the City of Monroe the authority to compel "the abatement and removal of all nuisances within the limits of said city, and also for the distance of one-fourth of a mile beyond said limits in any direction."[6]

Flint does have some alternatives within the framework of existing statutes and ordinances for effecting cooperative arrangements with other governmental jurisdictions in the metropolitan region or for exercising control outside its boundaries. The question remains, however, whether any of the existing possibilities fall within the realm of the practical.

Incorporation of the Urban Fringe

A substantial proportion of the populated area on the outskirts of Flint could meet local government problems of a pressing nature by incorporation. Under Michigan law incorporation proceedings may be inaugurated by petition of the inhabitants of the area affected.[7] This petition must have the

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[6] Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan (1837).

[7] Michigan Statutes Annotated (1949), sec. 5.2085.

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signatures of one percent of the population residing in the area in the last Federal census, but in no case can the number of signers be less than one hundred. The signers must be "qualified electors who are free-holders." The boundaries of the new city must be described accurately in the petition and the petition shall state that no fewer than two thousand people reside in the area and that there is a population density of at least five hundred inhabitants per square mile.[8] The people in the area vote on the question of whether to incorporate, and if a majority of the ballots cast are in favor of incorporation, the returns and other pertinent data are filed with the Secretary of State and the city is incorporated.[9] Smaller areas may incorporate as fifth class home-rule cities if they have a population of more than 750 and less than 2,000 and a density of 500 per square mile.[10]

All of the three areas recommended for annexation by this paper could incorporate under the statutes described above, but only Areas I and II are at all suitable for separate municipal status. The Burton-Flint township area on the south and the Beecher district on the north would find that incorporation would enable them to meet a few of their most pressing problems--fire protection, zoning, and sewage disposal.

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[8] Ibid., sec. 5.2086.

[9] Ibid., sec. 5.2092.

[10] Ibid., sec. 5.2086.

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According to Arthur W. Bromage, incorporation "would tend to solve some of the most critical area problems in the more densely settled sections," but it would present financial demands which the new city would find exceedingly difficult to meet.[11] It means "a multiplication of governmental units, more administrative 'overhead' and produces a small city which must make heavy capital outlays for water supply and sewage treatment."[12] Some of the financial difficulties, it is true, could be lessened by a levying of special assessments and by effecting contractual arrangements with Flint for such services as fire protection, water supply, and sewage treatment. Some revenue could also be expected from state subventions. The statutes provide that a newly incorporated city shall be entitled to its pro rata share of "gasoline and motor vehicle weight tax revenues, intangibles tax revenues, state alcoholic liquor tax revenues, or any other state funds, moneys or grants which, by law, now or hereafter, are required to be distributed" to the local units of government.[13]

Some of the other difficulties can be weighed against obvious advantages. The present township governments are unwilling and unable to meet the needs of the urban fringe.

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[11] Arthur W. Bromage, "Fringe Dwellers Present Governmental Puzzle," National Municipal Review, XXXVI (Nov., 1947), p. 574.

[12] Ibid., p. 575.

[13] Michigan Annotated Statutes (1949), sec. 5.2093.

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They are, moreover, illogical areas for meeting the fringe problem. On all four sides of Flint, and especially on the north and south, township lines cut communities and neighborhoods in two, and thus make impossible effective and economical government of any of the fringe districts. Incorporation would eliminate at least partially this area problem, while at the same time it would create another. The urban fringe would still be separated arbitrarily from the remainder of the metropolitan community by corporate boundaries.

The Charter Township

In 1937 the Michigan legislature passed the so-called charter township law, which attempted to convert the township into a type of government suitable to the metropolitan area. Any township with a population of 5,000 inhabitants or more, or any township of 2,000 or more which adjoins a city of more than 25,000 population, may incorporate as a charter township and it shall thenceforth be a municipal corporation.[14] While the form of government remains basically the same as that of the township, the board of the charter township is empowered to appoint a township superintendent with the power to: enforce the laws and ordinances; manage and supervise public improvements and township utilities; administer township contracts and franchises; prepare and administer an annual budget; make recommendations to the township board; and, in other

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[14] Compiled Laws of Michigan (1948), sec. 42.1.

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respects, perform the functions and duties of a professional manager of a municipal corporation.[15] The charter township is empowered to: furnish fire and police protection; enact health regulations; regulate the use of streets, alleys, bridges and other public places; grant licenses; regulate the construction of buildings; make public improvements and levy special assessments; and establish a tax rate not in excess of ten mills.[16]

The charter township is thus a hybrid--part township and part municipality. Although it is in the eyes of the law a municipal corporation, it retains its former boundaries. Its initial disadvantage, therefore, is that it does not furnish a method of rationalizing local government areas. If all four townships in the Flint metropolitan district, for example, were to vote to become charter townships, the splitting of fringe communities by township lines would remain.

It does not appear that the idea of the township as a municipal corporation is entirely new with Michigan. In Pennsylvania, around Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, are first-class townships, the corporate powers of which are "hardly distinguishable from those of full-fledged municipal corporations."[17] Townships were first classified into first-class

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[15] Ibid., sec. 42.10.

[16] Ibid., sec. 42.12 ff.

[17] Victor Jones, Metropolitan Government (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1942), p. 155.

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and second-class categories in 1899. To-day the first-class townships have corporate powers that are similar to those of Pennsylvania municipalities and that are in keeping with the urban character of the majority of them.[18] The first-class township is not equal to the task set for it in Pennsylvania, and it has been recommended that "the lack of taxable resources, the possibility of cutting overhead costs and other factors make the consolidation or annexation of many of the townships desirable."[19] The charter township in Michigan may prove as inadequate as the Pennsylvania first-class township.

The township as a municipal governing body has not had extensive use in this country. Except for the Northeastern states, its use has been limited to serving as administrative and self-governing districts within counties. Outside the Northeast, the township "has been for the most part artificial ... and ... destined never to possess very much vitality. Artificial stimuli have kept the machinery in existence, but the township as a unit of self-government is still declining, and even in those seventeen states where it does exist it is unable to command the vigorous interest of the people."[20]

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[18] Philip B. Willauer, "The First Class Township," Report of the Pennsylvania Local Government Survey [transactions of The American Philosophical Society] (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1935), pp. 244-245.

[19] Ibid., p. 251.

[20] Kirk H. Porter, County and Township Government in the United States (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1929), p. 309.

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Arthur W. Bromage has made an exhaustive analysis of the new type of township government in Michigan.[21] Previous to the charter township act, urban townships in Michigan had been given power to supply fire protection, zoning and building codes, planning, and water and sewage services. According to Professor Bromage, "the presumed purposes of the charter township act are to facilitate the provision of these services."[22] Although invested with municipal functions, the township, under the 1947 statute, has a charter only in the limited sense. Instead it is rigidly bound by the provisions of state law.

The charter township has many disadvantages.[23] Rural areas must be joined with built-up areas. Villages are a part of the township, and wherever they exist as a part of a charter township, the tax burden is apt to be high. Representation on the county board of supervisors does not increase as a result of a township's coming under the 1947 statute. It is entitled to only one representative regardless of status or population. In Genesee County, Argentine Township with a population of 936 and Burton Township with a population of 10,909 in 1940 each have one representative on the county

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[21] Arthur W. Bromage, "Evaluating the New Form of Government Optional for Michigan Townships," Michigan Municipal Review, XX (Dec., 1947), pp. 135-136.

[22] Ibid., p. 135.

[23] Ibid., pp. 135-136.

