A recent street widening, finally consummated, cost 15 per cent more as a result of three years' delay during which a factory located in the district and values increased. The needed improvement had been foreseen and proposed early while values remained low but was retarded by objections.

Civic progress is like a relay race, the work of one administration starts where a preceding one leaves off. If their programs can become coordinated, real results will follow.

Knowing as we do, that environment will determine to an extent, the conduct and well being of the people; it is our duty, as public servants, to raise the standard as high as we can, and though we cannot see the consummation of our plans, it may prove an incentive to those who follow after us.

ENGINEERING PROVISIONS FOR A CITY’S GROWTH

By H. G. Wray, City Engineer, South Bend, Indiana.

With your kind indulgence I wish to discuss briefly my subject of “Engineering Provisions for a City’s Growth” in its relation to

1. Planning and zoning.
2. Sanitary facilities and advantages.
3. Public improvement of streets and highways.
4. Railroad grade separation.

It is my judgment that one of the most important, if not the most important, engineering provision for a city’s growth is that of the application of sound principles of planning and zoning. A city properly planned develops a well balanced and usually a permanent growth. Careful supervision can be exercised in a city’s subdivision activities to insure a provision for streets and thoroughfares that will conveniently connect both urban and suburban districts. Major streets, and convenient traveling encourage segregation which will develop expansion and growth.

Municipal growth may be traced in many instances to industrial and commercial prosperity. The lack of manufacturing sites having available shipping facilities, often due to inadequate or improper industrial zoning, is, I believe, an important consideration in the matter of a city’s growth. A periodical check on the supply and demand of industrially zoned territory within a city, would, I think, stimulate a city’s industrial progress. Many large employers of industrial labor seeking new factory sites, invariably give careful consideration to the
available sites for rail shipping and the convenience of thoroughfare travel, in order that their products may be economically marketed. A lack of such convenience retards industrial development. Therefore, thoughtful administration of city planning and zoning will have a great influence upon a city's growth.

The question of sanitation and sanitary advantages is of great importance to a growing city. No one cares to reside or practice industry in a community or district where modern sanitary conveniences are not adequately supplied. Pure and abundant water supply is an essential consideration for prospective homeseekers, and those engaging in industry. Every growing city must constantly seek means for improving or enlarging its water supply, and be prepared to supply sanitary facilities to all new territory, in order that the ever-increasing demand may be promptly cared for.

Modern travel and means of transportation demand paved streets and highways. In a rapid growing city it is often difficult to supply this demand. Property values are materially increased by the benefits of public improvements. The increase of property values brings increased prosperity. The subdividers of any community are first to see the value of public improvements.

Before a building site is sold or offered for sale, you will usually find a complete system of sewers, paved streets, and highways traversing the entire subdivision area. Increased sales and better values can always be obtained on property when the comfort and convenience of public improvements has been made possible.

Much can be said concerning the effect of grade separation upon the growth of the city. Railroad grade crossings are a menace to public welfare and safety and a full appreciation of grade separation importance can best be realized by observation before and after such an engineering improvement has been made. Contact between sections of our city separated by dangerous grade crossings is often impaired to the extent that a distinct economic loss is sustained, due to unavoidable delays in transportation and commercial deliveries. Property values are unusually low in communities isolated by dangerous grade crossings. Enterprise will avoid unsafe operating conditions and inconvenience of travel. A study of the physical development of any city will show almost without exception that the presence of railroads operating at grade has brought about an unbalanced or distorted development. I question if any city has undergone a symmetrical development about a railroad line as an axis. Development will be observed on one side or the other, but scarcely ever uniformly developed on both. The elevation of railroad lines over our streets and highways removes an important barrier to growth and development.