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BRIEF HISTORY OF BOARD OF PUBLIC WORKS, CITY SURVEYORS,  
STREET SUPERINTENDENTS and CITY ENGINEERS in the  
City of Los Angeles since 1872 to 9/1/1953. GENERAL REFERENCE  
DEPARTMENT

On March 20, 1872 the City Council created a Board of Public Works consisting of 5 councilmen appointed by the Council, with the Mayor as an ex-officio member and the City Clerk as secretary.

On April 5, 1872 John Goldsworthy was designated as Surveyor and Engineer, and a successor could be elected and qualified, to do surveying and engineering, make plans and estimates and keep as public records his surveys, notes, profiles and maps.

On April 15, 1872 Jasper Babcock was appointed as Superintendent of Streets and highways, to serve at the pleasure of the Council, but under orders of both the Board of Public Works and the City Council.

On October 21, 1872 the office of Surveyor and Engineer was abolished, and on February 20, 1873 the office of Street Superintendent and City Surveyor (Engineer) was made appointive by the Mayor and Council, subject to their orders and to those of the Board of Public Works. The Office of Street Supt. and City Surveyor (Engineer) was so combined, appointive until December 11, 1879 when the first City Engineer (Still called Surveyor) was appointed in accordance with the provisions of the Charter of 1878 (Approved by the Governor on March 30, 1878). The City Surveyor (Engineer) still included the office of Street Supt. until April 18, 1883 when a separate office of Superintendent of Streets was created, to be appointed by the City Council.

The following are the names of the City Engineers, and Street Superintendents, together with dates of appointment or election during the time these offices were separate and later combined into one: Appointed

<u>CITY ENGINEER</u>	<u>Appointed or Elected:</u>	<u>STREET SUPERINTENDENT</u>	<u>or Elected.</u>
J. E. Jackson,	Ap. Dec. 11, 1879		
J. E. Jackson,	Ap. Dec. 18, 1880		
J. E. Jackson,	Ap. Dec. 17, 1881		
Geo. Hansen,	Ap. Dec. 16, 1882		
G. C. Knox,	Ap. Dec. 15, 1883	E. H. Boyd,	Ap. Dec. 15, 1883
G. C. Knox,	Ap. Dec. 16, 1884	Geo. H. Pike,	Ap. Dec. 16, 1884
Fred Eaton,	Ap. Dec. 22, 1885	Geo. H. Pike,	Ap. Dec. 25, 1885
Fred Eaton,	Ap. Dec. 20, 1886	Geo. H. Pike,	Ap. Dec. 20, 1886
W. T. Lambie,	Ap. Dec. 19, 1887	J. Kuhrts,	Ap. Jan. 3, 1888
		John M. Baldwin,	Ap. Mar. 26, 1888
		J. W. Brown,	Ap. Dec. 24, 1888

The Charter of 1889, approved by the voters on Oct. 28, 1888, by the Legislature on Jan. 23, 1889 and the Governor on Jan. 21, 1889 provided that the City Engineer and Street Superintendents be elective offices, term of office 2 years, as follows:

J. H. Dockweiler,	El. Dec. 1, 1890	W. E. Morford,	El. Feb. 21, 1889
J. H. Dockweiler,	El. Dec. 5, 1892	E. H. Hutchinson,	El. Dec. 1, 1890
C. S. Compton,	El. Dec. 3, 1894	D. A. Watson,	El. Dec. 5, 1892
J. H. Dockweiler,	El. Dec. 7, 1896	P. A. Howard,	El. Dec. 5, 1894
F. H. Olmstead,	El. Dec. 5, 1898	John H. Drain,	El. Dec. 7, 1896
Harry F. Stafford,	El. Dec. 3, 1900	John H. Drain,	El. Dec. 5, 1898
Harry F. Stafford,	El. Dec. 1, 1902	Hugh J. McGuire,	El. Dec. 3, 1900
Harry F. Stafford,	El. Dec. 5, 1904	E. R. Wardin,	El. Dec. 1, 1902
		James Hanley,	El. Dec. 5, 1904

(Effective 1st Monday in January 1906)

The Charter Amendments of 1905 created the department of Public Works. The Board of Public Works took over the duties and was the successor of the Street Superintendent, and to it was assigned all work formerly handled by the Council, Mayor or any commission in connection with bids, contracts, bond fund work and assessments on sewer, drain and street improvements. It had charge of the design, construction and maintenance of streets, sewers, storm drains and city-owned buildings; disposal of garbage, sewage and street refuse; and all public utilities owned, controlled or operated by the city, except waterworks. The Street Superintendent was made inspector of public works. The City Engineer was placed under the Board until the first Monday in January, 1907, at which time the Board was required to appoint to such position a civil engineer of not less than 5 years' professional experience. Such appointees received an annual remuneration of \$3,000, and served at the pleasure of the Board.

(Continued)

It will thus be seen that the offices of City Engineer (Surveyor) and Street Superintendent were separate and distinct from April 18, 1883 until merged under the Board of Public Works according to the Charter Amendments of 1905, which became effective the first Monday in 1906. Thereafter these two organizations functioned under the City Engineer, appointed by the Board of Public Works. From 1906 to date the following City Engineers have held office under the Board of Public Works appointments, Harry F. Stafford, the elected incumbent at the time of establishing the Board of Public Works, was retained until his death, as indicated below:

<u>Name of City Engineer</u>	<u>Term of Office</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
Harry F. Stafford,	xl. Dec. 5, 1904 to Aug. 4, 1906	Died 8/4/06
Homer Hamlin	Ap. Aug. 9, 1906 to July 10, 1917	
A. G. Hansen,	Ap. July 11, 1917 to Feb. 9, 1920	Died 2/9/20
R. W. Stewart (Acting)	Ap. Feb. 10, 1920 to Mar. 21, 1920 (Acting City Engr)	
John A. Griffin	Ap. Mar. 22, 1920 to Oct. 15, 1924	
H. A. Van Norman	Ap. Oct. 16, 1924 to Aug. 19, 1925 (L. of A. in Water/)	Dept)
John C. Shaw	Ap. Aug. 20, 1925 to Jan. 15, 1930	
J. J. Jessup,	Ap. Jan. 16, 1930 to Aug. 31, 1933	
Lloyd Aldrich (Appointed to serve as Chief Deputy City Engineer for the Month of August 1933)	Ap. Sept. 1, 1933 to	(Present Incumbent Sept. 1, 1933)

**SCHEDULE SHOWING DEVELOPMENT**  
**of**  
**THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Area in Square Miles</u>	<u>Assessed Non-Operative Valuation</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Municipal Tax Rate</u>
1850*	28.00	\$ -----	1,610	\$ -----
1915	288.21	420,200,190	500,000	1.60
1916	337.92	482,325,320	533,535	1.45
1917	351.10	489,902,245	550,000	1.52
1918	362.04	508,808,564	565,000	1.45
1919	363.44	533,567,105	567,675	1.51
1920	365.72	636,147,965	663,175	1.60
1921	366.17	704,599,078	768,648	1.45
1922	366.88	783,718,770	890,000	1.26
1923	391.63	996,950,520	1,073,995	1.55
1924	406.98	1,374,750,565	1,100,000	1.63
1925	410.77	1,467,252,935	1,211,533	1.54
June 1926	420.55	1,574,489,610	-----	1.53
Jan. 1927	434.22	-----	1,300,000 (Est.)	---

\* Original City incorporated

NOTE.- Area is taken from Engineer's Annual Report.

Assessed Valuation is taken from Controller's Annual Report.

Population is taken from report of Chamber of Commerce.

Tax rate is taken from Controller's Annual Report.