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board of supervisors.[24]

The charter township has little to offer as a method of solving Flint's fringe problem. Adoption of it in the fringe townships would merely preserve the archaic local government areas already existing in Flint and would tend to preclude reorganization of the Flint metropolitan district. Furthermore, the charter township "appears to offer nothing that municipal organization does not offer except for the retention of the word 'township'."[25]

The Metropolitan District Authority

Under Michigan law, two or more cities, villages, townships or any combinations or parts of those governmental units may form metropolitan districts to provide parks, water, sewage, drainage, and transportation.[26] Each local unit of government which comes into the district must assent by majority vote to its inclusion, and each unit must cast a majority ballot for the proposed charter as drawn by the charter commission.[27]

The special authority has been used with sufficient frequency in metropolitan districts to become a familiar part

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[24] Frank Landers, Local Government in Genesee County, Michigan Pamphlets No. 14 (Bureau of Government, University of Michigan, 1941), p. 18.

[25] Bromage, op. cit., p. 136.

[26] Michigan Statutes Annotated, sec. 5.2131.

[27] Ibid., sec. 5.2138.

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of the political and administrative landscape. The Sanitary District of Chicago, which embraces 61 municipalities, the Port of New York Authority, with over two hundred municipalities included within its boundaries, and the Massachusetts Metropolitan District embracing about 40 incorporated places, are gigantic examples of the "ad hoc" authority in the United States.[28] The "ad hoc" district normally will have only one function, and "there has been little or no tendency to give additional functions to such authorities, once they have been created."[29] It is possible, however, as illustrated by the Michigan statute, to provide for a self-governing, locally controlled authority which would be empowered to handle many of the large-scale problems of a metropolitan area.

There are 522 special districts overlying 397 cities surveyed by the Bureau of the Census.[30] They include flood control, highway and bridge, sanitation, health and hospital, library, housing, water, and other types of districts. Since most of these districts are entrusted with only one activity, they do not contribute appreciably to an integration of

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[28] Charles M. Kneier, City Government in the United States (rev. ed., New York: Harper & Bros., 1947), pp. 361-362.

[29] Ibid., p. 363.

[30] U. S. Bureau of the Census, Governmental Units Overlying City Areas, Government Organization No. 3 (Washington, Oct., 1947), p. 7.

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governmental services in metropolitan areas.

At the present time there is one metropolitan district in the Flint area (the Beecher Metropolitan District) which functions only to furnish water service to portions of two townships. This is by no means a metropolitan district in the usual sense of the term. Such a district, by definition, should apply to an entire metropolitan area rather than to a segment of it. The metropolitan district act, in so far as it does not preclude the establishment of such authorities as the Beecher district, is badly conceived. The statute permits superimposing another governmental structure upon existing ones and adding to the chaotic array of governments at the local level. The only thing that commends the Beecher Metropolitan District is that it joins for limited purposes a community that is artificially divided by township lines.

Yet properly applied in the Flint area the metropolitan district authority would be an exceedingly logical and effective instrument for achieving efficient local government. With the cities of Flint and Mount Morris, the four metropolitan townships, and portions of outlying townships, especially to the south, joined under a metropolitan authority that used to the limit its statutory powers, a great stride forward toward effective local government would be taken in the Flint district. There are many functions which could be handled on a metropolitan basis, and which are permitted the metropolitan authorities. The problems of water supply and

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sewage disposal are larger than the city itself, and are far larger than a circumscribed area like the Beecher district. The planning and construction of arterial streets and highways on a metropolitan basis would be most advantageous to the area as a whole, and the same is true of parks and drainage. Real need exists for considering these problems on an area-wide basis, and the metropolitan district authority could be a means to that end.

County Reorganization or Consolidation

The county reorganization movement has never made great headway in the United States. Save for a few notable exceptions, the American county has been subjected to little administrative modernization. Even the eighty-one urban counties lying partially or wholly within the sixteen most populous metropolitan areas have hardly been touched by reorganization.[31] Los Angeles and Alameda counties in California were substantially reorganized, but Alameda county later returned to the long ballot, the unsatisfactory procedure of electing administrative officials.[32] There have been other reorganizations at scattered points. Henrico and Arlington counties in Virginia, for example, have adopted the county manager form of government. The Missouri Constitution of 1945 permits a type of county home-rule for counties over

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[31] Jones, op. cit., p. 164.

[32] Ibid.

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85,000 population.

The county in Michigan is to-day structurally the same kind of organization that it was in territorial days.[33] Numerous attempts have been made to get an amendment to the constitution that would permit counties to draft their own charters, but each attempt has been defeated at the polls. In 1920 the Detroit News and interested citizens sponsored a bill in the legislature "for the submission of a constitutional home rule amendment applicable to counties throughout the state, but it was defeated by rural groups."[34] From 1934 to 1944 four attempts were made to effect county reorganization by initiative petition, but they were all defeated at the polls.[35]

The outstanding defects of the Michigan system of county government are the unusually large boards of supervisors and the elective administrative officials. With such organization it is difficult for able personnel to serve the public efficiently; with mediocre and unqualified personnel, the county is wholly inadequate to the needs of an urban community.

In the Flint area a new and efficient county government

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[33] Robert S. Ford and Claude R. Tharpe, Reorganization of Michigan's County Government, Michigan Pamphlets #19 (Bureau of Government, University of Michigan, 1946), p. 2.

[34] Ibid., p. 9.

[35] Ibid., p. 10.

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could do much to solve the problems of the urbanized core of the county. County manager government, for example, could be entrusted with such area-wide functions as sewage, water supply, and roads and streets. Some disadvantages, of course, exist in this alternative. The county does not correspond with the metropolitan district, nor is reorganization likely to be accomplished easily in Michigan. Aside from the problem of area, the great needs of the county are: home rule; county management by a professional; and departmentalization.[36] Unfortunately, Michigan has been unable to achieve any of them.

City-county consolidation cannot be effected under present Michigan statutes, yet it has worked well in certain areas of the country and should not be overlooked in any review of the alternatives to annexation. In 1854 the boundaries of the city of Philadelphia were made co-terminous with the county of Philadelphia and units of government within the county were consolidated with the new city-county of Philadelphia. This action eliminated "nine incorporated districts, six boroughs, and 13 townships."[37] One student of metropolitan government has been led to comment that "the city-county of Philadelphia, for a few years after the consolidation of 1854, was the closest approximation to a metropolitan government we have had in the United States."[38]

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[36] Arthur W. Bromage, American County Government (New York: Sears Publishing House, 1933), p. 284.

[37] Kneier, op. cit., p. 372.

[38] Jones, op. cit., p. 85.

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City-county consolidation has been effected in such diverse places as New York, Philadelphia, New Orleans, and Honolulu.[39] The city and county of Honolulu includes all of the island of Oahu and some lesser and unimportant islands. It has a land area of 603 square miles and the greater part of it is rural. It was established by the territorial legislature in 1907, and by this act it was made a municipal corporation with all the powers "usually exercised by a city and by a county."[40]

There is a parallel to be drawn between Flint and Honolulu. If the city of Flint and the county of Genesee were combined, the result would very closely approximate, in population and area, the city and county of Honolulu. The Honolulu built-up area had a population in 1940 of 179,326, and the city and county together a population of 258,256.[41] Flint had a population in 1940 of 151,543 and the city and county together a population of 227,944.[42] The land area of the City and County of Honolulu and of Genesee County is approximately the same--603 and 644 respectively. If the combination of rural and urban sections in the city and county of Honolulu does not

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[39] John A. Rush, The City-County Consolidated (Los Angeles: published by the author, 1941).

[40] Ibid., p. 356.

[41] U. S. Bureau of the Census, Sixteenth Census of the United States: 1940. Population I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942), pp. 1209-1210.

[42] Ibid., pp. 517 and 504.

