

Dinuba's incorporation dates from 1906, and city government is a very real part of Dinuba life. A council of five is elected for a 4-year term, three at one time and two at another. A heated biennial election had been held just prior to the time of field investigations for the present study, and the issues were still fresh in the minds of civic leaders, issues involving local problems which the local electorate decided at the polls.

In the course of its history, the city has paved many miles of streets and laid many miles of sidewalks. It has established a water system, a sewerage system, and a garbage-disposal system; it has placed electric lights along its streets throughout town, has created two parks and is creating a third one, and maintains police and fire departments. The council selects a chairman who is the mayor, and each councilman is in charge of one of five departments. These are (1) police and fire, (2) streets, sewers, and water, (3) parks and waste disposal, (4) city properties, and (5) finance. The operation of the city government is therefore close to the people.

In final analysis, the worth of this must be measured in accomplishment. The police force of four maintains order in the community. Court actions are confined largely to "driving while intoxicated" charges. Houses of prostitution in the community were readily eliminated at the specific request of the War Department.

The fire department is efficient. Its rapid response to a fire and its consideration of property owners, as well as its interest in fire prevention, was observed. The department is jointly operated with the county. There are four paid firemen who operate the county engines outside the city limit and both county and city engines within the city. In addition, there is a volunteer group which serves both town and county. These men serve at nominal pay, and have, after a pattern frequently found in rural California, made a social organization out of the department.

The present mayor claims responsibility for establishing the city garbage system. Four years ago garbage collection was a private franchise. It was expensive and few people availed themselves of the service. It is now a city service, paid for out of an addition of 50 cents to the monthly water charge. After many years of inadequate service, the alleys had become very dirty and the mayor hired a crew to clean them up. Adequate garbage service has made it possible to keep the alleys clean. The mayor was particularly proud that no WPA help was required on this project, and that the service is done at so small a charge without resorting to feeding garbage to hogs. He avoided this because of the nuisance to householders of segregating garbage, and because he anticipates that this practice will eventually be outlawed.

Most of the streets are paved and lighted with electroliers. They are kept unusually clean, and together with the planting of trees make the Dinuba residential areas attractive. The paving and lighting, along with the sewage system, was established in the post-war boom period at excessive costs. At that time Dinuba was confidently expected to expand into a community of much larger size, and this expectation and high raisin prices conspired to create a spirit of overoptimism. The result was overexpansion, with the inevitable collapse that caused heartaches in the community. Assessments ran high, the town was overbuilt, houses and other property