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work to the disadvantage of the local government, there is no reason why the same combination in Michigan would not also be satisfactory. As to the success of the Honolulu plan, an observer wrote in 1941 that "in the thirty-four years during which the people of the City and County of Honolulu have enjoyed the benefits of the city-county consolidated, they have been satisfied with the results and no attempt has been made to change back to the old system."[43]

City-county separation is another method of rearranging the local areas in the Flint metropolitan area. This would mean that Flint would need to expand to take in the metropolitan fringe and then separate from Genesee County. Such action is permitted under the Michigan Constitution. The constitution specifically reads that "when any city has attained a population of one hundred thousand inhabitants, the legislature may organize into a separate county without reference to geographical extent, if a majority of the electors of such city and of the remainder of the county in which such city may be situated voting on the question shall each determine in favor of organizing said city into a separate county."[44] Thus there are two hurdles which separation must leap: legislative obdurance and citizen resistance in the fringe areas.

City-county separation has been most widely used in

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[43] Rush, op. cit., p. 358.

[44] Art. VIII, sec. 2.

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Virginia, where all cities of 10,000 or over are removed from the jurisdiction of the county.[45] Thomas H. Reed believes that the reason "the State of Virginia leads the country in dealing with the problem of the urban fringe" is that in Virginia there is city-county separation and an effective method of annexation.[46] Some of the prominent cities of the United States have long been separated from their respective local counties: Baltimore, St. Louis, San Francisco, and Denver.[47]

Several attempts have been made recently to consolidate Dade County and Miami, Florida. In 1947 a constitutional amendment was adopted by the state legislature providing for the consolidation of Dade County, Miami, and five small towns into the new County of Miami.[48] Before becoming effective, however, the amendment had to be approved by the voters in the area affected, and after a desultory campaign, the amendment was defeated (May 25, 1948). Although about 90,000 votes were cast in the election, only sixty percent of the people

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[45] Kneier, op. cit., p. 372. In England the County Borough is a city of 50,000 or more which is free of the county "for most governmental purposes." There are about 85 county boroughs in England and Wales. William B. Munroe, The Government of European Cities (rev. ed., New York: The Macmillan Co., 1927), p. 24.

[46] Thomas H. Reed, "Annexation and the Urban Fringe Problem," Virginia Municipal Review, XXVI (Jan., 1949), pp. 5-9.

[47] Rush, op. cit.

[48] John F. Willmott, "City-County Consolidation," Notes and References, IV (Governmental Research Association, Sept., 1948), p. 2.

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voting took the trouble to mark their ballots on the consolidation issue, and consolidation lost, 23,526 to 28,337.[49] Consolidation, however, will be "a continuing issue in Dade County, because of the rapid growth of the suburban areas of the county and because of the financial difficulties now being encountered by the separate units of government."[50]

On January 1, 1949, Baton Rouge and East Baton Rouge Parish were consolidated, though both the city and parish remain as political subdivisions of the state.[51] The boundaries of the city of Baton Rouge were extended to include the contiguous urban areas skirting the old city. Two small incorporated places in the county were allowed to continue their corporate existence, but no further incorporations may take place.[52] The city council was set up with seven members and the parish council with nine members, but consistency of purpose between the two bodies was assured by making the city councilmen seven of the nine members of the parish council. The other two members are elected from the parish outside the city.

Because of the provision regarding city-county separation in Article VIII of the Michigan constitution, the

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[49] Ibid., p. 3.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Baton Rouge Chamber of Commerce, Proposed Plan of Government (Mimeo., June 26, 1947), p. 1.

[52] Ibid., pp. 1-2.

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extension of Flint's boundaries and the separation of the enlarged city from Genesee County has an existing legal foundation. County reorganization and city-county consolidation, on the other hand, would necessitate constitutional amendment and legislative action in order to be wholly effective. While the cities and the urban counties should continue to agitate for county reorganization and county home-rule, they might at the same time consider trying to effect city-county separation under Article VIII of the constitution. If Michigan could achieve adequate reapportionment, the legislative hurdle to separation would not be so formidable as it is now. There would still remain, however, the task of persuading residents in the built-up areas next to the city that separation would be desirable. In Flint's case, city-county separation could be questioned on the grounds that such action would cut the heart out of the county, since Flint is located roughly in the geographical center. It could be questioned, too, whether Flint does not owe enough to its agricultural hinterland to contribute something to the support of its government.

County government in Michigan as it is now organized is primarily government for a rural area. The fringe dweller, on the other hand, is an urbanite settling outside the city boundaries, and thus is dependent upon a rural government, except where a charter township or a special district may be developed. Even with a reorganization of the urban county to enable it more nearly to fill the governmental needs of an

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urban area, the fringe dweller still does not belong in the county. As an urbanite his place is in the city.

Sale of Services

The policy of Flint to-day is to restrict the extension of municipal services outside its legal boundaries. Water and sewer service is supplied to between two and three hundred users (the new Chevrolet plant to the southwest of the city and certain households immediately adjacent to the city limits), but further extensions are very carefully restricted. The water rate to outside customers, however, is fifty percent higher than the city rate.

Most of the cities over 100,000 reporting to the Municipal Year Book on charges to outside consumers for water service have established rates higher than the rates paid by city users. Forty-four of the fifty-seven cities reporting to the Year Book charge higher rates and only thirteen charge the same rate.[53] Thirty-five of these cities charge higher rates for sewerage service.[54]

Supply of services can be a method of integrating the metropolitan area. In most areas the fringe inhabitants supply the dynamics of annexation, as well as the opposition to it. "The sole reason motivating almost all fringe areas which [want] annexation [is] the desire to obtain the complete set

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[53] The Municipal Year Book 1947, p. 295.

[54] Ibid., p. 297.

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of services supplied by the city to its own residents."[55] The services desired in order of importance are usually sewers, water, fire protection, police protection, and schools.[56] Some cities such as Milwaukee refuse to service outside industrial plants in order to induce industries to sign annexation petitions.[57] "Duluth, which just received authorization in 1949 to supply municipal utilities to property owners outside the city, is expected to establish charges big enough to discourage location of industries outside the corporate limits."[58]

Upland, California has an unusual plan for selling municipal services outside the city boundaries. Rather than discourage urban development outside the city by refusing to extend services, Upland services the areas but demands "that within a reasonable time they hold an election and vote to become a part" of the city.[59] All applications for water service, however, must be accompanied by building plans and the plans must conform to "all city codes and requirements

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[55] John C. Bollens, "Annexation of Fringe Areas," Public Management, XXXI (Apr., 1949), 99.

[56] Ibid., p. 99.

[57] Winfield Best and Margy Ellin Meyerson, Annexation of Industrial Areas by Cities, Report of the American Municipal Association and the American Society of Planning Officials (Chicago, Sept., 1949), p. 3.

[58] Ibid., p. 3.

[59] R. G. Manley, "Fringe Area Building Restrictions for the City of Upland," Western City, XXII (April, 1946), 50.

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before a permit is issued for water service."[60] The city-user contract stipulates that water may be cut off by the city at any time, and the water rates set by the contract are higher than the rates in the city. The city expects that when the fringe dwellers are presented with the opportunity of deciding whether to subscribe to annexation, the contractural arrangement will "act as an incentive for these persons to vote themselves into the city."[61]

The Upland plan has very considerable merit. The extension of services fills the service void in the fringe area and prevents the growth of special districts and badly conceived incorporations. It is also recognition of the city's being the only instrument for adequately supplying the outside areas and thus of its being under a moral obligation to do so. On the other hand, the city is in a position to control the development of a fringe section by means of its service contracts, and presumably also to obtain popular consent to annexation.

If Flint were to embark upon the policy of selling water and other services to the fringe area, the scheme would have the merit of flexibility, but at the same time the considerable drawback of expanding "capital improvements for an indefinite and unplanned market."[62] Some of the objections to

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[60] Ibid., p. 50.

[61] Ibid., p. 50.

[62] Arthur W. Bromage, "Fringe Dwellers Present Governmental Puzzle," National Municipal Review, XXXVI (Nov., 1947), p. 574.

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such a program could be overcome if contractual arrangements similar to Upland's were followed. The city should contract only with individual users. It would be disastrous to the future expansion of the city if contracts were made with the special districts or the county or township governments. By means of the individual contract, the city could acquire a measure of extra-territorial authority, but that would vanish upon contracting to fringe governments.

If Flint continues, on the other hand, its present policy of withholding services, or extending them only in unusual circumstances, it can have the expectation of acquiring additional land areas through annexation when areas find themselves unable to furnish their own services. This is especially true if the city would engage in an aggressive annexation policy, one perhaps modelled after Milwaukee's.

Finally, the city should establish a service policy in regard to outlying clusters of population which are not a part of the contiguous fringe, but which nevertheless are sufficiently close at hand to merit service some time in the future. It would be advantageous to the whole metropolitan community for such places to be furnished the basic urban services. They should be serviced, therefore, either by means of direct sale by the city or through the instrumentality of the metropolitan district authority.

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Conclusion

From this chapter it is apparent that there are workable alternatives to annexation, some of which are possible to effect under existing law. City-township consolidation could not now be achieved (except through the annexation procedure), and while integrating the whole metropolitan area under the city and abolishing township government and probably special districts in the district, it would have the disadvantage of including within the city great expanses of agricultural lands. A continuance of the present situation has little advantage, except that some functional consolidation (such as city-county health unification) could be achieved.

Separate incorporation of fringe communities would have little advantage except in a very localized rationalizing of the boundaries of fringe governments. On the north and the south communities are now split by township lines and separate incorporation would integrate them. The charter township is a hybrid that has most of the drawbacks of the ordinary township and no merits that are not possessed in greater degree by the municipal corporation.

The metropolitan district authority could be an effective self-governing, locally-controlled agent of government which could handle many of the large-scale problems of the Flint metropolitan region, but the use to which it has been put in the Beecher district shows the unfortunate side of it. County reorganization has been tried many times in

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Michigan, but the necessary constitutional authority and enabling legislation has never been acquired. It is possible, however, for urban regions to effect city-county separation under Article VIII of the Michigan constitution. Sale of services to outlying areas would fill a void and might prevent the further growth of special districts and inhibit undesirable incorporations. If used according to the Upland plan, it could be a means of bringing the fringe into the city.

Whatever course is taken, whether it is an ambitious scheme for annexation of territory to the city, whether it is the establishment of a metropolitan district for the entire area to take care of area-wide functions, or whether it is merely an attempt to utilize effectively present city powers over the fringe region--whatever the course of action, the problem of how best to furnish governmental services in the Flint metropolitan area must be met.

Annexation is a "sine qua non"--none of the alternatives presented in this chapter are adequate. Annexation plus one of the alternatives--the Metropolitan Authority--presents the greatest promise for a solution of the governmental problems of the area.

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CHAPTER X

CONCLUSION

The Fringe Problem

The problem of the urban fringe is comparatively new to local government. Although in 1859 there was immediately to the west of Flint a "fringe" district known then as West Flint, only a scattering of dwelling units were in the area and it was absorbed in the annexation of 1871. Because of that annexation and the succeeding ones, Flint had no fringe problem until after 1920. While there were residences outside the city limits, no communities were established and allowed to develop for long, away from the city's jurisdiction.

It has already been noted that the fringe was in the first stages of formation even in the spring of 1920, when Flint's last and greatest annexation of land area was accomplished. Because the new city limits were not drawn to include all of the areas even then platted, one could have predicted in 1920 that communities would grow up contiguous with Flint, and yet set apart from it by a corporate boundary. The growth of the fringe, therefore, began with the last annexation.

Lack of foresight in re-drawing the city limits in 1920 made the fringe inevitable. In the late 1920's or early 1930's there was a change in community psychology which made annexation difficult politically. No further expansions of

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the boundaries of Flint have been attempted. Observing the situation now, one can not help being impressed with the inevitability of the fringe.

The increasing popularity of the motor car and its ever greater availability to all economic levels of the population, combined with the nearness of the suburban areas to downtown Flint and to the great automobile factories, completely eliminated the past advantage of location which the resident inside the city had over the resident outside. The inability of the city, moreover, to control population dispersion, and both the unwillingness and inability of the fringe governments to do so made the fringe all the more inevitable.

The great depression of the 1930's had its influence. There was a marked increase in subsistence agriculture. The dearness of money and the resulting tax delinquencies made city services "luxuries" that were sacrificed. The real property tax in many instances became a burden to non-productive property, and that led residents to flee the city or to legislate tax limitations. Thus the 15-mill limitation was voted into the city charter in 1934.

There was no penalty for land speculation. On the contrary, the laxity of tax delinquency laws permitted owners of delinquent lots to write off most of their taxes periodically and thereby retain title to the lots. While the retention of subdivided lands in the hands of speculators

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had the immediate effect of depriving the city of its rights in the land, acquired through taxation, the long-range effect has been to keep lots off the market and thus inflate their price. Another effect has been to keep the ownership of vacant parcels of land in the city diversified. Such diversification has made accumulation of lots by builders exceedingly difficult, and has thus inhibited post-war building.

A survey of the past thirty years, and the life and growth of Flint during that period, reveals the complicated aspects of the fringe problem. While it cannot be claimed that there is any one solution to the problem, and while it should be emphasized that the problem has its economic and social phases, still one conclusion is inescapable. The kernel of the whole problem is the corporate boundary line.

Local Government and the Area of Jurisdiction

Of all the complex problems of local government, no one is more perplexing than the determination of the proper area for carrying out local government functions. In every type of local government, rural and urban, complications arise from the irrational boundaries which afflict cities and towns, counties and townships, special authorities and school districts from Maine to California and from Canada to the Gulf. While the problem exists in the rural areas, the extent and the urgency of it is small, compared with the extent and urgency in the urban areas, and especially in the 140 metropolitan districts in the nation.

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In Flint, the problem exists in its fullest extent and urgency. One county, two cities, two special districts,[1] four townships and over a dozen school districts[2] overlap or lie close together in the approximately 144 square miles that is metropolitan Flint as defined by the Bureau of the Census. The same local government services now offered by over twenty-one governmental jurisdictions lying wholly within the metropolitan district could be furnished by one city, one county, and one school district. Although there is a continuing tendency to consolidate school districts, no other visible evidence of metropolitan integration can be seen in the metropolitan area of Flint.

Metropolitan Flint presents none of the complicated problems of integration found in so many metropolitan districts in the United States. There are no geographical bars, no state lines, no dozens of incorporated places jealous of their own identity. Where the greatest metropolitan regions of the country present knottier subjects for governmental solution than are presented by many state governments, Flint's problem and the solution to it is relatively simple. It is to be found in the razing of most of the political boundaries in the area.

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[1] The Burton Township water district is here counted as a special district.

[2] In 1947 there were 17 school districts lying wholly within the Flint Metropolitan District (cf. Hughes, op. cit., pp. 7-9). Since then, however, there have been several consolidations.

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While the fringe problem, as detailed in this paper, is not the same as the metropolitan problem, the two of them could be solved in simultaneous actions. First, the city of Flint should be made coextensive with the built-up area--the political city corresponding with the natural city. Secondly, a metropolitan district could be established with limits that include all of the metropolitan district of Flint. At least five activities are of primary concern to the entire district: water supply and distribution, sewage disposal, planning and zoning, health regulation, and education. The Flint city school district could be made metropolitan in scope, and would not be a responsibility of the metropolitan authority. The promotion of the public health and the administration of community health controls could be effectively controlled by a combined city-county health unit, and here, at least, some hope now exists for handling a metropolitan activity on an integrated basis.

The planning of land use and the imposition of zoning controls upon land is inescapably a metropolitan function, and is fully as important as water and sewage. With adequate controls, the growth of the metropolitan community could be aided and blight combatted. Planning and zoning should be handled exclusively at the metropolitan level. Water and sewage, on the other hand, should probably continue to be a city function. With an expanded city the sewage problem would be confined almost entirely within the municipal

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boundaries. Water mains, however, could be extended far more widely than sewer lines and thus water, if not remaining in the hands of the city, could be made a joint city-metropolitan authority project.

The solution of the area problem in Flint lies with the extension of the city boundaries and the establishment of a metropolitan authority the limits of which truly correspond with the metropolitan district. None of the alternatives to annexation, in themselves, offer an acceptable solution. Continuing with the status quo promises only integration of the health function, and at best health and education. Sale of services is apt to take away the chief force for metropolitan integration. The charter township solves nothing and instead gives rise to further rigidity in the present structure of local government. County reorganization or city-county consolidation has promise, but little hope of necessary state enabling legislation exists. City-county separation is possible for Flint--at least it is constitutionally permissible--but while solving the fringe problem, it would aggravate the dislocations of the metropolitan region as a whole. These and other possibilities cannot be overlooked, but they offer relatively little promise as effective solutions of the area problem in the government of Flint and its environs.

The New City

The city of Flint operates under the council-manager

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form of government; most of its employees work under a civil service system; its departments are operated by professionals. Yet, Flint is ringed by four townships that are faltering and inefficient governments, and there are other areas of jurisdiction in the Flint Metropolitan District that are neither systematic, effective, nor logical.

In discussing the "splintering" of local governments, Carl Chatters expressed the belief that "city governments are being broken up into a group of independent 'kingdoms'."[3] The independent units that Chatters had in mind were 'ad hoc' municipal corporations (the special authority, such as the Beecher Metropolitan District) and mammoth city departments that were not properly integrated into the governmental structure. But the same terminology can be used to describe the units of local government with conflicting jurisdictions. The envy and suspicion with which fringe governments, whether townships, villages, cities, or counties, regard the central city is notorious. Yet for all this fragmentation, for all this suspicion and envy, the separate jurisdictions are not entities, but are themselves parts of the whole community.

Every metropolitan community is afflicted to greater or less extent with the centrifugal tendency of population. In the Chicago area, "more than 10,000 housing units have been built in the unincorporated areas of Cook County since

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[3] Carl Chatters, "The Splintering of Local Governments," Michigan Municipal Review, XXII (July, 1949), p. 101.

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1940. In most instances, the consumers of these units must accept inconvenient transportation, little or no fire protection, less police protection and, in addition, must in the beginning lay out and improve entirely new building sites."[4] The dispersion of population is a problem which government must control and direct, but government cannot do it if the community is split by artificial political boundaries. What has happened to Chicago could, to a lesser extent, happen to Flint. Indeed, there is indication that it is already happening. Only area-wide planning and control can meet the need. The central city in most cases has the capabilities, administrative and financial, to bring the proper governmental remedies to the cure of fringe maladies. The only barrier in most cases is a political one.

If there is anything wrong with annexation as a method for solving the fringe problem, it is to be found chiefly in the legal disabilities which are put upon it. Cost should be given consideration. Unless careful estimates, however, show that overwhelming deficits may be anticipated, cost should be given only incidental weight. Where the anticipated deficit is large, the area to be annexed is probably a district with only a limited tax base, such as a working-class section. In such a case, it might be advantageous for the state to carry a part of the burden and subsidize the city's annexation

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[4] Frederick T. Aschman, "Dead Land," Land Economics, XXV (Aug., 1949), pp. 241-242.

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program for the first five years. Thereby, the state would aid in the redevelopment of a depressed area.

The area to be taken in also can hardly be given more than a secondary place. A British local government boundary commission set up by the Local Government act of 1945 has suggested that "boroughs should possess within their boundaries what an aerial photograph would show to be one town, with some addition for future growth."[5] This criterion is as adequate as any that can be compressed within a short sentence. It suggests that all of the built-up area of a community plus a sufficiency of vacant land for its future development should be included within the new city. The built-up area can be accurately delimited, but what is a sufficiency of vacant land for the future? While some trends in population size and direction of dispersion can be accurately forecast, the amount of land needed for the future can only be estimated. The amount of area to be taken into a city requires, in the final analysis, a value judgment. Therefore, it becomes, like the factor of cost, a decision to be made by the local legislative body or the local community as a whole.

Annexation of vacant lands can be advantageous. When the city has a long history of regulation and planning of

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[5] Bryan Keith-Lucas, "Local Government Areas 1834-1945," Public Administration, XXVII (Autumn, 1949), p. 215. This is a review of the book by the same name.

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land use, it should take in an area before it has developed. Kansas City is an example of a city which is taking in a large block of land that is only twenty percent developed. If more cities were to have the same degree of foresight, they would be in an excellent position to control the evolution of their new areas. Such developmental planning and control of land use has already shown its promise. This promise has been "fully demonstrated in the case of many small towns that were planned from the start. These communities, largely as a result of such planning, are comparatively free of the maladjustments and deficiencies common in unplanned communities. They offer their inhabitants not only a more satisfactory environment, but, in a great measure a more attractive existence."[6]

The legal barrier is the only formidable hurdle which must be overcome to make annexation effective. That legal barrier is the stipulation in most state annexation laws that a popular referendum must be taken before annexation can be effected. In states like Texas, Missouri, and Virginia a small minority of the total community cannot nullify the will of the majority. These states have conclusively shown, just as the past in Flint has shown, that annexation by the parent city can keep the community integrated under one government.

One government for one community can be achieved in

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[6] Ladislas Segoe, op. cit., p. 555.

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most of the urban areas of the United States. Flint can achieve it with comparative ease. Only the popular referendum stands in the way. The great advantage that Flint enjoys over most central cities in metropolitan areas is that its suburban fringe is unincorporated. A vacuum exists which the city would fill, if it were to embark upon a vigorous policy of expansion. Extension of the boundaries is the way to community integration. Expansion alone can create the new city.

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APPENDIX

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APPENDIX I

ANNEXATION PROVISIONS IN THE CHARTERS OF SOUTHWESTERN CITIES

Charter of the City of Austin (1938), sec. 2a

"The City Council shall have power by ordinance to fix the boundary limits of the City of Austin; and to provide for the alteration and the extension of said boundary limits, and the annexation of additional territory lying adjacent to the City, with or without the consent of the territory and inhabitants annexed."

Charter of the City of San Antonio (1931), par. 2 of sec. 2

"The Commissioners of said City shall have power by ordinance to, from time to time, otherwise fix and change the bounds and limits of said City and provide for the extension thereof and the annexation of additional territory lying adjacent to said City with or without the consent of the territory and inhabitants annexed...."

Charter of Kansas City (1946), Art. I, sec. 5

"The city may at any time or times extend its limits by amendment of this charter in the manner provided by the Constitution and laws relating to said city. The proposal therefor shall be made in the form of a proposed amendment of the charter, specifying with accuracy the new line or lines to which it is proposed to extend such limits. All courts of this state shall take judicial notice of the limits of said city now and when thus extended and of all the steps in the proceedings leading thereto."

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APPENDIX II

ASSESSED VALUATIONS AND TAX RATES, FLINT, MICHIGAN 1913-1930

Year	Assessed Valuation	Rates[a]	
		State and County	City[b]
1913	$33,903,675	$ 5.68	$15.58
1914	35,267,451	4.93	15.15
1915	37,166,190	5.90	14.85
1916	47,594,444	5.33	17.47
1917	60,759,494	6.62	18.38
1918	67,103,785	7.10	18.30
1919	104,253,224	7.80	20.20
1920	140,574,630	7.36	22.44
1921	144,396,525	9.71	24.89
1922	136,212,970	9.34	23.26
1923	141,245,600	8.59	25.01
1924	154,285,570	7.89	26.82
1925	159,357,070	8.93	27.07
1926	164,169,952	8.64	30.61
1927	176,477,939	10.05	29.45
1928	192,015,900	9.35	31.15
1929	204,059,700	11.23	30.97
1930	225,371,470	10.75	30.00

[a] Per thousand-dollar valuation.

[b] Including the rate levied for schools.

Source: Financial or audit reports for the various years, Office of the Director of Finance, Flint, Michigan.

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APPENDIX III

CRITERIA DETERMINING SUITABILITY OF LANDS FOR ANNEXATION

Exhibit A

The English Experience

(1) "Can the enlarged area be capably and economically administered?

(2) "Will the extension affect 'the good and economical government' of the areas concerned?

(3) "Did the inhabitants of the area to be incorporated in the (city) agree to the change?

(4) "Is the area an outgrowth of the (city)?

(5) "Would the (city), if the extension were not granted, be losing a rateable value which, in all equity, belonged to it?

(6) "Are the rating adjustments between the incorporated areas likely to be reasonable?"

(7) "Is the town well administered?"

(8) Have the areas to be incorporated 'a community of interests'?

> Is the city the amusement and shopping center for the area? Are the city and area to be annexed linked by common industries? Do they share such public services as transport, sewage, water, etc.?

(9) "Should the town, because it is almost wholly developed, have its area extended to allow for expansion?"

Source: Herman Finer, English Local Government, London: 1946.

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Exhibit B

Virginia Statutory Provisions

(1) Compact and Contiguous.

"The area proposed for annexation must be contiguous to the city and constitute with the city a reasonably compact body of land."

(2) Capable of improvement.

"The area must be adapted to municipal improvements. This means physically adapted and mountains or swamps may be included when necessarily embraced in the compact body of land."

(3) Urban in character.

"The area must be urban in character or needed by the city for the development of the city within the reasonably near future.... 'Reasonably near future' has never been defined, but ten years has not been deemed too long."

(4) Community of interest.

"There must be a community of interest between the city and the area proposed for annexation. This requirement is met by evidence that inhabitants of the area proposed for annexation come to the city to work, trade, worship, secure hospital care, or find amusement. Similarly it can be shown by the fact that residents of the city work in plants in the area proposed for annexation."

(5) Necessary and expedient.

"The necessity of the annexation from the point of view of the city is established by showing the effect of the outward movement of population on its finances. The need of the annexation area for city services and its inability to finance them are enough to prove necessity from its point of view. 'Expediency' has no clear meaning beyond that of 'necessity'."

Source: Thomas H. Reed, "Progress in Metropolitan Integration," Public Administration Review, IX, 1, pp. 5-6.

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Exhibit C

Judicial Doctrine in Missouri

City boundaries may be extended to take in contiguous lands:

(1) "when they are platted and held for sale or use as town lots;

(2) whether platted or not, if they are held to be brought on the market and sold as town property when they reach a value corresponding with the views of the owner;

(3) when they furnish the abode for a densely settled community, or represent the actual growth of the town beyond its legal boundary;

(4) when they are needed for any proper town purpose, as for the extension of its streets, or sewer, gas or water system, or to supply places for the abode or business of its residents, or for the extension of needed police regulation;

(5) when they are valuable by reason of their adaptability for prospective town uses."

Source: State v. Kansas City, 134 S.W. 1022; these rules were first laid down in Vestal v. Little Rock, 15 S.W. 891, 16 S.W. 291, and adopted and approved in Copeland v. St. Joseph, 29 S.W. 281, and Parker v. Zeisler, 73 Mo. App. 537.

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APPENDIX IV

POST-WAR ANNEXATION STUDIES

Post-war interest in annexation has resulted in a certain amount of systematic study of various urban communities. Studies of three such communities will be abstracted in the following pages. They are Modesto, California; Dayton, Ohio; and Norfolk, Virginia.

Modesto, California[1]

Modesto is not a large city, either in area or population. As of June, 1947 it had an estimated population of 19,000, and an area of 3.55 square miles. It is ringed by a series of built-up sections, described by the authors as the inner fringe, which have an estimated population greater than that of the city itself--22,353.

Believing that the fringe area of Modesto presents a governmental problem, the authors suggest three ways of coping with it: separate incorporation of parts of the fringe; setting up various special service districts to supply the built-up sections of the fringe with municipal services; and annexation of the built-up areas by the city.

The great difficulty with the first alternative--incorporation--is that there is only one "self-contained

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[1] James Wilson McGrew and Arthur Bruce Winter, A Study of the Fringe Areas of Modesto, California (Denver: University of Denver, 1948).

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community outside of the city proper."[2] The remainder of the fringe, therefore, could not be considered suitable for incorporation. This one community, if it should incorporate, moreover, would probably find that establishing a number of essential municipal services would be exceedingly expensive.

The second alternative--the special district--would give the fringe inhabitants the opportunity of setting up as desired the services which they feel are needed. Under California law a district can be set up to supply virtually any type of municipal service. The authors of this study conclude, however, that the special district is expensive and not especially efficient. Property tax levies in special districts of Stanislaus County, the county which includes Modesto, rose 231 percent between 1943 and 1948, whereas the "combined levies of all the incorporated cities of the county rose 66 percent during the same period."[3] It is exceedingly doubtful that the difference in these percentages is reflected in the quality of service in these two types of political jurisdictions.

Annexation, the third alternative, is the most promising of the three. Some of the advantages of this alternative are that it will give the city room for expansion, will provide the best means for supplying the fringe areas with municipal services, will "substantially lower" fire insurance

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[2] Ibid., p. 111.

[3] Ibid., p. 125.

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rates outside the city, will integrate the community politically, and will give the people in the areas absorbed "a voice in the government of the political jurisdiction which plays the largest role in their lives."[4]

The disadvantages cited are that annexation would put a financial burden on the city, and would raise taxes in the areas absorbed.

Unquestionably taxes would be raised in the fringe after its absorption by the city, and no doubt annexation would necessitate additional capital outlay and operating expenses. But it can be seriously questioned whether the estimates of this study, especially in regard to capital outlays, are reliable. The method for arriving at these estimates was to query each department head in the city government. That these department heads were very generous in estimating capital outlay is indicated by the calculations of the chief of the Modesto fire department. At present, Modesto with an area of 3.55 square miles has three fire stations and at the time of this study was building another which was to be completed in September, 1948. Even so, the fire chief estimated that three new fire stations would be needed were the inner fringe annexed. This would give the new city of about 40,000 people seven fire stations. Ann Arbor, Michigan, with about the same number of people and an

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[4] Ibid., p. 130.

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area that would be roughly comparable to the expanded Modesto, has one fire station, and still has an excellent fire-loss record.

The additional expense of operating the enlarged city should, according to the study, be met by increases in tax receipts, state subventions, license fees, fines, inspections, and water receipts.

To summarize, this study of the fringe problem of the small city of Modesto, California, revealed that there was a built-up area surrounding the city which actually exceeds in population the population of the city. It is an area which is supplied only with the most rudimentary of urban services, which has no effective means of controlling land use, and which has no adequate public health protection. Annexation is suggested as the most effective means of correcting these inadequacies.

As the first step toward making a consistent annexation policy, the authors suggest the formation of a board composed of city planning, engineering, and health officials, and representatives of the urban fringe. This board would review all ordinances and other parts of official or semi-official city policy which affects annexation. The board would also act as a kind of liaison body between city and fringe. Since a popular vote is required on all annexations in California, this latter function could easily become the most important aspect of the board's action.

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Dayton, Ohio[5]

Dayton, a city of approximately 250,000 population, is surrounded by a fringe population of 35,000. This fringe area is typical of most in that it is growing more rapidly, in terms of population, than is the parent city. Faced with this situation, the staff of the city planning board made a study of the possibilities of annexing the fringe area.

Dayton's population growth has been rapid in the past, and since 1805, when it was incorporated, it has fairly consistently extended its area. The largest annexation of this century was one of 4.2 square miles in 1909, but smaller land areas have been added to the city in 1918, 1923, 1926, 1930, 1931, and 1941. Unfortunately for Dayton these additions have lagged behind the extensions of the "natural city."

Certain facts concerning annexation can be gleaned from the city's action in the past:

(1) Annexed areas usually do not pay their own way immediately;

(2) Annexation does not guarantee an immediate high level of services to the newly absorbed areas;

(3) Annexation encourages "high grade" business and residential development;

(4) Annexation creates further pressures on the city government for municipal services;

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[5] Dayton City Plan Board, Annexation Study Dayton Metropolitan Area (Dayton, Ohio: January, 1946); also Dayton Chamber of Commerce, Department of Governmental Affairs, Unification (Dayton, Ohio: January, 1946). The latter is a summary of the City Plan Board's study.

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(5) Property value in annexed areas is apt to increase because of the extension of city services and the development those services inspire;

(6) Annexation of small strips of land does not permit proper land-use control and boundary protection.

The Dayton metropolitan area includes five incorporated places in addition to Dayton itself.[6] A small city with a 1940 population of 7,652 joins Dayton on the south, and a village with a population of 227 lies about a mile to the eastward. The other cities and villages lie toward the outskirts of the metropolitan district. The total population outside Dayton in 1940 was 60,794, with 16,369 people living in incorporated places (cities or villages) and 44,426 living in unincorporated areas.

The Dayton study estimated that, in 1946, there were 35,000 people in the nine areas which it recommended for annexation. Policing, health and other community problems were larger in these sections than the present rural-type governments can manage. Incorporation as cities or villages would solve some of these problems, but would be very expensive.

The exact computation of cost of annexation is difficult either before or after the thing is accomplished. It is probable that the annexed areas will not pay their own way

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[6] United States Bureau of the Census, 16th Census of the United States. Population, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 838.

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at first. Relatively few major improvements would have to be made to-day. A revenue bond issue of uncertain amount would probably have to be made, however, in order to purchase a water distribution system and a sewage plant that now operate in the fringe. In the next five years, there would also be a need for capital expenditures estimated at $275,000, mainly for public safety equipment.

The study seeks to estimate what the increase in general operating costs would be if all nine of the suggested areas were taken into the city. With present-day operating costs extended on a per capita basis, the annual additional operating costs for all areas would be about $475,000. This amount is somewhat more than the annual additional revenue that might be expected from the new areas.

Dayton to-day is largely built-up. With a population density of about 10,000 per square mile, and with 85 percent of its land occupied, Dayton is in need of more land for residential, business and industrial expansion. The Dayton study concludes, therefore, that the city must encourage annexation as an alternative to encirclement. All or any part of nine recommended areas should be annexed, and any contiguous areas whose citizens want to join the city should be admitted.

A final recommendation of the study, and a most important one, is that the city "accept subsidization of strategically located undeveloped areas as justifiable to permit

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boundary control and protection."[7]

Norfolk, Virginia[8]

In 1940 Norfolk had a population of 144,332. It was estimated that, during the war and post-war years, population increased by at least sixty percent.

In the metropolitan district of which Norfolk is the center, there are three central cities: Norfolk, Newport News, and Portsmouth.[9] Since Newport News is across Hampton Roads, however, it presents no barrier to the extension of the Norfolk city limits. Portsmouth adjoins Norfolk, as does the small city of South Norfolk. The respective population figures for these places in 1940 were 50,745 and 8,038. No other incorporated places are close enough to Norfolk to inhibit its growth.

With a present-day estimated population of 230,000 and an area of about 35 square miles, Norfolk is about 83 percent developed. Much of the undeveloped land is not available for heavy industry. That available for residences is scattered, and much of it undesirable.

If there is no annexation, Reed predicts that population

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[7] Dayton City Plan Board, op. cit., p. iii.

[8] Thomas H. and Doris D. Reed, Report on Annexation City of Norfolk and Environs (Wethersfield, Conn., Oct. 25, 1948), processed.

[9] U. S. Bureau of the Census, 16th Census of the United States. Population, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1942), p. 1109.

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growth not only will end but will probably soon start a reverse movement--decline. The Hampton Roads area seems destined for great industrial and commercial expansion, but the city cannot benefit much from it by maintaining its present boundaries.

Reed advises the annexation of three areas with a total population of about 50,000 and an area greater than the city's present one. If his recommendations are followed, the city will more than double in area--from 35 square miles to about 85 square miles!

Annexation has already been too long delayed. In 1940, it would have been relatively easy and inexpensive, and it would have meant that the areas outside the city would have had controlled growth, rather than unregulated growth. The three districts recommended for annexation have felt "the disastrous effects of practically unregulated growth."

Cost of annexation will be very great. Reed estimates that the first two years could result in a deficit of over $6,000,000, though much of this figure comes from inflated estimates by city departments of what the annexation would cost them: "we believe that the city manager could and would in practice, bring down appropriations for city operation in the areas studies equivalent to 25 percent of the total estimates...." Even so, the cost of annexation would be high. Yet no matter how high it is, conclude the authors, the city must annex if it wishes to keep itself from decay and gradual decline.

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APPENDIX V

FRINGE OPPOSITION TO ANNEXATION

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

In the early part of 1949 an attempt was made to annex the unincorporated communities of Galewood, Urbandale, and Burlingame in Wyoming Township to Grand Rapids. While there was considerable support of the move by residents in the areas proposed for annexation, the residents who opposed were of the two groups much the more vocal. The "G-U-B" area voted down the proposal to join the city in the Election of April 4, 1949.

Excerpts from opposition literature are given in the following exhibits.

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EXHIBIT 'A'

G-U-B ELECTION FACTS

Published in the Interest of Every Home Owner and Taxpayer by the WYOMING BOOSTERS

Why You Should VOTE NO on ANNEXATION

The issues concerning the annexation of Galewood, Urbandale, and Burlingame by the City of Grand Rapids have become so involved and confused that a majority of people in this area seriously doubt any benefits that could come from annexation.

We know that one side says one thing about taxes and the other side says something else.

We know that we stand a chance to lose control of our schools by annexation.

We know that the water issue has turned out to be no issue at all.

We know that promises are one thing and the fulfillment of promises is something else again.

Of one thing we feel sure. (in spite of the almost frantic efforts of the pro-annexationists, the threats and the obvious efforts to enlist the support of the City Hall and the Grand Rapids Press), we feel sure that annexation carries with it certain angles (seen and unseen) that eventually will cost every taxpayer more money.

It would appear there has been a deliberate attempt to fog up the water situation. The safest conclusion you can make is that you will be served with the good water from the Township supply whether or no annexation.

Ask Yourself These QUESTIONS

Why is the City Hall so anxious to annex the G-U-B area, when once before there was opposition to it because the city had "too much hay on the fork"? ?

? Is it because this is no longer a "hay community", or because the area now has something valuable to contribute to the city?

Is it because it is going to cost the city money, or because many millions will be needed in the near future to build another pipe line to Lake Michigan? ?

? Is the City Hall in favor of annexation because it wants to share its benefits, or because money must soon be collected and spent to build an adequate sewage disposal plant?

Is the police protection of this area going to cost the city money or can it be "protected" from Hall and Ionia at little or no extra cost? ?

? Is fire protection going to cost the city money or would the apparatus come from Hall and Grandville at little or no extra cost to the city?

Hasn't the City Hall already said that now it looks as if annexation might prove "a profitable adventure" for the city? ?

? Will the City Hall be satisfied to leave our real estate assessed valuations as they are or would they be averaged up to the city level?

Why has publicity concerning the effects of the Bates Bill (allowing for increased millage on taxation) been almost eliminated from the news lately? ?

? Why has publicity concerning the cost of the much needed water supply and sewerage improvements in the city been so conspicious by its absence?

Why should you lose control of your schools and be absorbed by a larger impersonal body? ?

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EXHIBIT 'B'

Read These Opposing Views!

Excerpts from The Grand Rapids Press

(which favors annexation)

MARCH 11 . . .

"Wyoming township and Grand Rapids residents will vote April 4 on whether the Galewood-Urbandale-Burlingame area should be annexed to the city. Grand Rapids voters should be for the move. It would mean adding to their city one of the most rapidly growing suburban areas in the metropolitan district."

- Grand Rapids gets "one of the most rapidly growing suburban areas." Right! But what does the area get?

"Residents of the other three communities involved should be equally in favor of annexation because of the many benefits that step would bring them."

- Name three — for sure!

"Opponents of the proposal make no mention of the fact that annexation would give the three Wyoming communities an assured water supply, at the same rate paid by the present Grand Rapids users."

- No comment! Why? Because G U B has an assured water supply according to qualified engineers, and because annexation does not mean city water.

"There was a time, some years ago, when annexing the area may have had little to offer the city . . . "

- Naturally the city wasn't interested when the area had little to offer in return.

MARCH 18 . . .

"I don't believe the G U B area can be forced to accept township water if it doesn't want to," Dunham told a group of city officials at the city hall who sought information on reports published in a suburban weekly that brought queries from G U B residents."

- Name three!

"Attending the conference were City Manager Frank H. Goebel, Public Service Director Charles M. Darling, Water Works Registrar, Lew H. Boynton and Edward B. Alger, one of the G U B annexation leaders."

- Ah!

MARCH 19 . . .

"Nobody can say definitely at this point what would happen with respect to the township's $830,000 bond issue to finance its own water, should G U B come into the city."

- Now it comes out! We say annexation does not mean city water — necessarily.

"Dunham admits that some litigation over the water question is to be expected if G U B come into the city."

- So annexation does not mean city water if there has to be litigation. How will the courts decide?

"To many persons their (the opposition's) current argument will look like a last desperate attempt to win a losing battle."

- Who's desperate? Who is making the boycott threats? And other threats? Who have a losing battle on their hands?

MARCH 24 . . .

"City school officials Thursday squelched statements published in suburban papers to the effect that the two schools (Lee and Godfrey) might be 'discontinued' if they came into the city system."

- What was said is this: "Nor have we any assur- that for one reason or another our two schools would not be discontinued altogether." Not that they "might be discontinued." Well, have we that assurance? From whom?

"Other propaganda is to the effect that the Grand Rapids board is $451,000 in debt."

- This is what was stated: "The city school system will end its year with an **operating** deficit of $451,000." Nothing was said about "debt," nor G U B having to assume this indebtedness. You will note how the opposition twists everything.

"Simultaneously, Alger revealed that a bonded indebtedness of $103,000 on Lee school exists."

- But what he didn't say was that the school already has $90,000 of the money in non-callable bonds with which to take up this indebtedness, plus a $15,000 balance this year. Remember what we have been saying about half-truths?

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EXHIBIT 'C'

Annexation and the Township

What Loss of the GUB Area Will Mean

Township Residents have an important stake in the election Monday.

If the GUB area is annexed by Grand Rapids this is how you will be affected:

TAXES UP OR SERVICE DOWN

KEEP THE GUB AREA IN THE TOWNSHIP

1 Township tax revenue at present is $220,000. Real estate taxes produce $100,000 and the sales tax (refunded by the State) produces $120,000.

Of this amount the GUB area contributes MORE THAN ONE-THIRD, or about $75,000.

That will mean that the Township will then have to function on about $145,000.

It is doubtful if the Township can continue to function properly on an income reduced that much. If that is true, what will it mean to residents of the Township outside the GUB area?

Simply this: (as you must realize) reduced services or increased taxes! (Increased Township taxes means less taxes for schools).

Is that what you want? Of course not. Then, Vote No on Annexation.

TOWNSHIP WATER SYSTEM

2 Annexation of the GUB area would endanger the extension and operation of the Township water system, so important to the areas which now have no water system. The issue is not clear at the present time, but in the event of annexation, there will be litigation to determine the status of the Township system.

The major part of the burden of extending and completing this system could fall on the Township residents in outlying areas.

BE SURE TO VOTE

3 Your vote for or against annexation will be counted on Grand Rapids' side of the fence.

If you do not want to lose the GUB area, its tax contribution to the Township and its growth and increasing progress, you'll vote No on annexation.

Vote Against Annexation!

Wyoming Boosters

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EXHIBIT 'D'

Y E S !

Let's Tell the TRUTH

Not a Half Truth ! Not a Part Truth ! Not a "Friend of Annexation" Truth, But,

THE PLAIN TRUTH !

You may have seen (and read) a recently published, and unsigned, yellow sheet headed "Annexation News. Let's Tell the Truth". Yellow was the proper color to use. Yellow was the only color for such a screaming wail of defeat. It was yellow all the way through.

When Will You Get Township Water ?

This yellow sheet asks sarcastically when will we get water! "July 1st. Do they mean this year — or 1952?"

WE MEAN JULY 1, 1949. That's when you'll get Township water pumped to your homes at from 10 to 15 pounds more pressure than you are now getting from the City.

That's temporary! By September or October Township water will come from a 300,000 gallon elevated storage tank located at 3200 Clyde Park Avenue. The pressure will not be altered. It will be 70 pounds.

How Much Will You Pay for Water ?

You will pay at the rate of 10½ cents per hundred cubic feet, or $2.10 for 2000 cubic feet, plus a $1.75 readiness to serve charge, for a total of $3.85.

The unsigned yellow sheet, referred to, shows the rates, but then adds $2.50 "debt service charge to be paid every quarter for at least 15 years."

This "debt service" does not apply to the Galewood-Urbandale-Burlingame area because this section had an operating system when the bond was passed. Was this inserted in ignorance? More than likely it was deliberate! It does, however, apply to the outlying districts not included in the proposed annexation. Therefore YOUR RATE WILL BE $3.85, which seems to be more than the City's $3.45, but is actually less because included in the $3.85 is the cost of the mains to your homes.

The yellow sheet statement about Grand Rapids refunding meter costs is just an assumption — a statement not backed by any assurance whatever, and can reasonably be doubted.

Such things as this yellow sheet, plus the confusion of the City Attorney, plus the obvious attempt on the part of the Press to mislead, have done as much as anything else to turn people in Wyoming Township away from thoughts of annexation at this time. It's disgusting.

That's why most residents are voting No on annexation.

WYOMING BOOSTERS

Not "Friends of Annexation", but Friends of the Residents of the GUB Area Who Have the Best Interests of the Community at Heart.

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